

SS5215: DIVERSITY AND THE HELPING PROFESSIONS

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Diversity and the Helping Professions

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

5215

Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

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

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English, supplemented by Cantonese / Putonghua in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play exercises as situation requires.

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course prepares students to work with diverse groups of people in Hong Kong and in other multicultural societies, including populations affected by gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and race, age, neurodiverse conditions, mental and physical abilities, and religion. It explores the connection between diversity and the ethical principles of justice, equality, acceptance, and empathy in the helping professions. It aims to increase students' critical mind, awareness, knowledge, and skills for culturally responsive professional practice through knowledge acquisition, self-reflection, and critical inquiry. Teaching methods include lecture, critical reading of class materials, class exercises and activities, guest sharing, and field observation.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate knowledge on the connection between diversity, social justice, equality, empathy and acceptance in the helping professions.	20	x	x	
2	Demonstrate understanding on how experiences of privilege and oppression are shaped by diverse social forces including historical, social and political factors in relation to genderism, heterosexism, racism, ableism, ageism and religious oppression, and the effects of these on both society and individuals.	30	x	x	
3	Demonstrate ability and skills in critical contextual thinking and analyses and working towards diversity and justice with diverse populations.	30	x	x	x
4	Demonstrate an awareness of how own social positions can shape practice in the helping profession, including possible bias and advantages.	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	LTA 1. Lecture	Lectures cover the major topics (diversity and differences, justice and equality) of the course with explanation, clarification, and discussion during the sessions.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	LTA 2. Class exercises	Various exercises and activities will be integrated in class, including reporting, reflection and case analyses.	2, 3, 4	
3	LTA 3. Guest sharing	Guest speakers of related topics and practice fields will be invited to share their knowledge and practice wisdom to students.	3, 4	
4	LTA 4. Text reading and discussion	Recommended readings will be assigned to students. Students prepare the texts before class and discussions will be conducted in class for clarifications, responses, debates and reviews.	1, 2, 3, 4	
5	LTA 5. Student project	Students prepare group project and presentation on relevant topics. They learn to consolidate learning and application of relevant theories and concepts in real life cases.	2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	AT1: Individual Paper At the end of the semester, each student is required to submit an individual paper with 2,000 words to demonstrate the understanding of course content and ability of contextual case analyses. The paper should follow the APA style.	1, 2, 3	30	-	No
2	AT2: Group Presentation Students will be divided into subgroup to prepare a group project. Integration of classroom knowledge and contextual case analyses are required for this project. Presentation of group project will be conducted at the end of semester.	2, 3, 4	30	Allow AI to assist students to brainstorm initial ideas for the group project.	Yes
3	AT3: Reflection Paper In the middle of the semester, each student is required to submit a reflection paper with 1,000 words on the limitations and opportunities of her/his own social positions. The paper should follow the APA style.	2, 4	25	-	No

4	AT4: Class Participation Students are required to actively contribute to discussions and feedback giving in class.	1, 2, 3, 4	15	Allow AI to assist students to brainstorm ideas for class activities and discussions.	Yes
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Individual Paper (30%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) format of citations and references;
- f) fluency of presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Outstanding

- a) very clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) outstanding development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) Very good format of citations and references;
- f) outstanding fluency of presentation

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) good format of citations and references;
- f) fluency of presentation

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- a) fairly clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) fair integration of knowledge;
- c) fair argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) fair development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) fair format of citations and references;
- f) fair fluency of presentation

Marginal

(D)

- a) Marginally clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) marginal integration of knowledge;

- c) marginal argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) marginal development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) marginal format of citations and references;
- f) marginal fluency of presentation

Failure

(F)

- a) insufficiently clear description of case and identification of issues;
 - b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
 - c) insufficient argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
 - d) insufficient development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
 - e) insufficient format of citations and references;
 - f) insufficient fluency of presentation
-

Assessment Task

2. Group Presentation (30%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good recommendations logical to the context;
- e) good team work;
- f) fluency of presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- a) very clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) outstanding recommendations logical to the context;
- e) very good team work;
- f) outstanding fluency of presentation

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good recommendations logical to the context;
- e) good team work;
- f) fluency of presentation

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- a) fairly clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) fair integration of knowledge;
- c) fair argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) fair recommendations logical to the context;
- e) fair team work;
- f) fair fluency of presentation

Marginal

(D)

- a) marginally clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) marginal integration of knowledge;
- c) marginal argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) marginal recommendations logical to the context;
- e) marginal team work;
- f) marginal fluency of presentation

Failure

- (F)
 - a) insufficient description of case and identification of issues;
 - b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
 - c) insufficient argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
 - d) insufficient recommendations logical to the context;
 - e) insufficient team work;
 - f) insufficient fluency of presentation
-

