

# THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

## Course Outline

### Part I

<b>Programme Title</b>	: Master of Public Policy and Management
<b>Programme QF Level</b>	: 6
<b>Course Title</b>	: Poverty, Inequality and Social Policy
<b>Course Code</b>	: PPG6021
<b>Department/Unit</b>	: Department of Social Sciences and Policy Studies
<b>Credit Points</b>	: 3
<b>Contact Hours</b>	: 39
<b>Pre-requisite(s)</b>	: Nil
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>	: EMI
<b>Course Level</b>	: 6

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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 Sub-degree, Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate, Professional Doctorate 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

Urban poverty is becoming a widespread phenomenon following decades of economic globalization. The dominance of neo-liberalist economic ideology and the global “race to the bottom” have resulted in an increasing number of people living in polarized urban societies. Reducing poverty and improving socio-economic equality are important societal goals as they are vital to sustainable and inclusive development. In this course, we will introduce to students the conceptual skills and practical tools that allow them to critically examine the issue of poverty and inequality, and to identify solutions to the problems. The course will explore the philosophical underpinning of poverty reduction from the perspective of applied ethics and introduce different definitions of poverty and measurement approaches. The political economy, especially the ideology of neo-liberalism, and various types of welfare regimes will be discussed. The course will also examine various factors that lead to poverty as well as poverty reduction policies adopted by governments.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

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

- CILO<sub>1</sub>* : Engage in the conceptual and practical debate on the issue of poverty and poverty reduction.
- CILO<sub>2</sub>* : Critically examine the efficacy of government poverty reduction strategy and policy.
- CILO<sub>3</sub>* : Apply the knowledge of poverty definition and measurement to assess the extent of poverty in a society.
- CILO<sub>4</sub>* : Formulate and articulate a policy response to the poverty situation of different disadvantage and vulnerable groups in a society.

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

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
Definitions and measures of poverty and the philosophical underpinning of poverty reduction.	<i>CILO<sub>1,3</sub></i>	Lecture and group discussion.
Trends in economic growth, economic inequality and polarization of the labor market.	<i>CILO<sub>1,2,4</sub></i>	Lecture, documentary screening, and group discussion.
Poverty reduction strategies and types of welfare regime.	<i>CILO<sub>1-4</sub></i>	Lecture, case study, and group discussion.
Characteristics and needs of disadvantage and vulnerable groups in a society, including elderly, single parent, immigrant, ethnic minority, working poor and children.	<i>CILO<sub>2-4</sub></i>	Lecture, case study, group discussion and student presentation.
Evaluating competing	<i>CILO<sub>1-4</sub></i>	Lecture, case study, group discussion

poverty reduction policies adopted by governments.		and student presentation.
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#### 4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILO
(a) <b>Attendance and Participation</b>	10%	CILO <sub>1-4</sub>
(b) <b>Group Presentation</b> Students will form into groups of 3 and deliver a presentation (20 minutes) on a topic concerning social policy on poverty.	40%	CILO <sub>1-4</sub>
(c) <b>Written Examination</b> A 2-hour written examination will be held at the end of the course.	50%	CILO <sub>1-4</sub>

#### 5. Use of Generative AI in Course Assessments

Please select one option only that applies to this course:

☐ **Not Permitted:** In this course, the use of generative AI tools is not allowed for any assessment tasks.

☒ **Permitted:** In this course, generative AI tools may be used in some or all assessment tasks. Instructors will provide specific instructions, including any restrictions or additional requirements (e.g., proper acknowledgment, reflective reports), during the first lesson and in relevant assessment briefs.

#### 6. Required Text(s)

Nil

#### 7. Recommended Readings

Blank, R., & Greenberg, M. (2008). "Improving the measurement of poverty," *Brooking Institution, Hamilton Project*. Retrieved from [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/12\\_poverty\\_measurement\\_blank/12\\_poverty\\_measurement\\_blank.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/12_poverty_measurement_blank/12_poverty_measurement_blank.pdf)

Chan, C. K. (2003). Protecting the ageing poor or strengthening the market economy: The case of the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 12(2), 123-131.

