

SS5316: AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AND HOMICIDE

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Aggressive Behaviour and Homicide

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

5316

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

After completing the course, students could be able to distinguish two subtypes of aggressive behaviour, reactive and proactive aggression, and make a clear assessment on people acting with school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide. They could be competent to make accurate analyses of the suspects based on the features and characteristics of the crime in particular cases. They could comprehend and apply relevant theories in case analyses as well as the strategies and procedures of handling the suspects. Furthermore, based on Social Information Processing Model, Cognitive-behavioural Therapy, and neurobiological approach, to devise effective intervention and counselling strategies for reducing children, adolescents, and adults with reactive and proactive aggression, it leads to reduce the violence, homicide, and crime rate in Hong Kong eventually.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Comprehend the distinction between two subtypes of aggressive behaviour, and their later development in childhood and adolescence stage	15	x	x	
2	Make assessment and identify people based on their characteristics of reactive and proactive aggression	15	x	x	
3	The differences of committing school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide between people with reactive and proactive aggression	30		x	x
4	Apply Social Information Processing Model and counselling interventions to reduce crime rate of violence and homicide, and prevent people from having reactive and proactive aggression	40		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	Lectures:	Major theoretical concepts and models of aggression as well as two subtypes of reactive and proactive aggression will be presented to students	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hrs/wk

2	Class Discussions:	Classroom discussions organized for the whole class or carried out in small group discussion followed by a presentation by each small group will be used for clarification of concepts and for integration of theories and local practice experiences.	1, 2, 3, 4	0.5 hrs/wk
3	Live Demonstration and Class:	Related videos on different kinds of violent real cases, such as demonstration by school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide will be shown and used in classroom for students to make clear and accurate assessment as well as device suitable interventions for the real specific cases in Hong Kong	2, 3, 4	1 hr/wk
4	Student Presentation:	To present a real local or overseas homicide case, and try to apply relevant theories and concepts for making a precise case analyses and assessments, then to device an appropriate intervention counselling strategies for the specific client with reactive and proactive aggression	2, 3, 4	3 hrs/wk for 3 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	AT1: Group presentation: Students will collaborate in groups to deliver a comprehensive oral presentation on a specific case of aggressive behavior or homicide, either locally or internationally. The presentation should include a detailed assessment of whether the case constitutes murder or manslaughter, supported by evidence, and propose appropriate intervention strategies.	1, 2, 3, 4	35	Allow AI to (1) conduct proof editing; (2) brainstorm and generate initial ideas; (3) conduct preliminary analyses	Yes
2	AT2: Reflective and case critique paper: Students will identify two real cases, either local or international, that exemplify the subtypes of reactive and proactive aggression within the contexts of school bullying and peer aggression. Using newspaper or online reports, students will write a reflective critique paper analyzing the distinct features of each subtype, supported by empirical research and evidence.	1, 2, 3	35	-	No

3	AT3: Quiz: The quiz is designed to assess students' comprehensive knowledge of reactive and proactive aggression, as well as the characteristics of aggressive and pure victims across various contexts, including school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide. The quiz will emphasize the planning of prevention and intervention strategies to reduce aggression and peer victimization, as well as the discussion of relevant educational practices and policy changes.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	-	No
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Group presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

1.1 Case Analysis: Demonstrates the ability to thoroughly assess and analyze homicide cases, distinguishing between reactive and proactive aggression.

1.2 Evidence-Based Support: Provides robust, evidence-based support to substantiate assessments, clearly differentiating between murder and manslaughter.

1.3 Intervention Design: Develops a customized intervention plan tailored to the specific perpetrator, demonstrating creativity and practicality.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Marginal

(D) Limited evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Assessment Task

2. Reflective and case critique paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

2.1 Case Identification: Accurately identifies two real-world cases of school bullying and peer aggression involving reactive and proactive aggression.

2.2 Theoretical Application: Applies theoretical knowledge effectively, using empirical research to support detailed analyses of each case.

