

GE1204: LIVING WITH THE UNEXPECTED AND UNKNOWN IN MODERN SOCIETY

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Living with the Unexpected and Unknown in Modern Society

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

1204

Academic Unit

Accountancy (AC)

College/School

College of Business (CB)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

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

GE Area (Primary)

Area 2 - Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

From a practical utilitarian perspective, this course aims to equip students with an understanding of risks faced in modern society emanating from the interrelationship among humans, and between humans and their natural (physical), biological, technological, behavioral and financial environments. It seeks to develop students' ability to assess risk from multiple perspectives including economics, sociology, psychology, engineering, law, political science, and geography in a global context. Building on this understanding of risk, the course introduces students to the concept and process of risk management, which helps develop their ability to deal with risks both known and unknown. From a theoretical perspective, the course introduces students to various theoretical positions in risk literature and helps develop their ability to engage in debates of major risk management doctrines and issues in modern society, both verbally and in written form, with the appropriate supporting reasons and analyses, individually and in a team environment.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Explain the concepts of risk and risk management in modern society from the perspective of social science and economics.		x	x	
2	Discuss the psychological and behavioural attributes that influence one's subjective perception of risk and derail human's rational behaviour (e.g., risk aversion, sunk cost fallacy, etc.)		x	x	
3	Describe risk and risk management strategies at the individual, firm, society, and global level and apply risk management tools covered in class to real-life problems.		x	x	
4	Explain the complexities of and controversies in risk management practices in modern society and why there is no one-size-fits-all situations.		x	x	
5	Communicate your ideas and insights verbally and in written form.		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	Interactive Seminar*	Students will engage in lecture activities about basic concepts of risk and risk management tools, apply their knowledge to real-life problems, and communicate their ideas with other students in class.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3 hours
2	Weekly in-class exercises and group discussions with mini group presentations at end*	Students will participate in group discussions and/or debates on assigned topics.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1.5 hours (part of LTA1)
3	Guest Seminars*	Students will participate in seminar presentations by guest speakers (CB faculty or practitioners) on special topics of risk management.	1, 3	1 – 2 hours (part of LTA1)
4	Online discussions*	Students will participate in online discussions of various topics covered in class to deepen their understanding. Participation in these activities will count towards the total participation assessment.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	No limit

Additional Information for LTAs

*DEC element

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Individual written report*: Students are required to read the assigned article and answer 4-5 questions.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	Students are encouraged to use GenAI tools in any way that supports their learning and coursework.	Yes

2	Group case presentation*: Students are required to conduct group projects to apply the various concepts of risk and risk management tools covered in class.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	Students are encouraged to incorporate GenAI tools when preparing and delivering their presentations. They may also choose to reflect on their experience using GenAI during the presentation, including any challenges encountered—such as overly generic or inaccurate outputs.	Yes
3	Participation: Students are required to participate in an in-class discussion.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	Students who effectively leverage GenAI to uncover particularly insightful information are encouraged to share their prompts during in-class discussions, which will positively contribute to their participation score.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

60

Examination (%)

40

Examination Duration (Hours)

2

Additional Information for ATs

*DEC element Final Examination: Students are required to take a final examination to evaluate their understanding of main concepts covered in class as well as their ability to apply knowledge related to the topics covered in class. Students are required to pass both coursework and examination components to guarantee to pass the course. Failing either component may lead to failure in the course.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Individual written report

Criterion

Students are required to answer 4-5 questions related to the assigned article. To get good marks, students should thoroughly understand the article and answer the questions based on their understanding of the article and the topics covered in class.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Group case presentation

Criterion

Students will be randomly divided into smaller groups (3-4) in the first week and give a 30-minute group presentation on the assigned topic. To get good marks, students are expected to show an in-depth understanding of the topic, give a real-world example or their own interpretation, lead a discussion section, and address questions from other students during the discussion section. Every group member must equally participate in the presentation.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Participation

Criterion

Participation comprises of attendance, in-class discussion/question, and participation via Canvas. Students are expected to actively participate in an in-class discussion at least three times during the semester by asking thoughtful questions or giving insightful comments. Further, students can also participate by asking questions and giving comments via Canvas. To earn participation points, comments or questions must be insightful and closely related to the course content.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Assessment Task

Final examination (open book)

Criterion

The final exam comprises of 20-30 multiple choice questions and 8-10 essay questions. To get good marks, students should fully understand the topics covered in class and apply their in-depth understanding of the course content to a real-world problem.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Below marginal levels

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

1. Understanding and Categorizing Risks in modern Society
2. Theoretical positions in Risk Literature
3. Risk management process – Living with the unexpected and unknown
4. Individual Risk (Health)
5. Society Risk (Social Welfare, Pandemic)
6. Global Risk (Risk of Terrorism, Environmental Risk)
7. Risks faced by Business
8. Risk Management Tools
9. Debates in Risk Management

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	(CityU Publishing discontinued course pack production service in Summer 2016). Book chapter from the following two text books will be assigned as Weekly readings. (1) Risk and Society, David Denney, London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 2005. (2) Smart Risk, Andrew Holmes, Capstone (Wiley), 2004. Specific chapters from the following book (to be uploaded on Canvas) would be assigned for one of the sessions. Accident and Design: Contemporary Debates in Risk Management, Christopher Hood & David K.C. Jones, London; Bristol, Pa.: UCL Press, 1996.
2	Canvas site for the course.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Against The Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk, Peter L. Bernstein, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996.
2	How Safe is Safe Enough?: Leadership, Safety, and Risk Management, Gregory Alston, Aldershot, Hampshire ; Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2003.
3	Mastering Risk, Volume 1: Concepts, James Pickford, Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2001.

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

1, 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

1

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

3, 4

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

5

PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills

5

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

5

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

3

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

3, 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

Individual written report.