

SS4207: WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND OFFENDERS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Working with Young People and Offenders

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

4207

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

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

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English, supplemented by Chinese (Cantonese) in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The aims of the course are to describe and apply sociological and psychological theories in explaining youth problems and tackling problems of delinquency. It also aims to analyze the roles of social intervention and correctional services in preventing and treating young people and offenders.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Describe the characteristics of contemporary young people and statistics related to youth problems and delinquency.	20	x		
2	Differentiate the key themes and concepts in the development of psychological and sociological theories of young people and delinquency.	30		x	
3	Explain the assumptions and arguments of theories of youth problems and criminal behaviour.	20		x	
4	Apply knowledge and professional helping techniques for working with young people and offenders especially in a Chinese cultural context.	30			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	Lecture	There are lectures on theories of young people and delinquency. Students will gain basic concepts, working approaches, and issues related to youth and delinquents.	1, 2, 3, 4

2	Case Study and Discussion	There will be video shows and case studies on youth issues. Students will engage in small group discussion, complete case-study exercises or watch videos and participate in discussion and self-reflection.	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	Self-discovery learning and Out-of-classroom Visit	Students will take initiatives to arrange a self-discovery learning journey and engage in out-of-classroom activities. Students will explain principles adopted behind the service settings related to youth and offenders and grasp professional knowledge and skills from their own visits.	1, 3, 4	
4	Guest Lecture	Guest speakers will be invited to share their expert experiences from different fields.	1, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-class exercises and report back	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
2	Out of classroom visit and presentation	1, 3, 4	30	-	Yes
3	Final Paper	1, 2, 3, 4	50	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Small Group Discussion and Report Back

Criterion

Students participate in discussion and report back actively and are able to relate their presentation and arguments to subjects taught.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Extremely and strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Actively and highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Fairly and moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Seldom participate and just able.

Failure (F)

Not participate and not able.

Assessment Task

2. Reflection Report

Criterion

Students are able to reflect on what they have observed from the out-of-class room visit. They are able to clearly describe the functions of the services and identify strategies for advancement.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Just able.

Failure (F)

Not able.

Assessment Task

3. Final Paper

Criterion

Students are able to differentiate key concepts of psychological and apply theories of young people or delinquency in analyzing youth issues or delinquency.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strongly able.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Highly able.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderately able.

Marginal (D)

Just able.

Failure (F)

Not able.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Introduction: Concepts and definitions of child, adolescent, and youth. Understanding the development of concept of social adolescence. Adolescent behavior, society, and their relationships. The definition, nature and perception of crime and delinquency.

Theories of Young People and Delinquency: Examination of the psychological, sociological and radical perspectives on working with youth and delinquent. The use developmental and radical theories to explain the youth problems and delinquency in Hong Kong. Mixed and Integrated models will be examined.

The Contemporary Youth Problems in Hong Kong: Emotive consumption behaviors among youth. Pop and street culture. Smoking and drug-taking behavior, substance-abuse and dependence. Sex and AIDS. Idol Worshiping. School bullying behavior. Juvenile delinquency. Triad and gangs.

Care and Control: Solution to Youth Problems and Delinquency: Justice and Welfare ideologies. Theory of Reintegrative Shaming. Modes of responses to youth problems and delinquency. Forms of intervention and treatment: preventive, developmental, remedial and integrative measures. Services and policies for young people and offenders. Pre-court and Post-court victim-offender mediation. Restorative practices in schools.

Services for Young People and Offenders: What work and what's promising? Children and youth centre services. Youth integrated team. Probation services. Community support services scheme. Residential and correctional homes. After-care services. Measure alternatives to prosecution.

Working Approaches and Practical Skills: Specific intervention approaches and skills such as empowering practices, solution-focused, transaction analysis, and motivational interviewing approaches and skills.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Pickford, J., Dugmore, P., & Angus, S. (2012). Youth justice and social work (2nd ed.). London: Sage/Learning Matters
2	Geldard, K. (Ed.). (2009). Practical interventions for young people at risk. London: SAGE.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Adorjan, M., & Chui, W. H. (2014). Responding to youth crime in Hong Kong: Penal elitism, legitimacy and citizenship. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
2	Briggs, S. (2008). Working with adolescents and young adults: A contemporary psychodynamic approach (2nd ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
3	Brunelle, N., Cousineau, M., & Brochu, S. (2005). Juvenile drug use and delinquency: Youths' accounts of their trajectories. Substance Use & Misuse, 40, 721-734.
4	Burnett, R., & Roberts, C. (Eds.). (2004). What works in probation and youth justice: Developing evidence-based practice. Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.
5	Case, S., & Haines, K. (2009). Understanding youth offending: Risk factor research, policy and practice. Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.
6	Chui, W. H., & Chan, H. C. (2011). Social bonds and male delinquency while on Probation: An exploratory test in Hong Kong. Children and Youth Services Review, 33, 2329-2334.
7	Chui, W. H., & Chan, H. C. (2014). Juvenile offenders' perceptions of probation officers as social workers in Hong Kong. Journal of Social Work, 14, 398-418.

8	Dornbusch, S. M. (1989). The sociology of adolescence. <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> , 15, 233-259.
9	Farrington, D. P. (1990). Implications of criminal career research for the prevention offending. <i>Journal of Adolescence</i> , 13, 93-113.
10	Klein, H. (1990). Adolescence, youth, and young adulthood: Rethinking current conceptualizations of life stage. <i>Youth & Society</i> , 21(4), 446-471.
11	Liu, E. S. C., Holosko, M. J., & Lo, T. W. (Eds.). (2009). <i>Youth empowerment and volunteerism: Principles, policies and practices</i> . Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
12	Lo, T. W., Wong, D. S. W., & Maxwell, G. (2006). Community support and diversionary measures for juvenile offenders in Hong Kong: Old legacy, new age. <i>Asian Journal of Criminology</i> , 1, 9-20.
13	Poon, K., & Ho, C. S. (2014). Contrasting deficits on executive functions in Chinese delinquent adolescents with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder symptoms and/or reading disability. <i>Research in Developmental Disabilities</i> , 35(11), 3046-3056.
14	Smith, R. (2008). <i>Social work with young people</i> . Cambridge: Polity Press.
15	Shek, D. T. L., Sun, R. C. F., & Merrick, J. (Eds.). (2013). <i>Positive youth development: Theory, research and application</i> . New York: Nova.
16	Siegel L. J., & Welsh B. C. (2014). <i>Juvenile delinquency: Theory, practice, and law</i> . USA: Cengage Learning.
17	Tam, H. L. (2011). Delinquent behaviour as a kind of body politics against adult regulations – young people’ s discourses in Hong Kong. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> , 33(6), 878-887.
18	Wong, D. S. W. (2005). A study of children’ s shoplifting behavior: Implications to preventive measures. <i>International Journal of Adolescence and Youth</i> , 12: 49-68.
19	Wong, D. S. W., Lok, P. P., Lo, T. W., & Ma, S. K. (2008). School bullying among Hong Kong Chinese primary school children. <i>Youth and Society</i> , 40(1): 35-54.
20	Wong, D. S. W., Chan, H. C. O., & Cheng, C. H. K. (2014). Cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among adolescents in Hong Kong. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> , 36(1), 133-140.