

GE2111: IMAGE OF THE CITY – LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Image of the City – Language, Culture and Society

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

2111

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 1 - Arts and Humanities

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

CLA2701 Image of the City

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course will offer an exploration of different cities in different regions of the world, and focus on the linguistic, cultural, social and historical aspects of these cities. It will introduce to the students images of cities in Europe, Asia, Americas and Africa. The course will bring together a variety of cross-cultural interpretations and academic disciplines: Sociolinguistics, History, Cultural Studies, Sociology and Anthropology. The adoption of an interdisciplinary approach aims at providing students with an opportunity to relate their education to the real life as well as to expand their theoretical framework, deepen their critical analysis and widen their intellectual horizons.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify and describe some major cities in the world , as well as some works related to each culture;			x	
2	Examine issues emerging from the meeting of reality and imagination generated by urban life;		x	x	
3	Communicate complex matters effectively, clearly, and concisely, combining theories, concepts, and analysis of examples in language, historical, social and cultural studies;		x	x	x
4	Critically reflect on cultural, social and language phenomena related to the development of cities in a global context, through a range of approaches, to develop better thinking skills;		x	x	x
5	Compare and interpret the parallels between cities in different parts of the world.			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	Weekly lectures	Students will engage with one city through a text or a film or other resources, as well as critical readings. In each lecture, students will gain knowledge about possible interpretations of the image of the city in different parts of the world.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
2	Small group discussions and in-class participation	Students will reflect, answer questions about and/or comment on the readings/ films/ content materials through a varied set of questions. They will also discuss the issues which stimulate their imaginative thinking.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Written reflections: Students will engage in individual reflective writing exercises. The two pieces of reflective writing (worth 15% each) will require students to reflect on content materials, outline the issues they encountered, give their interpretation of the image of the city and use imaginative and critical thinking. Each piece of writing is about 400-500 words.	2, 3, 4, 5	30	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the contents from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the written reflections and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes

2	Final Test: Students will be asked to sit a final test at the end of the course. This test will require them to clearly recall the information they have learned in class about various cities, and to apply various analytical frameworks they have learned to issues concerning the image of the city.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	This is a summative assessment task.	No
3	Video presentation: Students will be given an introduction to video presentation skills and techniques. They will work in groups (no more than 5 students in a group), choose a city (Hong Kong not included) and give a video presentation on the linguistic, cultural, social and historical issues of the city. The activity will enhance their research skills, their team working skills and the clarity and conciseness of their communication. The video is about 7-10 mins.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the contents from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the presentation and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes
4	Class Participation: Student participation will be assessed from their engagement in class activities.	2, 3, 4, 5	10	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, and edit language.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Reflective Writing

Criterion

Understanding of Course Content and Analysis

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Present in-depth analysis; Demonstrate deep understanding of the content materials.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Present the analysis coherently, and the analysis is correct; demonstrate a good understanding of the content materials

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Present the analysis not clearly enough; show limited understanding of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Marginal (D)

Present the analysis not clearly; show very little knowledge and understanding of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Failure (F)

Present the analysis in an incoherently way, show almost no knowledge of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Assessment Task

1. Reflective Writing

Criterion

Relevance of Concept(s) Applied

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Understand the response question and apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly; reflect and analyze linguistic, cultural, social and historical issues of the city/ cities, and relate them to other cross-cultural issues.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Understand the response question and apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly; relate the linguistic, cultural, social and historical issues to the image of the city/ cities clearly.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Do not fully understand the response question and apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly, show the ability to give a basic analysis of cultural issues.

Marginal (D)

Do not understand the response question and apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis, show an inability to name or explain the key issues related to the topic.

Failure (F)

Do not understand the response question and apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis.

Assessment Task

1. Reflective Writing

Criterion

Relating the Issue(s) to contexts

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Show the ability to relate the issues outlined to relevant contexts in a coherent manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues in a coherent manner.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues but not in a coherent manner.

Marginal (D)

Show an inability to relate the cities to other contexts.

Failure (F)

Show an inability to identify the image of the cities and fail to relate the city to other contexts.

Assessment Task

1. Reflective Writing

Criterion

Organization

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent organization

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good organization

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate organization

Marginal (D)

Poor organization

Failure (F)

Poor organization

Assessment Task

1. Reflective Writing

Criterion

Language Use

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Use clear and concise language to demonstrate one interpretation of a complex phenomenon; convey the meaning effectively with few grammatical mistakes.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Convey the meaning clearly, but with a few grammatical mistakes.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Use unclear language; convey the meaning not clearly, with random and systematic errors.

Marginal (D)

Use unclear language; convey the meaning not clearly, with random and systematic errors.

Failure (F)

Use poor language, convey the meaning not clearly, with a lot of random and systematic errors.

Assessment Task

2. Final test

Criterion

Understanding of Course Content & Analysis

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrate in-depth analysis; demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrate coherent and correct analyses; demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The analysis is not clear enough; shows limited knowledge and understanding of the cities, texts, and other content materials.

Marginal (D)

The analysis is not clear; shows very little knowledge and understanding of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Failure (F)

The analysis is presented in an incoherent way, shows almost no knowledge of the cities, texts and other content materials.

Assessment Task

2. Final test

Criterion

Relevance of Concept(s) Applied

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly; reflect and analyze linguistic, cultural, historical and social issues of the cities, and relate them to other cross-cultural issues.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly; relate the linguistic, historical, cultural, social and issues to the image of the cities.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Do not apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis correctly, show the ability to give a basic analysis of cultural issues.

Marginal (D)

Do not apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis, show an inability to name or explain the key issues related to the topic.

