

**United College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong**  
**General Education Course**  
**GEUC 2102B PUBLIC AFFAIRS: PARTICIPATION AND REFLECTION**  
**1st Term, 2021/22**

Course Lecturer: Professor Annie TAM  
Data Science and Policy Studies Programme (DSPS)  
Faculty of Social Science

Office: c/o Data Science and Policy Studies Programme

Tel. No. : TBA

Class Time and Venue: Tuesday afternoons (3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.);  
28 September; 5 October; 16 November 2021  
C5, G/F, T C Cheng Building, United College  
Plus a compulsory experiential learning activity outside classroom between mid-October and early November 2021

**Course Overview:**

This course aims to groom each of the students to become a responsible policy leader and an effective change agent in society through enhancing social awareness and social problem solving capacities and through understanding the power and potential of innovation and technology. This course should help students to develop a full set of capacities including (1) awareness towards important public issues and social affairs; (2) ability to understand the policy connection, impact, and implications of those issues and affairs; (3) acumen in forming their opinions and suggestions based on well-articulated arguments and empirical evidence; and (4) faculty to understand how policy and social changes can be made, particularly through innovation and new technology, for making a positive difference in society. The course will emphasize the integration between theory and practice, with core and controversial issues cutting across teaching, discussion, observation and reflection.

As society and policies have been becoming increasingly complex, there is no one best way to resolve social problems. The course therefore will focus on two major dimensions: (1) the first dimension concerns the role of government in public affairs and its interaction with society, and (2) the second dimension concerns the new opportunities made possible by innovation and new technology related to data science for improving human welfare. There is no question that in recent years innovation and new technology such as AI and Big Data have induced enhanced productivity and created many challenges and dilemmas in different societies, including Hong Kong, and those in the Mainland China and the East Asia region. The course will discuss the concepts and theories of the policymaking and the interaction between policymakers and major stakeholders in shaping the outcomes and impacts as seen in society. It will also examine how innovation and technology has been or will be transforming the traditional relationships between policy and society, thus opening up new opportunities for change and progress.

Apart from classroom teaching and theoretical discussion, there will be interactive class exercises (case studies and role playing). Furthermore, there will be field trips / visits to various organizations and probably guest speakers. Students will therefore have opportunities to experience their own “seeing is believing” and directly exchange ideas and experiences with government officials, public leaders, and entrepreneurs, etc.

(Remark: This Course is not for students majoring in Government and Public Administration)

Grade Descriptors:

<b>P</b>	All learning outcomes/assessment criteria have been met. The work demonstrates most or all the following characteristics in relation to those expected at the given level of study within the discipline: 1. Adequate to good understanding and exploration 2. No significant inaccuracies, misunderstandings or errors 3. The specifications for the assessment task, including word limit/time limit where appropriate, have been adhered to 4. The outside classroom activities are well organized, coherent and the standard presentation, including referencing where appropriate, is up to standard 5. Appropriate contextualization, including relevant theory / literature / artefacts /performance 6. Evidence of quality analysis, synthesis, reflection and critical appraisal
<b>F</b>	One or more key learning outcome/assessment criterion/criteria has/have not been met. The work fails to meet the requirements in relation to those expected at the given level of study within the discipline, exemplified by any of the followings: 1. Poor understanding and exploration of ideas 2. Some significant inaccuracies, misunderstandings or errors 3. Not participating in required classroom activities, including group presentations 4. Not participating in required outside classroom activities, including service projects or visit to organizations 5. No evidence of analysis, synthesis, reflection and critical appraisal 6. Insufficient attention paid to some of the assessment criteria and some significant aberrations from the specifications for the assessment task

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes:**

This course will nurture students to become responsible policy leaders and effective change agents, with focus on developing and enhancing their capacities and skills as follows:

- 1.) Throughout the course students will learn how to master the basic concepts in public policy and apply them to analyse real-world problems.
- 2.) By taking this course, students will familiarize with a wide range of major problems and issues besetting both citizens in Hong Kong and citizens in the global community. Students will learn the skill to articulate and solve the problems from the perspective of policy analysts or policy leaders.
- 3.) The emergence of high technologies related to data science such as AI and Big Data have led to many innovations and open up new possibilities for the human future. By taking this course, students will learn how technology and innovation interplay with policies and develop innovative solutions to make a positive difference in society.
- 4.) This course will help students develop their skills in articulating and communicating complicated ideas and analytical results effectively in both verbal and written formats. Different learning formats will be used such as face-to-face interaction with policy leaders and entrepreneurs, a round of presentation and a series of interactive class exercises.