2.3 Self-Reflection: Engages in deep self-reflection, articulating how understanding the distinction between reactive and proactive aggression has influenced personal perspectives.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Marginal

(D) Limited evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

3.1 Comprehensive Understanding: Demonstrates a thorough understanding of reactive and proactive aggression, as well as the dynamics of aggressive and pure victims across various contexts, including school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide.

3.2 Prevention and Intervention Planning: Exhibits the ability to plan effective prevention and intervention strategies to mitigate reactive and proactive aggression and peer victimization.

3.3 Educational and Policy Insight: Addresses and critically evaluates educational practices and policy changes relevant to aggression and victimization.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Marginal

(D) Limited knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Failure

(F) Insufficient knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Assessment Task

1. Group presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

1.1 Case Analysis: Demonstrates the ability to thoroughly assess and analyze homicide cases, distinguishing between reactive and proactive aggression.

1.2 Evidence-Based Support: Provides robust, evidence-based support to substantiate assessments, clearly differentiating between murder and manslaughter.

1.3 Intervention Design: Develops a customized intervention plan tailored to the specific perpetrator, demonstrating creativity and practicality.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for ability to assess and analyse violent cases with reactive and proactive aggression

Assessment Task

2. Reflective and case critique paper (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

2.1 Case Identification: Accurately identifies two real-world cases of school bullying and peer aggression involving reactive and proactive aggression.

2.2 Theoretical Application: Applies theoretical knowledge effectively, using empirical research to support detailed analyses of each case.

2.3 Self-Reflection: Engages in deep self-reflection, articulating how understanding the distinction between reactive and proactive aggression has influenced personal perspectives.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for capacity to apply the theoretical knowledge and skills in their profession under particular workplace

Assessment Task

3. Quiz (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

3.1 Comprehensive Understanding: Demonstrates a thorough understanding of reactive and proactive aggression, as well as the dynamics of aggressive and pure victims across various contexts, including school bullying, assaults, family violence, blackmail, manslaughter, and homicide.

3.2 Prevention and Intervention Planning: Exhibits the ability to plan effective prevention and intervention strategies to mitigate reactive and proactive aggression and peer victimization.

3.3 Educational and Policy Insight: Addresses and critically evaluates educational practices and policy changes relevant to aggression and victimization.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Good

(B+, B) Good knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Failure

(F) Insufficient knowledge in previous literature and scientific evidence-based studies in reactive and proactive aggression as well as aggressive and pure victimization

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Ecology of childhood and adolescence, pro-social development and deviance, childhood experience, behaviour disorders, emotional disturbance, developmental disabilities, children in distress, behaviour management and behaviour therapy, CBT, child-centred play therapy

