

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
a. Origins of 'environmental justice'; race- and class-based environmental injustices	<i>CILO_{1,2}</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<i>CILO_{1,2,5}</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<i>CILO_{3,4}</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<i>CILO_{1,2,3,4,5}</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brief lectures (possibly including guest lectures) • provocative questions followed by classroom discussions • group sharing of ideas from course journals and assigned readings

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing summaries and analyses of readings in course journal • Oral Presentations
e. Achieving environmental justice and human rights: government and governance	<i>CILO</i> _{1,2,3,4,5}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<i>CILO</i> _{5, 6}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brief lectures • class and group discussion on activity design • case studies • oral presentations

4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILOs
Tutorial participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have to attend two one-hour tutorial sessions; • Assessment is based on (i) commentary on readings and (ii) participation in tutorial 	30%	<i>CILO</i> _{1,2,3,4,5}
Test: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short test of about 90 minutes to test students' understanding of basic concepts and theories covered in lectures. 	30%	<i>CILO</i> _{1,2,3,5}
Individual essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to submit an individual essay of about 2000 words to Moodle. 	40%	<i>CILO</i> _{1,2,3,5}

5. Required Text(s) (indicative)

Schlosberg, D. (2007). *Defining Environmental Justice Theories, Movements, and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

6. Recommended Readings (indicative)

- Andrzejewski, J., Baltodano, M. P., & Symcox, L. (Eds.). (2009). *Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education: Transforming Standards*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Bullard, R. (Ed.). (2005). *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Clover, D. E. (Ed.). (2004). *Global perspectives in environmental adult education*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Dobson, A. (1998). *Justice and the Environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gray-McDonald, J., & Selby, D. (Eds.). (2008). *Green Frontiers: Environmental Educators Dancing away from Mechanism*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Hiskes, R. (2009). *The human Right to a Green Future: Environmental rights and intergenerational justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Humphreys, S. (Ed.). (2010). *Human Rights and Climate Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kagawa, F., & Selby, D. (Eds.). (2010). *Education and climate change: living and learning in interesting times*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Martusewicz, R. A., Edmundson, J., & Lupinacci, J. (2011). *EcoJustice Education: toward diverse, democratic, and sustainable communities*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Newton, D. E. (2009). *Environmental Justice: A reference handbook*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.
- Pellow, D., & Brulle R. (2005). *Power, Justice and the Environment: A Critical Appraisal of the Environmental Justice Movement*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Posner E.A., & Weisback, D. (2010). *Climate Change Justice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schlosberg, D. (2007). *Defining Environmental Justice Theories, Movements, and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shallcross, T., & Robinson J. (2006). *Global Citizenship and Environmental Justice*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Stein, R. (Ed.). (2004). *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice: Gender, Sexuality, and Activism*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

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 Leadership Forum on Climate Change. 2008. "Principles of Climate Justice."

<http://www.weact.org/Portals/7/EJ%20Leadership%20Forum%20Principles.pdf>

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*:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/right-to-survive-changing-climate.html

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

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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