

SS5400: APPLIED SOCIOLOGY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Applied Sociology

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

5400

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

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to

- engage students in the field and substance of applied sociology
- train students to apply sociological theories and methods to examine real social life issues
- strengthen students' understanding of how theories, concepts, and sociological research are central to social problem-solving, policymaking, and the skills required in seeking improvements to public or organizational policies or programs.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Demonstrate sociological imagination by juxtaposing common sense with sociological understandings;	20	x	x	
2	Apply sociological perspectives to critically analyze social issues and social behavior;	30	x	x	x
3	Apply appropriate methods and techniques to identify, investigate and actively seek solutions to social issues; and	30	x	x	x
4	Enhance students' understanding of the real world from a more critical, reflexive and sociologically-informed perspective.	20	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	LTA1: Lectures	To introduce sociological concept and theories, as well as to illustrate how sociological knowledge can be applied to improve public policies or to induce positive social changes.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	LTA2: Group Project	Students are required to do a group project on a social issue / problem / situation / phenomenon in Hong Kong or China. Each group should also submit a written report.	1, 2, 3, 4	

3	LTA3: Group Presentation	Each group will be given 15 minutes doing their presentation. It should involve brief background of the issue; critical analysis, and recommendations.	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	LTA4: Class Assignments (individual / group)	Assignments are provided to help students understand the applications of sociological theories and related concepts.	1, 2, 3	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	AT1: Group Presentation It is in the format of a PowerPoint presentation. Students have to form groups to present their issue within 15 minutes, followed by Q & A.	1, 2, 3, 4	15	Allow students to use AI to search related journal articles.	Yes
2	AT2: Group Report Each group, after the group presentation, should also submit a written report. The word limit of the report is 3000 words.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Allow students to use AI to search related journal articles.	Yes
3	AT3: Class assignments (Individual / Group) Students are required to participate in a wide variety of assignments, ranging from assigned readings, video viewing, and problem-solving exercises. Assignments are in the format of individual or group.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	Allow students to use AI to search related journal articles.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

65

Examination (%)

35

Examination Duration (Hours)

1.5

Additional Information for ATs

AT4: In-class test (35%)

Closed Book Examination

Students are required to attend an in-class test which consists of MCQs and short-essay typed questions testing on students' understanding of sociological concepts.

It does not allow use of GenAI.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

1. Organisation: Refers to format and presentation: logical structure, good use of headings where appropriate# effective presentation.
2. Originality: Refers to original thinking, creativity, innovative analysis
3. Analysis: Refers to the quality, clarity, and depth of the analytical work involved in addressing questions and issues
4. Research effort: Includes resourcefulness, effort, and diligence in the search for and presentation of suitable information
5. English writing: Grammar, spelling, sentence construction, etc.
6. Referencing: Refers to the use of an accurate referencing system, appropriate citations in the essay, and avoidance of plagiarism.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) An excellent paper# very good mastery of the ideas or concepts, with excellent or innovative analysis. A is on the edge of this category, but still very good

Good

(B+, B, B-) A solid paper with reasonably good analysis and use of information.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Documentation, analysis, writing, use of concepts, referencing, and effort are mostly adequate for a passing grade, but with enough flaws and shortcomings that it cannot be judged to be "good" or "very good" .

Marginal

(D) Barely a pass. Many serious flaws and shortcomings, but adequate effort and some research

Failure

(F) Does not demonstrate the minimum research effort and documentation# or substantial plagiarism

Assessment Task

2. Group presentation (15%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

1. Organisation: Refers to format and presentation: logical structure, good use of headings where appropriate# effective presentation.
2. Originality: Refers to original thinking, creativity, innovative analysis
3. Analysis: Refers to the quality, clarity, and depth of the analytical work involved in addressing questions and issues
4. Research effort: Includes resourcefulness, effort, and diligence in the search for and presentation of suitable information
5. Ability in communication: English proficiency

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) An excellent presentation# very good mastery of the ideas or concepts, with excellent or innovative analysis. A is on the edge of this category, but still very good

Good

(B+, B, B-) A solid presentation with reasonably good analysis and use of information.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Documentation, analysis, use of concepts, referencing, and effort are mostly adequate for a passing grade, but with enough flaws and shortcomings that it cannot be judged to be “good” or “very good” .

