City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public and International Affairs
with effect from Semester A 2022/23

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Environmental Issues, Policy and Ethics
Course Code:	PIA 3206
Course Duration:	One Semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	B3
Proposed Area: *(for GE courses only)*	☐ Arts and Humanities ☐ Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations ☐ Science and Technology
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	SA/POL3206 Environmental Issues, Policy and Ethics
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	SA/POL3942 Environmental Policy and Ethics

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This course aims to examine the different perspectives and explanations regarding global environmental degradation and to analyse the relationship between economic growth, environmental justice and sustainable development. Besides, different theories of environmental ethics and their implications for public policy formulation in relation to the environment are be evaluated in this course. Through analysing different environmental issues and problems, and evaluate different policy options in response to these issues and problems, students' moral reasoning, and critical and creative thinking skills will be enhanced.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs[#]	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Identify major global environmental issues and problems, critically assess the different explanations regarding global environmental degradation, and construct explanations of their own..		√	√	
2.	Analyse the relationship between economic growth and sustainable development , evaluate the tension between promoting social utility and upholding social justice as the goals of environmental governance and produce solution to resolve the tension.		√	√	√
3.	Explain the major theoretical approaches to environmental ethics and construct independent assessment of their implications for environmental policy formulation		√	√	√
4.	Enumerate key environmental policy instruments and construct independent assessment their usefulness for addressing real life environmental issues and problems		√	√	√
5.	Acquire the skill to reason morally, critically and creatively, and recognize their ethical responsibility towards nature, the environment and their fellow human beings		√	√	
	** If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.*	100%			

[#] 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)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Seminar	These are organized thematically to enable students to - develop awareness of major environmental issues and problems and their impact on the future of both the planet earth and human lives - acquire knowledge of the theories, concepts and values essential for engaging in a rational debate regarding our relationship and our response to the environment - examine different policy options and evaluate their effectiveness for achieving the goal of sustainable development	√	√	√	√		3 hours per week
Readings	These include academic reading materials, newspaper clippings, government policy papers and information on relevant websites. Students have to do at least one of the related readings for each of the lectures, and to do all the essential readings for each of the tutorials to deepen and to reinforce their learning in the lectures	√	√	√	√	√	
Audio-Visual Materials	Relevant documentaries and films are used to cultivate students' affective learning and to create caring and empathy with the environment	√	√		√	√	
Essay-writing	Each student has to submit an individual essay of 1,500 words as a way to test their ability to integrate learning through relating theory to real life problems	√	√	√	√	√	

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5			
Continuous Assessment: _50_%								
Seminar attendance, discussion and participation	√	√	√	√	√	√	25%	
Individual essay and presentation	√	√	√	√	√	√	25%	
Examination 50____% (2 hours)								
** The weightings should add up to 100%.*							100%	

Note:

If a course has both coursework and examination components, students are required to pass BOTH the coursework assessment AND the examination before they can be awarded an overall passing grade of the course.

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Seminar attendance, discussion and participation	Ability to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics and to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Ability to present organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Presentation Skill and performance of collaboration among group members in the discussion.	Very good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Outstanding ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Very capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Very good presentation skill and very good collaboration among group members in the discussion.	Good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Strong ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Good presentation skill and good collaboration among group members in the discussion.	Adequate explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Some ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Adequately capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Adequate presentation skill and adequate collaboration among group members in the discussion.	Limited explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Limited ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Minimally capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Limited presentation skill and limited collaboration among group members in the discussion.	Little evidence of being able to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Weak ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Weakness in presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions. Little presentation skill and little collaboration among group members in the discussion.
2. Individual Essay	Ability to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics and to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Ability to present organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Very good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Outstanding ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Very capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Strong ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Adequate explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Some ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Adequately capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Limited explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Limited ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Minimally capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions	Little evidence of being able to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Weak ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Weakness in presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.

3.Final Examination	Ability to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics and to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Ability to present organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Very good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Outstanding ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Very capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Good explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Strong ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Adequate explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Some ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Adequately capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.	Limited explanation of key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Limited ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Minimally capable of presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions	Little evidence of being able to explain key concepts and theories in environmental ethics. Weak ability to identify key environmental issues, enumerate relevant policy instruments and evaluate their usefulness in resolving the issues from an ethical perspective. Weakness in presenting organized ideas and structured arguments to support conclusions.

