Course Outline

Part I

Programme Title : Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Education for Sustainability
Programme QF Level : 5
Course Title : Education for Environmental Justice and Human Rights
Course Code : SSC3185
Department : Social Sciences
Credit Points : 3
Contact Hours : 39
Pre-requisite(s) : Nil
Medium of Instruction : EMI
Course Level : 3

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
The concept of environmental justice was first articulated in local political struggles, most commonly opposing the location of polluting industries within poor or minority neighbourhoods. Disadvantaged people are often disproportionately affected by environmental pollution either directly, when polluting industries are located in poor communities and countries, or indirectly because environmental impacts inflict the greatest harm on those people who are the most vulnerable. Environmental justice can also be conceived of globally, for example the idea that rights and obligations related to the environment should be equitably assigned to people everywhere. The environment also presents human rights questions, for example with respect to the “right to development” for impoverished people and countries. Some theorists argue that environmental rights should be treated, and protected, as a special kind of human right.

This course immerses students in these and other debates about the extent of human obligations and rights in an era where resource use is exceeding the planet's carrying capacity. Students will be challenged to identify environmental inequality and injustices within their own society and within the global human community, to identify the sources of these inequalities, to analyse possible justifications for inequality, and to critically examine how environmental injustice might be addressed. Students will gain familiarity with major debates about environmental justice and human rights, and they will be challenged to identify and evaluate their own perspectives on these debates. Students will discuss the educational implications of the perspectives discussed in this course for promoting public’s awareness of environmental justice and human rights in resolving environmental issues, and how this can contribute to education for sustainability.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

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

CILO1 Assess the nature, scale and justice aspects of environmental inequalities within their own society and globally.

CILO2 Critically analyse, from major normative perspectives, the official statements and actions of governments, corporations and non-governmental actors related to environmental inequality and rights.

CILO3 Develop a global perspective on justice and rights, putting theories and debates within the context of ecological limits.

CILO4 Developing the ability to participate, in an informed and articulate way, in discussions about environmental justice and related questions of human rights, and communicate informed views to the general public.

CILO5 Demonstrate understanding of individual environmental rights and responsibilities, including those of participating students, both within and beyond their own communities.

CILO6 Recognize the importance to enhance citizens’ understanding of the essential concepts and critical thinking skills to analyze issues with implications for environmental justice, and to develop their compassion to uphold human rights in promoting sustainability.
### 3. Content, CILOs and Teaching & Learning Activities

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<tr>
<th>Course Content</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
<th>Suggested Teaching &amp; Learning Activities</th>
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| a. Origins of 'environmental justice'; race- and class-based environmental injustices | CILO$_{1,2}$ | • brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)  
• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions  
• group discussions of assigned readings  
• group sharing of ideas from course journals  
• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal |
| b. Environmental injustice and human rights in the Hong Kong and China contexts | CILO$_{1,2,5}$ | • brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)  
• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions  
• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings  
• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal  
• Oral Presentations |
| c. “Right to development” and the human right to a sustainable environment       | CILO$_{3,4}$ | • brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)  
• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions  
• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings  
• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal  
• Oral Presentations |
| d. Inter-communal environmental justice                                         | CILO$_{1,2,3,4,5}$ | • brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)  
• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions  
• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings |
• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal
• Oral Presentations

e. Achieving environmental justice and human rights: government and governance

CILO1,2,3,4,5

• brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures)
• provocative questions followed by classroom discussions
• group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings
• writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal
• Oral Presentations

f. Implications of the issue of environmental justice and human right for the promotion of education for sustainability: challenges and opportunities

CILO5, 6

• brief lectures
• class and group discussion on activity design
• case studies
• oral presentations

4. Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Assessment Tasks</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial participation:</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>CILO1,2,3,4,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students have to attend two one-hour tutorial sessions;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Assessment is based on (i) commentary on readings and (ii) participation in tutorial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test:</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>CILO1,2,3,5</td>
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<td>• A short test of about 90 minutes to test students’ understanding of basic concepts and theories covered in lectures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual essay:</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>CILO1,2,3,5</td>
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<td>• Students are required to submit an individual essay of about 2000 words to Moodle.</td>
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5. Required Text(s) (indicative)
6. **Recommended Readings (indicative)**


7. **Related Web Resources**

The Climate Justice Project

http://www.climatejustice.org.uk/

Environmental Justice Resource Center at Clark Atlanta

http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/

Environmental Justice of Field Studies: University of Michigan

http://sitemaker.umich.edu/environmentaljusticefieldstudies/home

Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative

http://www.ejcc.org/


Environmental Justice Project

http://ej.ucdavis.edu/

Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment

http://www.crpe-ej.org/
National Black Environmental Justice Network
http://www.nbejn.org/

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Human rights and climate change'
http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/climatechange/index.htm

Oxfam (2009), The Right to Survive in a Changing Climate:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

US EPA Environmental Justice
http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/

GlobalRights.Org: Partners for Justice Online
http://www.hrlawgroup.org/

8. Related Journals

   Ethics
   Ethics and Global Politics
   Ethics and International Affairs
   Ethics and the Environment
   Global Change, Peace and Security
   Global Environmental Change
   International Environmental Agreements
   International Journal of Human Rights
   International Society
   Journal of Environment and Development
   Journal of Ethics
   Journal of Global Ethics
   Journal of Human Development
   Philosophy and Public Affairs
   World Development

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

   Newspaper articles and other media reports, including contemporaneous reporting, related to global warming and climate change; recent reports from scientific organizations and nongovernmental organizations; new video media.

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