

PIA5511: SPECIAL TOPICS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Special Topics for Development and Sustainability

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

5511

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course offers students an opportunity to explore in-depth some specific aspects of sustainability issues in Hong Kong and the Region. Students are free to choose from any substantive area of interest that falls within the broad subject of sustainability with a focus on policy and management issues. In the process of independent reading and research throughout the semester, students will develop a broader and deeper knowledge of their substantive area. Both practical skills as well as theoretical analytics need to be enhanced in order to help train their understanding about the key sustainability policy and management issues which might be related to students' future career plan.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify a relevant aspect of sustainability in Hong Kong and the Region on which to undertake a substantial piece of individual research based on their various learning experiences	20	x	x	x
2	Think and debate critically on a focused subject area of the course	20	x	x	x
3	Define the scope and provide a rationale for the specific focus of their research paper	20	x	x	x
4	Discover and critically analyse, synthesize and evaluate appropriate knowledge and theories relating to their topic	20	x	x	x
5	Present the analysis and conclusions of their research in a written paper	20	x	x	x

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 real-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.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture	Lecturers and visual materials	1, 2, 3, 4
2	Presentation	A group of students will present some of the required reading and lead the discussion in classes.	1, 2, 3, 4

3	Research Paper	Students are asked to analyse some specific sustainability financing mechanisms of a country or a city and present the findings to the class at the end of the class.	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-class participation & discussion: i. Attendance: Class attendance is compulsory. ii. Students are expected to go through their readings PRIOR TO CLASS and participate in discussion, share ideas and opinions in a respectful manner, and analyse case studies critically and constructively.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
2	Presentation	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	No
3	Research Paper	1, 2, 3, 4	50	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-class participation & discussion (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To demonstrate the activeness of classroom participation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Very good to excellent participation in presentations and class discussion

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good participation in presentations and class discussion

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Satisfactory participation in presentations and class discussion

Marginal

(D) Adequate participation in presentations and class discussion

Failure

(F) Lack of attendance or participation in class discussion and presentations; and/or substantial plagiarism

Assessment Task

Presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To assess individual presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding of the course

Good

(B+, B, B-) Demonstration of good to very good understanding of the course

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Demonstration of general knowledge of the course

Marginal

(D) Demonstration of adequate knowledge of the course

Failure

(F) Fail to demonstrate basic knowledge of the course

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

To assess the ability to write a 3,000-3,500 words essay

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies

Good

(B+, B, B-) Demonstration of good to very good understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Demonstration of general knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies

Marginal

(D) Demonstration of adequate knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies, but without good critical evaluation

Failure

(F) Failure to demonstrate basic knowledge of impacts of problems and policies; inability to engage in critical evaluation

Assessment Task

In-class participation & discussion (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

To demonstrate the activeness of classroom participation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Very good to excellent participation in presentations and class discussion

Good

(B+, B) Good participation in presentations and class discussion

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Satisfactory participation in presentations and class discussion

Failure

(F) Lack of attendance or participation in class discussion and presentations; and/or substantial plagiarism

Assessment Task

Presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

To assess individual presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding of the course

Good

(B+, B) Demonstration of good to very good understanding of the course

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Demonstration of general knowledge of the course

Failure

(F) Fail to demonstrate basic knowledge of the course

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

To assess the ability to write a 3000-3500 words essay

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Demonstration of excellent understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies

Good

(B+, B) Demonstration of good to very good understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Demonstration of general knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies, but without good critical evaluation

Failure

(F) Failure to demonstrate basic knowledge of impacts of problems and policies; inability to engage in critical evaluation

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Sustainability; sustainable development; literature review; central thesis; supporting and counter-arguments; methodology; research and writing

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Alchian, A.A. & Demsetz, H., 1972, "Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization," <i>The American Economic Review</i> , vol. 62, no. 5, pp. 777-795.
2	Baker, S. 2006. 'Challenges in the Third World' , in <i>Sustainable Development</i> . Oxon: Routledge.
3	Barron, W. 2009. <i>The Great Disconnect</i> . Hong Kong: Institute for the Environment, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
4	Bordie, R., S. Wilson a & J. Kuang, "The Importance, Development and Reform Challenges of China' Rail Sector," in L. Song, R. Garnaut & C. Fang (Eds), <i>Deepening Reform for China' s Long -term Growth and Development</i> , Canberra: ANU Press, 2014.
5	Bulkeley, H. et al. 2011. <i>Cities and Low Carbon Transitions</i> . Oxon: Routledge. Ch. 3. Ch. 6
6	Campos, J., & P. Cantos, 1999, "Rail Transport Regulation," <i>The World Bank Group Working Paper</i> , pp.4-18 (http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/64576/2064rail.pdf).
7	Carter, N. 2001. 'Sustainable Development and Ecological Modernization' , <i>The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8	Coase, R. H., 1959, "The Federal Communications Commission," <i>Journal of Law and Economics</i> , vol. 2, pp. 1-40.
9	Demsetz, H., 2002, "Towards a Theory of Property Rights," <i>American Economic Review</i> , vol. 57, issue 2, pp.653-672.
10	Li, H. & Rozelle, S., 2004, "Insider privatization with a tail: the screening contract and performance of privatized firms in rural China," <i>Journal of Development Economics</i> , vol. 75, no. 1, pp. 1-26.
11	Naughton, B., 2010, "China's Distinctive System: can it be a model for others?" <i>Journal of Contemporary China</i> , vol. 19, no. 65, pp. 437-460.
12	Neil T. Carter & Arthur P.J. Mol (eds.) <i>Environmental Governance in China</i> , London: Routledge.
13	Roberts, J. 2004. 'Sustainable Development and the goals of environmental policy' <i>Environmental Policy</i> , London, New York: Routledge.
14	Susan Baker, 2006. <i>Sustainable Development</i> . Oxon: Routledge.
15	Terri Mottershead. 2004. <i>Sustainable Development in Hong Kong</i> , Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Button, K.J. 1994, "Privatisation and deregulation: its implications for negative transport externalities," <i>The annals of regional science: an international journal of urban, regional and environmental research and policy; official journal of the Western Regional Science Association</i> , vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 125-138.
2	Kopicki, R., & Louis S. Thompson, 1995, "Best Methods of Railway Restructuring and Privatization," <i>World Bank CFS Discussion paper Series</i> , pp. 1-17, 19-39 (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRAILWAYS/Resources/b35.pdf).
3	Naughton, B., 2005, "SASAC Rising," <i>China Leadership Monitor</i> , no. 14, pp. 1-11.
4	Naughton, B., 2013, "The Return of Planning in China," <i>Modern China</i> , vol. 39, no. 6, pp. 640-652.
5	OECD, 2003, <i>Railway Reform in China promoting competition</i> , OECD report.

6	Online resources:
7	Agenda 21: The United Nations Programme of Action for from Rio http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/
8	Built Cultural Heritage and sustainable urban development http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204607001442
9	Creating space for sustainable food systems: lessons from the field http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1016095421310#page-1
10	Integrated Conservation of cultural built heritage http://dare2.uvu.vu.nl/handle/1871/10934
11	Sustainable Cities http://www.sustainablecities.org.uk/
12	Sustainable Development Fund http://www.susdev.gov.hk/html/en/sd/index.htm
13	United Nations documents on Sustainable Development: http://www.un-documents.net/k-001303.htm