Chiu, S. (2003). Local policy in global politics: The limit of anti-poverty policy in Hong Kong. *Social Policy & Social Work*, 7(2), 171-203.

Fung, K. K., & Hung, S. L. (2014). Strengthening a community of poverty in an affluent society: Strategies to build social capital in Tin Shui Wai North in Hong Kong. *Community Development Journal*, 49(3), 441-457.

Goodstadt, L. F. (2013). *Poverty in the midst of affluence: How Hong Kong mismanaged its prosperity*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Haveman, R. What does it mean to be poor in a rich society? In M. Cancian & S. Danziger (Eds.), *Changing poverty, Changing policies* (pp. 387-408). Russell

Sage Foundation.

- Ho, K. Y., Li, W. H. C., & Chan, S. S. C. (2015). The effect of poverty and income disparity on the psychological well-being of Hong Kong children. *Public Health Nursing*, 32(3), 212-221.
- Lee, E. W. Y. (2005). The renegotiation of the social pact in Hong Kong: Economic globalisation, socio-economic change, and local politics. *Journal of Social Policy*, 34(2), 293-301.
- Romich, J. L., Simmelink J., & Holt, S. D. When working harder does not pay: Low-income working families, tax liabilities, and benefit reductions. *Families in Society*, 88(3), 418- 426.
- Saunders, P. (2015). Tackling poverty in Hong Kong: Measurement as a prelude to action. *Journal of Poverty & Social Justice*, 23(1), 43-56.
- Saunders, P., Wong, H., & Wong, W. P. (2014). Deprivation and poverty in Hong Kong. *Social Policy & Administration*, 48(5), 556-575.
- Shaffer, P. (2013). *Q-squared combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in poverty analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Singer, P. (1972). Famine, Affluence and Morality. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1, 229-43
- Singer, P. (2002). Poverty, facts, and political philosophies. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 16(2), 121-4
- Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). *Globalization and its discontents*. New York: Norton
- Stiglitz, J. E. (2012). *The price of inequality*. London: Allen Lane.
- Venkatesh, S. A. (2006). *Off the books: The underground economy of the urban poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Walkers, A. & Wong, C. K. (Eds.). (2005). *East Asian welfare regimes in transition: From Confucianism to Globalism*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Wong, C. K. (2008). Squaring the welfare circle in Hong Kong: Lessons for governance in social policy. *Asian Survey*, 48(2), 323–342.
- Wong, H. (2007). Mised intervention by a misplaced diagnosis: The Hong Kong SAR government's policies for alleviating poverty and social exclusion. *China Review*, 7(2), 123-147.

## 8. Related Web Resources

Name of the Web Page	Web Link
Commission on Poverty	<a href="http://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/welcome.html">http://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/welcome.html</a>
Census and Statistics Department	<a href="http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp">http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp</a>
The HK Council of Social Service	<a href="http://www.hkcss.org.hk/e/">http://www.hkcss.org.hk/e/</a>
Society for Community Organization	<a href="https://soco.org.hk/">https://soco.org.hk/</a>
Future of Children	<a href="http://www.futureofchildren.com">http://www.futureofchildren.com</a> <a href="https://futureofchildren.princeton.edu/">https://futureofchildren.princeton.edu/</a>
Heritage Foundation	<a href="http://www.heritage.org">http://www.heritage.org</a>
Institute for Research on Poverty	<a href="http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp">http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp</a>
Joint Center for Poverty Research	<a href="http://www.jcpr.org">http://www.jcpr.org</a>
Michigan Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy	<a href="http://www.ssw.umich.edu/poverty/pubs.html">http://www.ssw.umich.edu/poverty/pubs.html</a>
National Poverty Center	<a href="http://www.npc.umich.edu">http://www.npc.umich.edu</a>

## 9. Related Journals

Nil

## 10. Academic Honesty

The University upholds the principles of honesty in all areas of academic work. We expect our students to carry out all academic activities honestly and in good faith. Please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity* (<https://www.eduhk.hk/re/uploads/docs/000000000016336798924548BbN5>). Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

## 11. Others

Newspaper articles, policy papers and video-clips on relevant issues.

*Updated as of 16 July 2025*