Assessment Task

3. Reflection Paper (25%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- a) focus of the reflection paper;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) format of citations and references, and
- e) fluency of the presentation

Excellent

- (A+, A, A-)
- a) very clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) outstanding scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) very good format of citations and references, and
- e) outstanding fluency of the presentation

Good

- (B+, B, B-)
- a) clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) good format of citations and references, and
- e) fluency of the presentation

Fair

- (C+, C, C-)
- a) fairly clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) fair integration of knowledge;
- c) fair scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) fair format of citations and references, and
- e) fair fluency of the presentation

Marginal

- (D)
- a) marginally clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) marginal integration of knowledge;

- c) marginal scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) marginal format of citations and references, and
- e) marginal fluency of the presentation

Failure

- (F)
- a) insufficient focus of the reflection paper;
 - b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
 - c) insufficient scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
 - d) insufficient format of citations and references, and
 - e) insufficient fluency of the presentation
-

Assessment Task

4. Class Participation (15%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- a) Punctually attending the class;
- b) Active participation in class discussions and exercises;
- c) Actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Excellent

- (A+, A, A-)
- a) Very good punctuality and very active participation in class;
 - b) Very active discussions in class;
 - c) actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Good

- (B+, B, B-)
- a) Good punctuality and active participation in class;
 - b) active discussions in class;
 - c) actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Fair

- (C+, C, C-)
- a) Fair punctuality and participation in class;
 - b) fairly active discussions in class;
 - c) fair engagement in constructive feedback giving

Marginal

- (D)
- a) Limited punctuality and participation in class;
 - b) little discussions in class;
 - c) marginal engagement in constructive feedback giving

Failure

- (F)
- a) Insufficient punctuality and participation in class;
 - b) insufficient discussions in class;
 - c) insufficient engagement in constructive feedback giving
-

Assessment Task

1. Individual Paper (30%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) format of citations and references;
- f) fluency of presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- a) very clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) outstanding development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) Very good format of citations and references;
- f) outstanding fluency of presentation

Good

(B+, B)

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) good format of citations and references;
- f) fluency of presentation

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- a) fairly clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) fair to limited integration of knowledge;
- c) fair to limited argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) fair to limited development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) fair to limited format of citations and references;
- f) fair to limited fluency of presentation

Failure

(F)

- a) insufficiently clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
- c) insufficient argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) insufficient development of a critical and feasible framework for future practice;
- e) insufficient format of citations and references;
- f) insufficient fluency of presentation

Assessment Task

2. Group Presentation (30%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good recommendations logical to the context;
- e) good team work;
- f) fluency of presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- a) very clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) strong argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) outstanding recommendations logical to the context;
- e) very good team work;
- f) outstanding fluency of presentation

Good

(B+, B)

- a) clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) good recommendations logical to the context;
- e) good team work;
- f) fluency of presentation

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- a) fairly clear description of case and identification of issues;
- b) fair to limited integration of knowledge;
- c) fair to limited argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) fair to limited recommendations logical to the context;
- e) fair to limited team work;
- f) fair to limited fluency of presentation

Failure

(F)

- a) insufficient description of case and identification of issues;
- b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
- c) insufficient argumentation supported by evidence in contextual case analysis;
- d) insufficient recommendations logical to the context;
- e) insufficient team work;
- f) insufficient fluency of presentation

Assessment Task

3. Reflection Paper (25%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- a) focus of the reflection paper;
- b) integration of knowledge;
- c) scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) format of citations and references, and
- e) fluency of the presentation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- a) very clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) outstanding integration of knowledge;
- c) outstanding scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) very good format of citations and references, and
- e) outstanding fluency of the presentation

Good

(B+, B)

- a) clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) good integration of knowledge;
- c) good scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) good format of citations and references, and
- e) fluency of the presentation

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- a) fairly to limitedly clear focus of the reflection paper;
- b) fair to limited integration of knowledge;
- c) fair to limited scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
- d) fair to limited format of citations and references, and
- e) fair to limited fluency of the presentation

Failure

(F)

- a) insufficient focus of the reflection paper;
 - b) insufficient integration of knowledge;
 - c) insufficient scope and depth of reflection in relation to one's own experiences and social positions;
 - d) insufficient format of citations and references, and
 - e) insufficient fluency of the presentation
-

Assessment Task

4. Class Participation (15%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- a) Punctually attending the class;
- b) Active participation in class discussions and exercises;
- c) Actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- a) Very good punctuality and very active participation in class;
- b) Very active discussions in class;
- c) actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Good

(B+, B)

- a) Good punctuality and participation in class;
- b) active discussions in class;
- c) actively engaged in constructive feedback giving

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- a) Fair to limited punctuality and participation in class;
- b) fairly to limited active discussions in class;
- c) fair to limited engagement in constructive feedback giving