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Swart, L. & Mellor, L. (2017). Homicide: A forensic psychology casebook. Florida: CRC Press.
2	Raine, A. (2013). The Anatomy of Violence: The biological roots of crime. New York: Pantheon/Random House.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Arsenio, W. F. (2010). Emotions aggression, and morality in children: Bridging development and psychopathology. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
2	Beauregard, E. & Martineau, M. (2017). The sexual murderer: Offender behavior and implications for practice. London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
3	Bartol A. M., & Bartol C. R. (2017). Criminal behaviour: A psychological approach (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
4	Cavadino P. (2002). Children who kill: An examination of the treatment of juveniles who kill in different European countries. Winchester: Waterside Press in association with the British Juvenile and Family Courts Society.
5	Coyne U. R. (2009). Homicide: Trends, causes and prevention. New York: Nova Science Publishers.
6	Crick, N. R., & Dodge K. A. (1994). A review and reformulation of social information processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. Psychological Bulletin, 115 74-101.
7	Crick, N. R., & Dodge K. A. (1996). Social information-processing mechanism in reactive and proactive aggression. Child Development, 67 993-1002.
8	Dodge K. A., & Coie J. D. (1987). Social-information processing factors in reactive and proactive aggression in children's peer groups. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 53 1146-1158.
9	Dodge K. A. (1991). The structure and function of proactive and reactive aggression. In Pepler D., Rubin K. (Eds.), The Development and Treatment of Childhood aggression. Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. [Library Call No.: RJ506.A35 D48]
10	Dodge K.A. (2002). Mediation, moderation, and mechanisms in how parenting affects children's aggressive behavior. In J. Borkowski (Eds.), Parenting and the child's world: Influences on academic intellectual, and social-emotional development (pp. 215-229). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. [Library Call No.: HQ755.8 .P379126 2002]
11	Dodge K. A., & Coie J. D. (1987). Social-information processing factors in reactive and proactive aggression in children's peer groups. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53 1146-1158.
12	Flowers, R. (2013). The dynamics of murder: Kill or be killed. Boca Raton FL: CRC Press.
13	Fung A. L. C. (2012). Group treatment of reactive aggressors by social workers in a Hong Kong school setting: A two-year longitudinal study adopting quantitative and qualitative approaches. British Journal of Social Work 42(8) 1533-1555.
14	Fung A. L. C. (2012). Intervention for aggressive victims of school bullying: A longitudinal mixed-methods study in Hong Kong. Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 53(4), 360-367.
15	Fung A. L. C. Gao, Y., & Raine, A. (2010). The utility of the child psychopathy construct in Hong Kong China. Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 39(1), 134-140.
16	Fung A. L. C., Gerstein, L. H., Chan J. Y. C., & Hurley E. (2013). Children's aggression, parenting styles, and distress for Hong Kong parents. Journal of Family Violence 28(5) 515-521.
17	Fung A. L. C., Gerstein, L. H., Chan, Y., & Hutchison, A. (2013). Cognitive- behavioral group therapy for Hong Kong students that engage in bullying. Revista de Cercetare si Interventie Sociala 42, 68-84.
18	Fung A. L. C. & Raine, A. (2012). Peer victimization as a risk factor for schizotypal personality in childhood and adolescence. Journal of Personality Disorder, 26 (3) 428-434.

19	Fung A. L. C., Raine, A. & Gao, Y. (2009). Differentiation between proactive and reactive aggression in age gender, and factor structure: A cross-section study of 11 to 15-year-old schoolchildren. <i>Journal of Adolescence</i> . 91(5). 473 - 479.
20	Heide, K. M. (1999). <i>Young killers: The challenge of juvenile homicide</i> . Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
21	Hubbard, J. A., Morrow, M. T., Romano, L. J., & McAuliffe M. D. (2010). The role of anger in children's reactive versus proactive aggression: review of findings, issues of measurement, and implications for intervention. In W. Arsenio & E. Lemerise (Eds.), <i>Emotions, Aggression, and Moral Development: Bridging development and psychopathology</i> (pp. 201-217). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [Library Call No.: BF713.E46 2010]
22	Prins H. A. (2016). <i>Offenders, deviants or patients?: An introduction to clinical criminology</i> (Fifth edition). Hove East Sussex; New York, NY: Routledge.
23	Raine, A., Dodge K., Loeber R., Gatzke - Kopp, L., Lynam D., Reynolds, C., ... & Liu, J. (2006). The reactive-proactive aggression questionnaire: Differential correlates of reactive and proactive aggression in adolescent boys. <i>Aggressive Behavior</i> , 32(2) 159-171.
24	Raine, A., Fung A. L. C. & Lam, B. Y. H. (2011). Peer victimization partially mediates the schizotypy – aggression relationship in children and adolescents. <i>Schizophrenia Bulletin</i> 37(5), 937-945.
25	Smith, M. D., Zahn, M. A. (1999). <i>Homicide: A sourcebook of social research</i> . Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
26	Vitaro F., & Brendgen M. (2005). Proactive and Reactive Aggression: A Developmental Perspective. In R. E. Tremblay W. W. Hartup & J. Archer (Eds.), <i>Developmental Origins of Aggression</i> (pp. 178-201). New York: Guilford Press.
27	Worth, R., & French, J. (2008). <i>Homicide (criminal investigations)</i> . New York: Chelsea House.
28	Wolman, B. B. (1999). <i>Antisocial behavior: Personality disorders from hostility to homicide</i> . Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books.
29	Tremblay R. E., & Archer, J. (2005). <i>Developmental origins of aggression</i> . New York: Guilford Press.
30	Yardley E. (2017). <i>Social media homicide confessions: Stories of killers and their victims</i> . Bristol, England: Policy Press.