

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Media and Communication  
with effect from Semester A 2017/18**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Independent Studies

**Course Code:** COM8009

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** R8

Arts and Humanities

Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

Science and Technology

**Proposed Area:**  
*(for GE courses only)*

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

The course aims to:

develop an in-depth understanding of a topic, through independent directed reading. To enable students to:

- Understand the range of issues underlying a particular area of communication study
- Critically read and evaluate a selection of existing literature in the field; and
- Identify and develop a specific focus for an in-depth study relevant to individual contexts of specialization

There is no specified syllabus for this course. The student will be required to work with a designated supervisor, who initially will suggest a reading list in the area that the student has selected. The student, through independent study, will add to the reading list to develop a comprehensive annotated bibliography on the selected topic.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

No.	CILOs <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Explore and identify important issues in the field of communication and issues for communication research		✓		
2.	Evaluate and analyze these issues and topics in light of theoretical perspectives			✓	
3.	Conduct research on important issues using appropriate and innovative research methods, to discover new knowledge in the relevant domain		✓	✓	✓

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

<sup>#</sup> Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.			Hours/week(if applicable)
		1	2	3	
Reading	Weekly Readings on the selected areas of study	✓			Throughout the class
Research	Conduct research on selected issues using appropriate methods		✓		Throughout the class
Discussion	Weekly discussions of issues with the instructor			✓	Throughout the class

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.			Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3		
Continuous Assessment: <u>100%</u>					
Analysis of selected issues	✓			40%	
Research Project: individual or group research project of selected issues using appropriate methods		✓		50%	
Class discussion and participation			✓	10%	
Examination: <u>NA</u> % (duration: _____, if applicable)					

\* The weightings should add up to 100%.

100%

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Analysis of selected issues	<b>Ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues</b>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Research Project	<b>Capacity for self-directed learning to critically identify and analyze an in-depth communication issue</b>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Class discussion and participation	<b>Ability to explain the concepts and demonstrate original thinking</b>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

Communication research, communication study, issue studies, topical studies, communication theory, empirical research

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

1	Chaffee, S. H., & Berger, C. R. (1987). What communication scientists do? In C. R. Berger and S. H. Chaffee (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Communication Science</i> (pp. 99-122). CA: Sage.
2	Pan, Z. & McLeod, J.M. (1991). Multi-level Analysis in Mass Communication Research. <i>Communication Research</i> . 18: 138-171.
3	Neuman, W.R., Davidson, R., Joo, S.H., Park, Y.J., & Williams, A.E. (2008). The Seven Deadly Sins in Communication Research. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 58: 220-237.
4	Sullivan, J.L. (2013). <i>Media Audiences: Effects, Users, Institutions, and Power</i> . CA: Sage.
5	Frey, L.R., Botan, C.H. & Kreps, G.L. (2000). <i>Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods</i> . Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**2.2 Additional Readings**

1	Wright, M.C. (1959). <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.
2	Gitlin, T. (1978). Media Sociology: The Dominant Paradigm. <i>Theory and Society</i> . 6:205-253.
3	Bryant, J. & Oliver, M.B. (2009). <i>Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research</i> . NT: Routledge.
4	Papacharissi, Z. (2009). <i>Journalism and Citizenship: New Agendas in Communication</i> . NY: Routledge.
5	Bannerman, S. & Haggart, B. (2014). Historical Institutionalism in Communication Studies. <i>Communication Theory</i> , 25: 1-22.