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

1. Keyword Syllabus

Environmental crisis and economic growth; world poverty and environmental justice, sustainable development and economic inequality; social utility and distributional justice; balance between human and non-human interests; anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism; environmental planning and environmental impact assessment; command and control, economic measures, and market-based environmental policy measures; environmental impact assessment, air pollution control; sustainable waste management; renewable energy, genetically modified food

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	**What is the impact of Over Population, Technological Advancement, Economic Injustice on Sustainable Development?** Joe Walker, "The Human Dimension" in *Environmental Ethics.* London: Hodder & Stoughton. 2000, Chapter 4, pp.86-103 The World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, Chapter 2 Norton, Bryan, "Environmental Problems and Future Generations" in *The Environmental Ethics and Policy Book*, Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce (eds.) 2nd ed., Wadsworth Publishing company, 1998, pp.440-448 Garrett Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics", in *The Environmental Ethics & Policy Book*, Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce (eds.) 2nd ed., Wadsworth Publishing Company,1998, pp.393 – 398 Rolston III, Holmes, "Feeding People Versus Saving Nature", in *The Environmental Ethics & Policy Book*, Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce (eds.) 2nd ed., Wadsworth Publishing Company,1998, pp.409-420 Peter S. Wenz, "Overpopulation, Markets, and Human Rights" in *Environmental Ethics Today*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, Chapter 1, pp.19-36
2.	**Saving the planet** Garret Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, Vol. 162, No. 3859 (December 13, 1968): 1243-1248. (Journal, available on-line).

3.	**Anthropocentrism, and Oneness** "Images of Nature," in Lori Gruen and Dale Jamieson, eds., *Reflecting on Nature: Readings in Environmental Ethic*, (New York: Oxford University Press 1994): 1-25, 28-30. (**Hereafter *RON***). (Semi-closed Reserve). Val Plumwood, "Nature, Self, and Gender: Feminism, Environmental Philosophy, and the Critique of Rationalism," in *RON*, pp. 142-59. (Semi-closed Reserve). Film: *Giant pandas: the last refuge*
4.	**The Biophilia hypothesis** Edwin O. Wilson, *Biophilia*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984): 1-2, 83-101, 119-140. (Semi-closed Reserve).
5.	**Environmental Justice** Excerpts from: Robert D. Bullard, "Environmental Blackmail in Minority Communities." In Lori Gruen and Dale Jamieson, eds., *Reflecting on Nature: Readings in Environmental Philosophy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): 132-41. (On Reserve.) Environmental Justice Case Study: The Yucca Mountain High-Level Nuclear Waste Repository. Online: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yucca_Mountain Film: Excerpts from *Erin Brockovich*.
6.	**What is Sustainable Waste Management? How to evaluate Hong Kong's waste treatment policy?** Pong-wai Lai, Lai-yan Woo, Kim-che Lam, Wai-ying Lee, Tung Fung, "Siting and Community Response to Locally Unwanted Land Uses: A Literature Review", Research Monograph, April 2007, Chinese University of Hong Kong
7.	**What are the major energy issues and policy approaches to energy sustainability?** IEA. (2001) Toward a Sustainable Energy Future. International Energy Agency. Paris, France: OECD. Chapters 5 (Energy efficiency), 6 (Renewable energy), 7 (Sustainable transport), 8 (Climate change).

	WCED. (1987) Energy: Choices for Environment and Development, in Our Common Future. World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, Ch 7, pp. 168-205. Zhou, Y., Rengifo, C., Chen, P., & Hinze, J. (2011). Is China ready for its nuclear expansion? Energy Policy, 39(2), 771-781. doi: 10.1016/j.enpol.2010.10.051.

2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	**Is there an Environmental Crisis for the Planet Earth?** Walker, Joe, "Specific Environmental Issues" in *Environmental Ethics.* London: Hodder & Stoughton. 2000, Chapter 2, pp.27-44 Bailey, Ronald, "Debunking Green Myths,*" Reason* (February 2002), Vol. 33, Issue 9, pp. 58-60. Pimentel, David, "Skeptical of the Skeptical Environmentalist," *Skeptic*, Vol.9, no.2, 2002, p. 21. Video: Three Gorges: The Biggest Dam in the World
2.	**What is the impact of Over Population, Technological Advancement, Economic Injustice on Sustainable Development?** Paul R. Ehrlich and John P. Holdren, "Population Increase Causes Increased Environmental Damage", *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, Louis P. Projman (ed.), Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1994, pp.310-315 Barry Commoner, Michael Corr, and Paul J. Stamler, "Population in Itself Does Not Cause Increased Pollution" in *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, Louis P. Projman (ed.), Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1994, pp.315-323
3.	**The Biophilia hypothesis** Stephen R. Kellert, "The Biological Basis for Human Values of Nature," in Stephen R. Kellert and Edward O. Wilson, ed., *The Biophilia Hypothesis*, (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1993): 42-69. (Semi-closed Reserve). Judith H. Heerwagen and Gorden H. Orians, "Humans, Habitats and Aesthetics," in

