

# THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

## Course Outline

### Part I

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Programme Title</b>       | : Undergraduate Programmes            |
| <b>Programme QF Level</b>    | : 5                                   |
| <b>Course Title</b>          | : Social Theory for Critical Thinking |
| <b>Course Code</b>           | : SSC2253                             |
| <b>Department</b>            | : Social Sciences                     |
| <b>Credit Points</b>         | : 3                                   |
| <b>Contact Hours</b>         | : 39                                  |
| <b>Pre-requisite(s)</b>      | : NIL                                 |
| <b>Medium of Instruction</b> | : English                             |
| <b>Course Level</b>          | : 2                                   |

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### Part II

The University's Graduate Attributes and seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs) represent the attributes of ideal EdUHK graduates and their expected qualities respectively. Learning outcomes work coherently at the University (GILOs), programme (Programme Intended Learning Outcomes) and course (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) levels to achieve the goal of nurturing students with important graduate attributes.

In gist, the Graduate Attributes for Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate and Research Postgraduate students consist of the following three domains (i.e. in short "PEER & I"):

- Professional Excellence;
- Ethical Responsibility; &
- Innovation.

The descriptors under these three domains are different for the three groups of students in order to reflect the respective level of Graduate Attributes.

The seven GILOs are:

1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Creative Thinking Skills
- 4a. Oral Communication Skills
- 4b. Written Communication Skills
5. Social Interaction Skills
6. Ethical Decision Making
7. Global Perspectives

## 1. Course Synopsis

This course aims to enable students to use classical and contemporary social theoretical perspectives to engage in critical analyses of the contemporary social issues of capitalism, bureaucracy and rationalization, religion and ritual, authority and power, the nation-state, social identity, alienation, anomie, stigma, social interaction, deviance, civil society, democracy, and social movements. Students will be engaged in reading and discussion of short selections of primary material representative of social thinkers including Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Anthony Giddens, Michel Foucault, George Herbert Mead, Erving Goffman, Howard Becker, Manuel Castells, and others. The primary learning objective is for students to develop their capacity for critical and creative thinking on major social issues raised in writings by these social theorists. Whole class and small-group discussions will allow students to extend ideas from theory to students' knowledge and real-life experience and observations.

## 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

*Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

- CILO<sub>1</sub> read and discuss selections of primary source materials from classical and contemporary social theorists on issues of contemporary societal concern
- CILO<sub>2</sub> analyze contemporary social issues in light of different social theoretical perspectives
- CILO<sub>3</sub> challenge commonsense perceptions and understandings and their own thinking on contemporary social issues
- CILO<sub>4</sub> apply knowledge of classical and contemporary social theories to ask and answer significant questions about contemporary social issues

## 3. Content, CILOs and Teaching & Learning Activities

| Course Content  | CILOs                         | Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities  |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| <p><i>Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theorists Writings on the following sociological concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Structure and Agency</li><li>• Capitalism</li><li>• Bureaucracy and Rationalization</li><li>• Religion and Ritual</li><li>• Authority and Power</li><li>• The Nation-State</li><li>• Social Identity</li></ul> | <i>CILO<sub>1,2,3,4</sub></i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lecture, reading and analysis of teaching materials, and video analysis</li></ul> |

| Course Content  | CILOs | Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities |
|---|-------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alienation -- Anomie -- Stigma</li> <li>• Social Interaction</li> <li>• Deviance</li> <li>• Civil Society and Democracy</li> <li>• Social Movements</li> </ul> |       |  |

#### 4. Assessment

| Assessment Tasks  | Weighting (%) | CILO |
|---|---------------|------|
| First Assignment (~750 words): Written reflection on social structure and the media, comparing assigned readings and online first-hand data | 25%           | 1-4  |
| Second Assignment (~750 words): Written reflection on agency and the media, comparing assigned readings and online first-hand data          | 25%           | 1-4  |
| Final Assignment (~1,500 words): Written answers to 1-2 of the class-generated discussion questions   | 50%           | 1-4  |

#### 5. Required Text(s)

Nil

#### 6. Recommended Readings

Allan, Kenneth (2013) *Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: Seeing the Social World*. California: Sage.

Appelrouth, Scott and Edles, Laura Desfor (2012) *Classical and Contemporary Social Theory*. California: Sage.

Baert, Patrick and da Silva, Filipe Carreira (2010) *Social Theory in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. Cambridge: Polity.

Best, Shaun (2003) *A Beginner's Guide to Social Theory*. London: Sage.

Calhoun, Craig (et al.) (2012) *Classical Sociological Theory*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Calhoun, Craig (et al.) (2012) *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

- Delanty, Gerard (2005) *Social Science: Philosophical and Methodological Foundations*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Elliott, Anthony (ed.) (2010) *The Routledge Companion to Social Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Elliott, Anthony (2014) *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Elliott, Anthony and Lemert, Charles (2014) *Introduction to Contemporary Social Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Giddens, Anthony (1995) *Politics, Sociology and Social Theory: Encounters with Classical and Contemporary Social Thought*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Go, Julian (ed.) (2013) *Postcolonial Sociology*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Inglis, David (2012) *An Invitation to Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Joas, Hans (2009) *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, Pip, Bradbury, Liz and LeBoutillier, Shaun (2011) *Introducing Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Miles, Steven (2001) *Social Theory in the Real World*. London: Sage.
- Ransome, Paul (2010) *Social Theory for Beginners*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Taylor, Charles (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Ritzer, George (2010) *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots*. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.

## 7. Related Web Resources

Nil

## 8. Related Journals

Nil

## 9. Academic Honesty

The University adopts a zero tolerance policy to plagiarism. For the University's policy on plagiarism, please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity with Specific Reference to the Avoidance of Plagiarism by Students* (<https://www.eduhk.hk/re/modules/downloads/visit.php?cid=9&lid=89>). Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

## 10. Others

Nil

*Updated 21 June 2018*