Marginal

(D) Barely a pass. Many serious flaws and shortcomings, but adequate effort and some research

Failure

(F) Does not demonstrate the minimum research effort and documentation

Assessment Task

3. Class assignments (Individual / Group) (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to apply relevant concepts and skills related to programme evaluation and design.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B, B-) Significant

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Moderate

Marginal

(D) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

4. In-class Quiz (35%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Scores of MCQ and essay-type questions obtained

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) 75 marks or above

Good

(B+, B, B-) 60 to 74 marks

Fair

(C+, C, C-) 45 to 59 marks

Marginal

(D) 40 to 44 marks

Failure

(F) Below 40 marks

Assessment Task

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

Criterion

1. Organisation: Refers to format and presentation: logical structure, good use of headings where appropriate# effective presentation.
2. Originality: Refers to original thinking, creativity, innovative analysis
3. Analysis: Refers to the quality, clarity, and depth of the analytical work involved in addressing questions and issues
4. Research effort: Includes resourcefulness, effort, and diligence in the search for and presentation of suitable information
5. English writing: Grammar, spelling, sentence construction, etc.
6. Referencing: Refers to the use of an accurate referencing system, appropriate citations in the essay, and avoidance of plagiarism.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate and apply various sociological concepts into the selected topic;
- Being able to show the understanding of theoretical concepts;
- Clear and systematic illustration of how to study and present the topic;
- Exact and fluent expression of original opinions;
- Creative, and insightful ideas.

Good

(B+, B) Some evidence of:

- Rich content, ability to integrate and apply various sociological concepts into the selected topic;
- Being able to show the understanding of theoretical concepts;
- Clear and systematic illustration of how to study and present the topic;
- Exact and fluent expression of original opinions;
- Creative, and insightful ideas.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Adequate content;
- Limited or irrelevant use of sociological concepts;
- Inadequate understanding of theoretical concepts;
- Loose organization;
- Sentence fluency and articulation is merely acceptable;
- Merely clear and systematic illustration of how to study and present the topic;
- Inadequate creative, insightful, and original ideas

Failure

(F)

- Vague and devoid of content, weak ability to integrate and apply various sociological concepts;
 - Not being able to show the understanding of theoretical concepts;
 - Loose organization;
 - Unsystematic expression of ideas;
 - Seriously insufficient/no reference;
 - Although expression is not clear, part of the idea can be identified; overuse of existing quotations and relevant concepts with no personal ideas;
 - Unclear and unsystematic illustration of how to study and present the topic.
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Assessment Task

2. Group presentation (15%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

1. Organisation: Refers to format and presentation: logical structure, good use of headings where appropriate# effective presentation.
2. Originality: Refers to original thinking, creativity, innovative analysis
3. Analysis: Refers to the quality, clarity, and depth of the analytical work involved in addressing questions and issues
4. Research effort: Includes resourcefulness, effort, and diligence in the search for and presentation of suitable information
5. Ability in communication: English proficiency

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the topic;
- Being able to show the understanding of theoretical and methodological concepts;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure;
- Insightful ideas and analysis of the topic;
- Superior presentation skills: fluent expression and appropriate diction, clear delivery of ideas, creative use of presentation methods, exact time-management.

Good

(B+, B) Some evidence of:

- Rich content, excellent grasp of the materials with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the topic;
- Being able to show the understanding of theoretical and methodological concepts;
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure;
- Insightful ideas and analysis of the topic;
- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, clear delivery of ideas, creative use of presentation methods, exact time-management.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Loose organization, merely acceptable identified content;
- Inadequate grasp of the relevant theories and concepts;
- Inadequate understanding of theoretical and methodological concepts;
- Simple and unilateral ideas, without clear explanation;
- Merely acceptable articulation and expression of ideas; merely acceptable presentation skills.