	Stephen R. Kellert and Edward O. Wilson, ed., *The Biophilia Hypothesis*, (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1993): 138-172. (Semi-closed Reserve).
4.	**What is Sustainable Waste Management? How to evaluate Hong Kong's waste treatment policy?** Environmental Protection Department, 2012. *Sustainable Waste Management: Strengthening Waste Reduction: Is Waste Charging an Option?* (Consultation Document), from http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/msw_consult/file/MSW_con_doc_full_eng.pdf Ashok V. Shekdar, "Sustainable Solid Waste Management: An Integrated Approach for Asian Countries", *Waste Management*, 29 (2009), pp. 1438-1488 Tam, V., & Tam, C. (2006). Evaluations of existing waste recycling methods: a Hong Kong study. *Building and Environment, 41*, 1649-1660. Tammemagi, H. (1999). *The Waste Crisis: Landfills, Incinerators, and the Search for a Sustainable Future*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1-2, 4-5, 7, 12. Jane L. Price and Jeremy B. Joseph, "Demand Management – A Basis for Waste Policy: A Critical Review of the Applicability of the Waste Hierarchy in terms of Achieving Sustainable Waste Management", *Sustainable Development, 8, 96-105, 2000.* David C. Wilson, "Stick or Carrot?: The Use of Policy Measures to Move Waste Management up the Hierarchy", *Waste Management & Research,* 14, 385-398, 1996 (waste management hierarchy; different types of policy instruments). Environmental Protection Department, 2005. A Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste in Hong Kong, from http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/msw/ Watson, M. & Bulkeley, H. (2005). "Just Waste? Municipal Waste Management and the Politics of Environmental Justice", L*ocal Environment*, 10 (4): 411-426. (Principles of justice; from principles to implementation)
5.	**What are the core principles and procedures of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)? What are its major contributions and limitations as a tool for Sustainable Development?** John Glasson, Riki Therivel and Andrew Chadwick, "Introduction and Principles", in *Introduction to Environmental Impact Assessment: Principles and Procedures, Process,*

	Practice and Prospects, 2nd Edition, 1999, UCL Press Limited, USA, Chapter 1, pp.1-25 Planning Department, "Sustainable Development for the 21st Century", Downloadable at http://www.pland.gov.hk/p_study/comp_s/susdev/ex_summary/final_eng/index.htm Environmental Protection Dept, "The operation of Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance in Hong Kong: April 1998--December 2001", pp.8-67 Au, Elvis Wai-kwong, "Environmental Planning and Impact Assessment of Major Development Projects in Hong Kong", *Building Hong Kong : environmental considerations*, Wong Wah Sang and Chan Hon-wan (eds.), Hong Kong University Press, 2000, Chapter 11, pp257-271 Leverett, B, et al., "Case Study on the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO)", Idling Engine: Hong Kong's Environmental Policy in a Ten-year Stall (1997-2007), 2007, Civic Exchange, Chapter 10, pp131-145.
6.	**Animal Rights and Welfare** Peter Singer, "All Animals are Equal", Reprinted in Thomas A. Mappes and Jane S. Zembaty, *Social Ethics*: *Morality and Social Policy*, 6th edition, Boston, McGraw Hill, 2002, pp. 436-446. Tom Regan, "The Case for Animal Rights", Reprinted in Thomas A. Mappes and Jane S. Zembaty, *Social Ethics*: *Morality and Social Policy*, 6th edition, Boston, McGraw Hill, 2002, pp.446-450. James P. Sterba, "From Anthropocentrism to Nonanthropocentrism", in *Justice for Here and Now*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 125-150**)** Mary Anne Warren, "The moral status of nonhuman life", in James P. Sterba (ed.) *Social and Political Philosophy: Contemporary Perspectives*, (Routledge 1998), pp. 370-385.
7.	**The Role of Ethics in Environmental Policy Making: A Philosophical Reflection** Wolff, Jonathan "Introduction" and "Scientific Experiments on Animals", in *Ethics and Public Policy*: *A Philosophical Inquiry*, London: Routledge, 2011, Chs. 1 & 2. Pp. 1-36. Holland, Alan, "Sustainability", in *A Companion to Environmental Philosophy*, Dale Jamieson (ed.), Oxford: Blackwell, 2001, pp. 390-401

	Sherer, Donald, "The Ethics of Sustainable Resources", in *Environmental Ethics*: *Anthology*, Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III (eds.), Oxford: Blackwell, 2003, pp. 333-358 Norton, Bryan, "Environmental Problems and Future Generations" in *The Environmental Ethics and Policy Book*, Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce (eds.) 2nd ed., Wadsworth Publishing company, 1998, pp.440-448.