Failure

(F)

- a) Insufficient punctuality and participation in class;
- b) insufficient discussions in class;

c) insufficient engagement in constructive feedback giving

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

1.1 Diversity, Difference and Multiculturalism

Human diversity and differences, social construction, global trend of multiculturalism

1.2 Diversity, Social Justice and Change

Values and principles, codes of ethics, social justice and social change, challenges to action: stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

1.3 Dimension of Diversity and Social Justice

Intersectionality, power and privilege, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and race, ability status, religion

1.4 Recognizing Systemic Oppressions and Injustice

Genderism, heterosexism, homophobia, xenophobia, racism, colorism, ableism, ageism, minority stress, internalized oppressions, microaggressions

1.5 Check Privileges and Oppressions

Diversity circle, social positions, advantages and disadvantages, self-awareness

1.6 Competency-Based Approaches to Diversity and Justice in Practice

Cultural competence VS cultural humility, individualism VS collectivism, cultural awareness, managing bias and microaggressions, individuals and families, groups and communities

1.7 Diversity and Inclusive Social Policies

Distributive justice, affirmative action, discrimination acts, school segregation, family policies

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Sue, D.W., Rasheed, M. N., Rasheed, J. M. (2016). Multicultural social work practice#: a competency-based approach to diversity and social justice. (Second edition.). Jossey-Bass.
2	Sue, D. W., Sue, D., Neville, H. A., & Smith, L. (2022). Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice (9th ed.). John Wiley & Sons

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Bender, K., Negi, N., & Fowler, D.N. (2010). Exploring the relationship between self awareness and student commitment and understanding of culturally responsive social work practice. <i>Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work</i> , 19(1), 34-53. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313200903531990
2	Bränström, R., Hughes, T. L., & Pachankis, J. E. (2024). Global LGBTQ mental health. In <i>*Global LGBTQ health: Research, policy, practice, and pathways*</i> (pp. 45–78). Springer International Publishing.
3	Byers, D., McInroy, L., Craig, S.L., Slates, S., & Kattari, S. (2020). Naming and Addressing Homophobic and Transphobic Microaggressions in SOWK classrooms. <i>Journal of Social Work Education</i> , 56(3). 484-495. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2019.1656688
4	Cohen, H., Greene, R., Lee, Y., Gonzalez, J., & Evans, M. (2006). Older adults who overcame oppression. <i>Families in Society</i> , 87(1), 35-42. https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.3482
5	Coston, B.M. & Kimmel, M. (2012). Seeing privilege where it isn't: marginalized masculinities and the intersectionality of privilege. <i>Journal of Social Issues</i> , 68(1), 97-111. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01738.x
6	Englar-Carlson, M., & Kiselica M. (2013). Affirming the strengths in men: a positive masculinity approach to assisting male clients. <i>Journal of Counseling and Development</i> 91(4), 399-409. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2013.00111.x

7	Finney, K. & Fitzgerald, T. (2020). <i>The reality of diversity, gender, and skin color: From living room to classroom</i> (1st ed.). Cognella Publishing.
8	Fisher-Borne, M., Cain, J. M., & Martin, S. L. (2014). From mastery to accountability: cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competence. <i>The International Journal of Social Work Education</i> , 34(2), 165-181. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2014.977244
9	Freeman-Coppadge, D. J., & Langroudi, K. F. (2021). Beyond LGBTQ-affirmative therapy: Fostering growth and healing through intersectionality. In <i>*Queer psychology: Intersectional perspectives*</i> (pp. 159–179). Springer International Publishing.
10	Hays, P. A. (2024). Four steps toward intersectionality in psychotherapy using the ADDRESSING framework. <i>Professional Psychology: Research and Practice</i> , 55(5), 454.
11	Kirmayer, L. J. (2019). The politics of diversity: Pluralism, multiculturalism and mental health. <i>Transcultural Psychiatry</i> , 56(6), 1119–1138.
12	Liao, X., Lei, X., & Li, Y. (2019). Stigma among parents of children with autism: A literature review. <i>Asian journal of psychiatry</i> , 45, 88-94.
13	Marsiglia F.F., Kulis S.S., & Lechuga-Pen# a S. (2021). <i>Diversity, oppression, and change: culturally grounded social work</i> . (Third edition.). Oxford University Press.
14	Pearce, E., Paik, K., & Robles, O. J. (2016). Adolescent girls with disabilities in humanitarian settings: "I am not 'worthless.' I am a girl with a lot to share and offer." <i>Girlhood Studies</i> , 9(1), 118-136. https://doi.org/10.3167/ghs.2016.090109
15	Peteet, J. R. (2019). Approaching religiously reinforced mental health stigma: A conceptual framework. <i>Psychiatric Services</i> , 70(9), 846-848.