Failure (F)

Do not apply relevant concept(s) to the analysis.

Assessment Task

2. Final test

Criterion

Relating the Issue(s) to contexts

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Show a strong ability to compare issues across cities in an accurate and clear manner.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues in a coherent manner.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues but not in a coherent manner.

Marginal (D)

Show an inability to relate the cities to other contexts.

Failure (F)

Show an inability to identify the image of the cities and fail to relate the cities to other contexts.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Understanding of Course Content and Analysis

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Present in-depth analysis; demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the city, texts, films and content materials.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Present the analysis coherently, and the analyses are correct; demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the city, texts, films and content materials.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Present the analysis not clearly enough; show limited knowledge and understanding of the city, texts, films and content materials.

Marginal (D)

Present the analysis not clearly; show very little knowledge and understanding of the city, texts, films and content materials.

Failure (F)

Present the analysis in an incoherently way, show almost no knowledge of the city, texts, films and content materials.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Relevance of Concept(s) Applied

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Reflect and analyse cultural, social, historical and linguistic issues of the city to other cross-cultural issues.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Relate the cultural, social, historical and linguistic issues related to the image of the city clearly.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Show the ability to give a basic analysis of cultural issues.

Marginal (D)

Show an inability to name or explain the key issues related to the topic.

Failure (F)

Show an inability to identify the image of the city.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Relating the Issue(s) to contexts

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Show the strong ability to relate the issues outlined by the city, to the country, region and global contexts.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues in a coherent manner.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Show the ability to outline and examine some issues but not in a coherent manner.

Marginal (D)

Show an inability to relate the city to any other contexts.

Failure (F)

Fail to relate the city to other contexts.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Structure and Organization

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent organization and structure in video presentation.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good organization and structure in video presentation.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Fair organization and structure in video presentation.

Marginal (D)

Poor organization and structure in video presentation.

Failure (F)

Poor organization and structure in video presentation.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Presentation and Language

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Interpret a complex phenomenon and convey the meaning clearly, concisely and effectively using both visual and audio creativity.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Interpret a phenomenon and convey the meaning clearly.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Do not interpret a phenomenon and convey the meaning very clearly, with random and systematic errors.

Marginal (D)

Interpret a phenomenon with unclear language; convey the meaning not clearly, with random and systematic errors.

Failure (F)

Interpret a phenomenon with unclear language, convey the meaning not clearly, with a lot of random and systematic errors.

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

Use of External Link

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Use relevant external links with proper acknowledgment

Good (B+, B, B-)

Use external links with proper acknowledgment.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Use adequate external links with acknowledgment.

Marginal (D)

Use irrelevant external links, no acknowledgment.

Failure (F)

Use irrelevant external links, no acknowledgment

Assessment Task

3. Video Presentation

Criterion

References and Citations

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Acknowledge the sources of the video clips and pictures. Provide relevant citations and references with consistent style (e.g. APA or MLA).

Good (B+, B, B-)

Acknowledge the sources of the video clips and pictures. Provide citations and references with consistent style

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Acknowledge the sources of the video clips and pictures, Provide citations and references with consistent style

Marginal (D)

Acknowledge the sources of the video clips and pictures. Provide citations and references with inconsistent styles

Failure (F)

Acknowledge the sources of the video clips and pictures. Provide citations and references with inconsistent styles

Assessment Task

4. Class Participation

Criterion

Ability to complete class assignments and involvement in class activities

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Completion of class assignments with excellent results;
Very active participation in class activities.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Completion of class assignments with good results;
Active participation in class activities.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Completion of class assignments with average results;
Adequate participation in class activities.

Marginal (D)

Completion of class assignments with below average results;
Passive participation in class activities.

Failure (F)

Completion of class assignments with poor results;
Very passive participation in class activities.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

City. Image of the City. Urban narratives. Imagination. Modernism. Post-modernism. Representations of Identity. Cultural Studies. Colonialism. Post-colonialism. Western Culture. African Culture. American Culture. European Culture. Asian Culture. Nationality. Ethnicity. Globalization. Interdisciplinary. Cross-cultural comparison. Language in use, Bilingualism, Multilingualism, Language planning, History. Anthropology. Sociology. Popular Culture. Music. Critical inquiry.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Danesi, M. (2018). Of cigarettes, high heels, and other interesting things: An introduction to semiotics. Springer.
2	Pennycook, Alastair & Otsuji, Emi (2015). Metrolingualism: Language in the city. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York : Routledge.
3	Emden Christian, Keen Catherine & Midgley David (2006) (Eds). Imagining the city. Oxford: New York : Lang Peter.
4	Ember Melvin & Ember Carol (2002) (Eds.) Encyclopedia of urban cultures : Cities and cultures around the world. Danbury,Conn: Grolier.
5	Mac Giolla Chríost, Diarmait (2007). Language and the city. ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan.
6	Macionis, John J. and Parrillo Vincent N. (2013) Cities and urban life (sixth edition). New Surrey: Pearson.
7	Brooker Peter & Thacker Andrew. (2005) (Eds). Geographies of modernism: Literatures, cultures, spaces. Abingdon, Oxon ; New York : Routledge.
8	Thadani,D.A. (2010) (Ed.) The language of towns and cities. New York: Rizzoli.
9	Tollefson, J. W., & Pérez-Milans, M. (Eds.). (2018). The Oxford handbook of language policy and planning. Oxford University Press.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

3, 4, 5

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues

3, 4, 5

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

3, 4, 5

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

Written reflections: Students will engage in individual reflective writing exercises. The two pieces of reflective writing (worth 15% each) will require students to reflect on content materials and to use imaginative and critical thinking. Each piece of writing is about 400-500 words.