# THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

## Course Outline

### Part I

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| **Programme Title** | : | All Undergraduate Programmes |
| **Programme QF Level** | : | 5 |
| **Course Title** | : | The Art of Job Interviews |
| **Course Code** | : | GEG2043 |
| **Department** | : | Social Sciences and Policy Studies |
| **Credit Points** | : | 3 |
| **Contact Hours** | : | 39 |
| **Pre-requisite(s)** | : | Nil |
| **Medium of Instruction** | : | EMI |
| **Course Level** | : | 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"):
- **P**rofessional **E**xcellence;
- **E**thical **R**esponsibility; **&**
- **I**nnovation.

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 job interview is often a key to any new career. While career centers provide information regarding job opportunities and orient students to useful career skills, job interviews are still being perceived as a "black box". This course aims at breaking down job interviews and revealing the unspoken norms and expectation of the changing job market through sociological, psychological, and industrial studies, as well as the experience of employers and employees of different fields.

Throughout this course, we will explore topics and concepts that are essential to the understanding of job interviews, while enabling students to gain insights into their own relationship with the world of work. We start with an overview about the trend of job markets and the macro social and economic structures that shape these trends. We then proceed to the understanding of building connections and getting access to job interviews through social network theory. Next, we further delve into the theories and research on impression management in cv and cover letter writing and during the job interviews. Emotions and emotional management during the whole recruitment process will also be discussed drawing upon micro-sociological and psychological concepts. Finally, analyzing job interviews from a broader perspective, we will explore job interviews through the lens of social inequalities and culture, while offering ways to navigate various kinds of stereotypes and subtle discriminations.

(Ex-)recruiters of various fields in the public and the private sectors are invited as guest speakers to share their thoughts regarding the hiring processes. They will also help in a simulated job interview exercise for our students. E-portfolio is used throughout the course.


**2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes** (CILOs)
*Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

$CILO_1$:  Understand, integrate, and apply the relevant conceptual knowledge in sociology and social and industrial psychology to job interviews

$CILO_2$:  Apply social skills that facilitate interpersonal and communication with others and develop reflective thinking skills

$CILO_3$:  Enable students to make good judgments and decisions regarding their future career and weigh both their chances of success and the risks of trying in different careers

$CILO_4$:  Boost students' confidence in articulating their ideas clearly

$CILO_5$:  Raise students' awareness of the cultural norms and the local and global issues in the job market so that they can construct thoughtful and creative responses to these issues

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

| Course Content | CILOs | Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities |
|---|---|---|
| **21st Century job market**<br>This session includes the changes and the trends in the job market and covers the following concepts:<br>• Organizational man<br>• Fordism, post-Fordism<br>• "Boundaryless" career<br>• 7/24 economy<br>• New technologies and change | $CILO_{1,2,3,5}$ | • Lectures (including a guest speaker from a private company)<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• Videos<br>• E-portfolio |
| **Building connections and access to job interviews**<br>This session includes the social network theory and covers the following concepts:<br>• Social capital<br>• Social ties<br>• Chinese *guanxi*<br>• Structural holes<br>• Structural equivalence | $CILO_{1,2,3,5}$ | • Lectures (including a guest speaker from a private company)<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• Videos<br>• E-portfolio |
| **Presentation of self during job interviews**<br>This session includes the following concepts/topics:<br>• Impression management<br>• Goffman's Interactional rituals<br>• Ethical issues in job interviews | $CILO_{1,2,4}$ | • Lectures (including two guest speakers. One from the disciplinary force and one is a principal of a primary school)<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• Role-playing<br>• Simulated job interviews<br>• Videos<br>• E-portfolio |
| **Emotions, anxiety, and stress throughout the recruitment process**<br>This session includes the following concepts:<br>• Sociology of emotions: emotional energy, managed heart (feeling rules)<br>• Industrial/social psychological concepts like evaluative apprehension and imposter syndromes<br>• Positive psychology like meditation and coping strategies | $CILO_{1,2,4}$ | • Lectures (including two guest speakers. One works as an Administrative Officer in HKSAR and one is a Principal of a kindergarten)<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• Videos<br>• E-portfolio |

| Inequalities, social stigmas and discrimination in job interviews<br>This session includes the following topics/concepts:<br>• Social stratification<br>• Stereotypes, stigmas, and discrimination in hiring<br>• Legal protection against discrimination | $CILO_{1,2,3,5}$ | • Lectures (including one guest speaker from a local NGO)<br>• Quasi-experimental activity (called vignette study)<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• E-portfolio |
|---|---|---|
| How culture plays a part in the art of job interviews<br>This session includes the following topics:<br>• Cultural matching processes in hiring<br>• Comparative research regarding organization culture in multinational organizations *versus* Chinese firms | $CILO_{1,2,3,5}$ | • Lectures<br>• Discussions<br>• Tutorials<br>• E-portfolio |