**Course Schedule and Arrangements:**

**Week One. Policy and Society: A Conceptual Framework**

[28 September 2021]

This lecture will introduce the concepts and theories of the policymaking, and analyze the interaction between policymakers and major stakeholders in shaping the outcomes and impacts as seen in society. Theories of policy analysis and policy advocacy will also be discussed to nurture within students a perspective of how change and progress can be made possible.

## **Week Two. Making Change through Innovation and Technology: Theory and Practice**

[5 October 2021]

This lecture will provide a general overview of how change in policy and society is possible as the two interact and co-evolve. New opportunities of social and policy change made possible by innovation and new technologies will also be discussed. Both theory and practice, including case studies, will be covered. Guest speakers may be invited for sharing their views with students.

### **Visit / Fieldtrip** (12 October to 10 November 2021)

List of organizations for visit (to be confirmed after discussion with students)

#### Categories included:

1. Government Organisations and Think Tanks, e.g. Planning Department Exhibition Centre at City Hall
2. High-Technology and Innovation Organizations / Companies, e.g. Science Park or Cyberport
3. Non-Governmental Organisations, e.g. New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association; Tung Wah Group of Hospitals; or Sisters of Good Shepherd Marycove Centre (Girls Home). Students may be able to talk to the CEOs of some of these organisations.
4. Urban Renewal Authority, e.g. Wing Lee Street project (the project scope of which was changed after the film Echoes of Rainbow 歲月神偷).
5. Hong Kong Housing Society (the second largest public housing provider in Hong Kong), e.g. housing for elderly and care services for elderly projects at Tanner Hill. The Tanner Hill project is a unique elderly housing project in Hong Kong.
6. Arts, Culture and Green Organisations. e.g. Xiqu Centre or T- Park
7. Community Organisations, e.g. Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS). Students may focus on one or two HKCSS projects.
8. Social enterprises, e.g. visit to Cafe 330 at CUHK or farmfresh 330 at Admiralty Centre. Students may learn about taking 330 breaks (through mindfulness exercises and coffee making, etc.) and even try direct sales.
9. Field trips, e.g. New Life Farm. Students may experience organic farming and even do some volunteering work on the site.
10. Others: students may suggest other visits (e.g. visits to MTRC social service projects or corporate social responsibility projects of private companies) and the Lecturer will try to arrange for them. With prior consent of the Lecturer, students may also arrange their own visits / field trips.

## **Week Three. Group presentation and discussion**

[16 November 2021]

Students will be free to form groups to conduct a project. The group size can vary. Students are advised to consult the Lecturer in advance. Each group is required to choose an organization from the list for visit / field trip or interview a person from that organization. Each group should analyze a policy issue of its choice and prepare an outline with clear objectives to be achieved from the interview / visit. Each group will present the findings in class (refer to the Assessment Section).

#### **Language:**

English

#### **Assessment:**

##### **Class attendance and discussion:**

Students will be required to attend all the lectures, the visit, and the presentation. They are also expected to actively participate in class exercises and exchange ideas with guest speaker (if any).

##### **Group presentation:**

Six to seven students should form a group and present their group presentation, which would meet the following requirements. (1) Each group of students should identify a policy issue for the project; (2) Students must demonstrate their ability to articulate the intricacies of the policy issue; (3) Students should be able to apply the concepts, theories, and knowhow learnt from the course; and (4) Students should present their own opinions and recommendations for achieving change and desirable outcomes. These opinions and recommendations should be supported by facts and figures. It is important to note that the content of opinions by itself would not affect the grading.

**Interview outline:**

Before the visit / field trip or interview, each group is expected to draft an outline which should include a general introduction of the background of the interviewee and/or organization and also a list of questions that students will ask during the interview or visit / field trip. The lecturer will help students to finalize the outline.

**Self-reflection report:**

At the end of the course, each student will submit a 500-word (in English) self-reflection report. In the report, the student is expected to reflect on what he/she has learnt from the course, inside and outside the classroom. Student should also reflect on the role he/she may play in contributing to the development of society in general, on the problems he/she deems as important in society, and on how the experience and knowledge learnt from this course may foster his/her intellectual and professional growth. The performance of student will not be judged on his/her opinions. Rather, the student will be assessed on his/her ability to integrate the theories and knowhow covered in the course.

**Feedback for Evaluation:**

1. Interaction and communication with Lecturer and students;
2. Participation in classes and visits;
3. Group presentation and sharing with classmates;
4. Self-reflection report; and
5. Course and teaching evaluation form.

**Suggested Readings**

Required Readings:

To be assigned

Optional Readings:

To be assigned

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.