

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences
with effect from Semester A 2017/18**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Social Problems and Interventions
Course Code:	SS2024
Course Duration:	One Semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	B2
Proposed Area: <i>(for GE courses only)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Humanities <input type="checkbox"/> Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Precursors: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Equivalent Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
Exclusive Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course aims to: 1) introduce students to basic concepts and methods in sociology; 2) train students to use sociological perspectives and theories to understand selected social issues and social problems as they relate to socio-economic developments in societies, with special focus on Hong Kong; 3) enable students to apply sociological theories and methods to examine the social problems and identify solutions to these problems.

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.	recognise the basic and essential concepts and principles of sociological theories for the analysis of social problems and issues;	30%	✓	✓	
2.	apply sociological concepts, perspectives and analysis to the interpretation of social problems and issues;	30%	✓	✓	
3.	critically reflect and analyze social problems and issues within the context other than the imposition of take-it-for-granted or moral judgements on others' action; and	30%	✓	✓	
4.	appraise the social policies and innovatively identify practical solutions to tackle the social issues and problems.	10%			✓
		100%			

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 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	
TLA 1: Lecture	There will be weekly lectures, with topics concerning theories on social problems and social issues, prepared and presented by lecturer.	✓	✓	✓	✓	

TLA 2: Tutorial:	In each weekly lecture, approximately one hour will be reserved for tutorial discussion. The purpose of it is to give students to discuss the concepts, social issues and problems in depth.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
TLA 3: Student Presentation	Students are required to form in groups and pick up one social issue or problem as their topic. They need to select one or more relevant theoretical perspective(s) to analyse the issue. They are also required to give a short description and brief evaluation of the current policies adopted to tackle the problem.		✓	✓	✓	

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		
Continuous Assessment: 100%						
AT1: Term Paper	✓	✓	✓		50%	
AT2: Student Presentation		✓	✓	✓	30%	
AT3: Class Participation	✓	✓	✓	✓	20%	
Examination: 0% (duration: , if applicable)						
					100%	

* The weightings should add up to 100%.

AT1: Term Paper (50%)

Students are required to submit an academic paper on topics related to the subject matter. They have to apply the relevant sociological theories to analyse a social problem and to identify practical solutions for this problem. Max word length: 2,000.

AT2: Student Presentation (30%)

Students are required to form in groups and pick up one social issue or problem as their topic. They need to select one or more theoretical perspective to analyse the issue. They have to collect information from existing literature to substantiate their arguments. They are also required to give a short evaluation of the current policies adopted to tackle the problem.

AT3: Class participation (20%)

The students are required to participate in a wide variety of assignments, ranging from assigned readings, video viewing, group discussions, quiz and problem-solving activities.

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. <u>Term Paper</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present the ideas in logical manner - Use of proper references and evidences to illustrate the ideas - Identify a social problem - Apply a sociological theory to analyse the problem critically - Identify practical solution for the problem with reference to the existing sociological theory 	Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.	Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.	Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.	Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without repeating the course.	Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.
2. Student Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to deliver an effective presentation - Demonstrate the ability to pick up one social issue or problem as the topic. - Ability to select one or more relevant theoretical perspective(s) to analyse the issue. 	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching the marginal level

	- Able to give a short evaluation of the current policies adopted to tackle the problem					
3. <u>Class participation</u>	<p>- The students are required to be actively participate in a wide variety of assignments, ranging from assigned readings, video viewing, group discussions, quiz and problem-solving activities.</p> <p>- Discuss the issues with reference to the existing sociological theories</p>	Very active and contribute significant ideas in the lesson	Sometimes actively contribute the significant ideas in the lesson	Occasionally contribute ideas in the lesson	Rarely contribute any constructive ideas	Little evidence of participation
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Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Applied versus basic sociology; historical development of applied and clinical sociology; the relationship between theory and practice; functions of theory/model in applied sociology; roles of sociologists; issues of knowledge, objectivity and personal involvement; definition of social problem; sociological perspectives on social problems; social policy, social issues and social problems in Hong Kong; social welfare services related to the social problems introduced in the course.

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.	Macionis, J. J. (2013) <i>Social Problems</i> . New Jersey: Pearson
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2.2 Additional Readings

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

Supplementary Reading:	
1.	Baker, P.J. (1993). <i>Social Problems: A Critical Thinking Approach</i> . Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2.	Cohen, R., Kennedy, P. & Perrier, M. (2013) <i>Global Sociology</i> . Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
3.	Coleman, J. W. & Kerbo, H. R. (2003) <i>Social problems : a brief introduction, 2nd ed.</i> Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Prentice Hall.
4.	Feagin, J.R., Feagin, C.B. & Baker, D.V. (2006) <i>Social problems : a critical power-conflict perspective, 6th ed.</i> Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Prentice Hall.
5.	Finsterbusch, K. Ed. (2003) <i>Social problems 03/04</i> . Guilford, Conn. : McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.
6.	Giddens, A. (2014). <i>Introduction to Sociology</i> . New York: W.W. Norton.
7.	Heiner, R. (2013) <i>Social problems: an introduction to critical constructionism</i> . New York : Oxford University Press
8.	Kendall, D.E. (2013) <i>Social problems in a diverse society, 6th ed.</i> Boston: Pearson.
9.	Lopata, H.Z. & Levy, J.A. (eds) (2003) <i>Social problems across the life course</i> . Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield.
10.	Neubeck, K.J. & Neubeck, M.A. (1997) <i>Social problems : a critical approach, 4th ed.</i> New York : The McGraw-Hill Companies
11.	Nolan, P. & Lenski, G. (2011). <i>Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology</i> . Boulder, Co.: Paradigm Publisher.
12.	Rubington, E. & Weinberg, M.S. (eds) (2011). <i>The Study of Social Problems: Seven Perspectives</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.
13.	Rubington, E. & Weinberg, M.S. (eds). (2008). <i>Deviance : the interactionist perspective</i> . Boston : Allyn and Bacon.
14.	Sanderson, S.K. (1999). <i>Macrosociology: An Introduction to Human Societies</i> . New York: Longman.
15.	Sernau, S.R. (2012) <i>Global Problems: The Search for Equity, Peace, and Sustainability</i> . New Jersey: Pearson.
16.	Zastrow, C. (2000) <i>Social Problems: issues and solutions, 5th ed.</i> Belmont, CA : Wadsworth.