4. **Assessment**

| Assessment Tasks | Weighting (%) | CILO |
|---|---|---|
| (a) Participation<br>Learning proactively is important in higher education. Students are encouraged to attend all the lectures and tutorial sessions; and they are also encouraged to think, discuss, raise questions and even challenges. Therefore, students' participation score will be marked according to their attendance and whether they answer the questions presented to them proactively and raise high quality questions. | 20% | $CILO_{1-2}$ |
| (b) E-portfolio (updated at least weekly)<br>E-portfolios can make student learning visible to the students themselves as well as to instructors, other students and their academic advisors, so they can better understand the progress they have made and how to learn in the future. This is an important tool for self-reflection. It also enables students to document relevant information regarding the career they want to pursue. Students are expected to apply the theoretical concepts throughout the process. | 60% | $CILO_{1,2,3,5}$ |
| (c) Simulated Job Interviews<br>Students are assigned into groups according to their career pursuit and they will attend a *simulated* 30- to 45-minute group interview. Feedbacks are given to students by recruiters/ ex-recruiters of different sectors right after those group interviews. | 20% | $CILO_{1-5}$ |

**5. Required Text(s)**

Nil

**6. Recommended Readings**

Barrick, M. R., Shaffer, J. A., & DeGrassi, S. W. (2009). What you see may not be what you get: relationships among self-presentation tactics and ratings of interview and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psycholo*gy, Vol 94(6), Nov 2009, 1394-1411.

Chow, I. H. S., & Ng, I. (2004). The characteristics of Chinese personal ties (guanxi): Evidence from Hong Kong. *Organization Studies*, *25*(7), 1075-1093.

Collins, R. (2014). *Interaction ritual chains*. Princeton university press.

Correll, S. J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty? *American journal of sociology*, 112(5), 1297-1338.

Coverdill, J. E., & Finlay, W. (1998). Fit and skill in employee selection: Insights from a study of headhunters. *Qualitative Sociology*, 21(2), 105-127.

Goffman, E. (1978). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Harmondsworth.

Goffman, E. (2005). *Interaction ritual: Essays in face to face behavior*. Aldine Transaction. Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.

Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling*. University of California Press.

Hebl, M. R., & Kleck, R. E. (2002). Acknowledging One's Stigma in the Interview Setting: Effective Strategy or Liability? *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 32(2), 223-249.

Huang, X. (2008). Guanxi networks and job searches in China's emerging labour market: a qualitative investigation. *Work, Employment & Society*, 22(3), 467-484.

Kacmar, K. M., & Carlson, D. S. (1994). Using impression management in women's job search processes. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 37(5), 682-696.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2013) Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s to 2000s. Russell Sage Foundation.

Montgomery, J. D. (1992). Job search and network composition: Implications of the strength-of-weak-ties hypothesis. *American Sociological Review*, 586-596.

Ngo, H. Y., Tang, C. S. K., & Au, W. W. T. (2002). Behavioural responses to employment discrimination: A study of Hong Kong workers. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13(8), 1206-1223.

Peeters, H., & Lievens, F. (2006). Verbal and nonverbal impression management tactics in behavior description and situational interviews. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, *14*(3), 206-222.

Petersen, T., Saporta, I., & Seidel, M. D. L. (2000). Offering a Job: Meritocracy and Social Networks. *American Journal of Sociology*, 106(3), 763-816.

Pingitore, R., Dugoni, B. L., Tindale, R. S., & Spring, B. (1994). Bias against overweight job applicants in a simulated employment interview. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(6), 909.

Rivera, L. A. (2011). Ivies, extracurriculars, and exclusion: Elite employers' use of educational credentials. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 29(1), 71-90.

Rivera, L. A. (2012). Hiring as cultural matching the case of elite professional service firms. *American Sociological Review*, 77(6), 999-1022.

Rivera, L. A. (2015). Go with Your Gut: Emotion and Evaluation in Job Interviews. *American journal of sociology*, 120(5), 1339-1389.

Ruggs, E. N., Martinez, L. R., & Hebl, M. R. (2011). How individuals and organizations can reduce interpersonal discrimination. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5(1), 29-42.

Watson, T. (2017). *Sociology, work and organisation*. Taylor & Francis.

Weber, M. (1946). "Class, Status, Party", "Status Groups and Classes" and "Open and Closed Relationships" in David Grusky's edited *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective.* pp. 113-129.

Wong, I. F., & Phooi-Ching, L. (2000). Chinese cultural values and performance at job interviews: A Singapore perspective. *Business communication quarterly*, *63*(1), 9-22.

## 7. Related Web Resources

How To Ace Job Interviews: 5 Secrets Backed By Research
http://projectmanagementhacks.com/how-to-ace-job-interviews/

Career Development, EdUHK
https://www.eduhk.hk/sao/?cat=12

Equal Opportunities Commission
http://www.eoc.org.hk/eoc/GraphicsFolder/default.aspx

## 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

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