Failure

(F)

- Vague and devoid of content, weak ability to integrate and apply various sociological concepts;
- Not being able to show the understanding of theoretical concepts;

- Loose organization;
 - Unsystematic expression of ideas;
 - Seriously insufficient/no reference;
 - Although expression is not clear, part of the idea can be identified; overuse of existing quotations and relevant concepts with no personal ideas;
 - Unclear and unsystematic illustration of how to study and present the topic.
-

Assessment Task

3. Class assignments (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Ability to apply relevant concepts and skills related to programme evaluation and design.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B) Moderate

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Basic

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

4. In-class Quiz (35 %) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Scores of MCQ and essay-type questions obtained

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the ability to understand and describe the sociological knowledge and concepts in a variety of occupational settings.

Good

(B+, B) Good evidence for the ability to understand and describe sociological knowledge and concepts in a variety of occupational settings.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair evidence for the ability to understand and describe the sociological knowledge in a variety of occupational settings.

Failure

(F) Insufficient evidence for the ability to understand and describe the sociological knowledge and concepts in a variety of occupational settings.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Origin and development of Applied and Clinical Sociology; Understanding society, self and social interaction; The relationship between theory and practice; Intervention and problem solving in Applied Sociology; Developing Applied techniques; Sociology as applied I: Understanding organizations and the workplace; Sociology as applied II: Conflict resolution and mediation; Sociology as applied III: Community involvement.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Dasgupta, S. & Driskell, R. Ed. (2007) Discourse on Applied Sociology. UK: Anthem Press.
2	Bruhn J. G. & Rebach H. M. & (2007) Sociological practice : intervention and social change, 2nd Ed [electronic resource]. New York : Springer.
3	Macionis, J. J. (2018) Sociology 16th Ed. Global Ed.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Dentler, R. A. (2002) Practicing Sociology: Selected Fields. London: Praeger.
2	Du Bois, W. D. & Wright R. D. Ed. (2001) Applying Sociology : Making a Better World. Boston: Allen & Bacon.
3	Du Bois, W. D. & Wright R. D. Ed. (2007) Politics in the Human Interest : applying sociology in the real world. Lanham, MD : Lexington Books.
4	Fritz, J. M. (ed.) (2008) International Clinical Sociology. New York: Springer.
5	Fritz, J. M. & Rhéaume, J. Ed. (2014) Community Intervention: Clinical Sociology Perspectives, 1st Ed [online access]. New York: Imprint: Springer.
6	Hanemaayer , A. & Schneider, C. J. Ed. (2014) The Public Sociology Debate: Ethics and Engagement. Vancouver: UBC Press.
7	James, R. K. & Gilliland, B. E. (2017) Crisis Intervention Strategies, 8th Ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
8	Jeffries, V. Ed. (2009) Handbook of Public Sociology. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
9	Kendall, D. E. (2017) Sociology in Our Times: The Essentials, 11th Ed. Botons MA: Cengage Learning.
10	Langton, P. A. & D. A. Kammerer (2005) Practicing Sociology in the Community: A Student' s Guide. New Jersey : Pearson.
11	Loen-Guerrero, A. (2014) Social Problems: Community, Policy, and Social Action. California. : Pine Forge Press.
12	Macionis, J. J. (2013) Social Problems, 5th Ed. Boston : Pearson.
13	Neuman, L. W. (2014) Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Boston : Allyn & Bacon.
14	Price, J., Straus, R. A. & Breese, J. R. Ed. (2009) Doing Sociology: Case Studies in Sociological Practice [online access]. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books.
15	Rebach H. M. & Bruhn J. G. Ed. (2001) Handbook of Clinical Sociology, 2nd Ed. New York: Springer.
16	Robbins, S. P. & Judge, T. A. (2016) Organizational Behavior 17th Ed. Boston; Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
17	Steele, S. F. & J. Price. (2008) Applied Sociology : Terms, Topics, Tools, and Task, 2nd Ed. Canada : Thompson.
18	Straus, R. A. Ed. (2002) Using Sociology: an Introduction from the Applied and Clinical Perspectives, 3rd Ed. Lanham, MD : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
19	Thompson, W. E., Hickey, J. V. & Thompson, M. L. (2019) Society in Focus: An Introduction to Sociology, 9th Ed. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.