

PIA3600: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Experiential Learning for Public Affairs

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

3600

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

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

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

SA3600 Independent Studies for Policy Studies and Administration /POL3600 Independent Studies for Policy Studies and Administration /POL3600 Experiential Learning for Public Affairs

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to grant students the opportunity to explore some interesting aspects of public affairs in greater depth. Based on their various learning experiences from classes, internships, exchange studies, studentships, and researches, students study a substantive area of interest that falls within the broad subject of policy studies and administration. In the process of researching, students will develop a broader and discover deeper knowledge of their substantive area throughout the semester. This course asks students to do research about competency-based learning, the competency demand of future works in the 21st century, and the implications for university education.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify an interesting aspect of public affairs on which to undertake a substantial piece of individual research based on their various learning experiences		x		
2	Think and debate critically on a focused subject area of the course		x	x	
3	Define the scope and provide a rationale for the specific focus of their research paper		x	x	
4	Discover and critically analyse, synthesize and evaluate appropriate knowledge and theories relating to their topic			x	x
5	Present the analysis and conclusions of their research in a written paper				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	Literature review	Supervised individual students will review the relevant literature on the research topic, provide a summary or summaries of the readings, and discuss the implications and insights for the research question(s) with their supervisor.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	An average of 2-3 hours of reading per week

2	Supervision	Each student will be allocated a supervisor from the academic staff to each student. Each student must discuss with his or her supervisor the most appropriate means to accomplish a research project. We strongly encourage students to discuss the development of their questions and arguments with their supervisors. They will prove invaluable in designing the study as well as providing feedback and insights into the research process. Each student will meet periodically with his or her supervisor throughout the semester. Students and their supervisors will arrange for times that accommodate both of their schedules.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Meeting hours and specific meeting schedule to be arranged between the supervisors and individual students. A total 9.75 hours of meetings with individual students per semester is required, including the Summer Semester.
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3	Final Paper	A final paper will serve as the culmination of the student's research, providing the most detailed and full analysis of the chosen subject. The paper must address one or more research question(s) or policy challenge(s), provide supporting arguments, and a detailed analysis of the relevant materials. The paper requires students to develop their individual insights and understanding of their chosen interest. In writing the paper, students must employ critical thinking and analytical reasoning to expand on and enrich their ideas. We expect students to present coherent and well-organized arguments on their chosen topics. The final paper will be 20 to 25 pages in length, double spaced. The paper will be due at the end of the semester.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Literature review report(s)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	No
2	Meetings with supervisor(s) - students are encouraged to maintain well-prepared and regular consultations with their supervisor(s). Supervisor(s) will assess in terms of students' preparation and intellectual growth and learning.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	Students may use AI in preparation for meetings.	Yes

3	Final Paper - The final paper, which may be composed of different sections and sub-topic analyses, will be marked by the supervisor(s).	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	50	-	No
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Literature Review

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Thorough understanding of the findings or arguments of the key literature related to the subject. Clear evidence and well-organized presentation of the literature. Ability to offer critical assessment of the past findings and original thinking of the subject based on the readings. Excellent writing and communication skills in presenting the review.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Fairly good understanding of the findings or arguments of the key literature related to the subject. Clear evidence and well-organized presentation of the literature. Some ability to offer critical assessment of the past findings and original thinking of the subject based on the readings. Fair writing and communication skills in presenting the review.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Rudimentary understanding of the findings or arguments of the key literature related to the subject. Acceptable presentation of the literature. Weak ability to offer critical assessment of the past findings and original thinking of the subject based on the readings. Weak writing and communication skills in presenting the review.

Marginal (D)

Poor understanding of the findings or arguments of the key literature related to the subject. Very weak presentation of the literature. No critical assessment of the past findings and original thinking of the subject based on the readings. Poor writing and communication skills in presenting the review.

Failure (F)

No evidence to show understanding of the findings or arguments of the key literature related to the subject. Unacceptable presentation of the literature. No critical assessment of the past findings and original thinking of the subject based on the readings. Unacceptable writing and communication skills in presenting the review.

Assessment Task

Meeting with Supervisor

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Regular attendance of scheduled meetings. Clear evidence of preparation before the meetings and excellent accomplishment of all assignments. Professional and responsive communications.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Regular attendance of scheduled meetings. Fairly clear evidence of preparation before the meetings and accomplishment of all assignments. Somewhat professional and responsive communications with some room for improvement.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Acceptable attendance of scheduled meetings with some unexcused absences. Acceptable evidence of preparation before the meetings and accomplishment of all assignments with room for improvement. Not highly professional and responsive communications.

Marginal (D)

Poor attendance of scheduled meetings with a number of unexcused absences. Poor evidence of preparation before the meetings and poor accomplishment of assignments with lots of room for improvement. Clear evidence of unprofessional and non-responsive communications.

Failure (F)

Very poor attendance of scheduled meetings with many of unexcused absences. No clear evidence of preparation before the meetings and frequent failures in accomplishing the assignments. Frequent unprofessional and non-responsive communications.

Assessment Task

Final Paper

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High standard of knowledge of topic or issue being addressed. Clear evidence of innovative and original thinking. Strong analytical skills. Excellent research, writing and communication skills.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Fairly good knowledge of the topic or issue being addressed. Evidence of good analytical skills and some original thinking. Ability to identify key challenges. Good research, writing and communication skills.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Rudimentary knowledge of topic or issue being addressed. Weak analytical skills. Basic research, writing and communication skills. Little evidence of critical thinking or innovative ideas

Marginal (D)

Poor understanding of topic or issue being addressed. Very little analysis. Weak research, writing and communication skills.

Failure (F)

Almost no evident knowledge of topic or issue being addressed. No evident analysis. Inadequate research, writing and communication skills.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Supervised individual research paper, literature review, central thesis, supporting arguments, research and writing.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Pfund, G. N., Bono, T. J., & Hill, P. L. (2020). A higher goal during higher education: The power of purpose in life during university. <i>Translational Issues in Psychological Science</i> , 6(2), 97-106. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tps0000231

2	Miller, S. (2019). Whither the University? Universities of Technology and the Problem of Institutional Purpose. <i>Sci Eng Ethics</i> 25, 1679–1698. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-019-00147-7
3	OECD (2018). <i>The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030</i> . Paris: OECD.
4	Kautz, T. et al. (2014). <i>Fostering and Measuring Skills: Improving Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills to Promote Lifetime Success</i> . Report No. 110. Paris: OECD.
5	Cheng, K.M., Jackson, L., and Lee, W.O (2017). <i>Advancing 21st Century Competencies in Hong Kong</i> . Center for Global Education, the Asia Society.
6	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Federal Government. Program Evaluation Framework Checklist for Step 2 [The design and use of a logic model] https://www.cdc.gov/eval/steps/step2/index.htm
7	OECD (2020). <i>Technical Report: Curriculum Analysis of the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030</i> . Paris: OECD.
8	Forbes, Moira. (2020). What I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Starting College. https://www.forbes.com/sites/moiraforbes/2016/08/10/what-i-wish-someone-had-told-me-before-starting-college

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Turabian, Kate L (2018) <i>A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations</i> , 9th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2	Giltrow, Janet (2002) 3rd ed. <i>Academic writing: writing and reading in the disciplines</i> . Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press.
3	Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald (2016) <i>The Craft of Research</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.