

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Course Outline

Part I

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

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:

- CILO₁* : Engage in the conceptual and practical debate on the issue of poverty and poverty reduction.
- CILO₂* : Critically examine the efficacy of government poverty reduction strategy and policy.
- CILO₃* : Apply the knowledge of poverty definition and measurement to assess the extent of poverty in a society.
- CILO₄* : 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_{1,3}</i>	Lecture and group discussion.
Trends in economic growth, economic inequality and polarization of the labor market.	<i>CILO_{1,2,4}</i>	Lecture, documentary screening, and group discussion.
Poverty reduction strategies and types of welfare regime.	<i>CILO₁₋₄</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>CILO₂₋₄</i>	Lecture, case study, group discussion and student presentation.
Evaluating competing	<i>CILO₁₋₄</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) Attendance and Participation Students are expected to read relevant readings before s/he attends the lectures and seminars, and must participate actively in the discussion. Students' engagement and participation are evaluated accordingly.	10%	<i>CILO₁₋₄</i>
(b) Group Presentation Students will form into groups of 3 and deliver a presentation (20 minutes) on a topic concerning social policy on poverty.	40%	<i>CILO₁₋₄</i>
(c) Written Examination A 2-hour written examination will be held at the end of the course.	50%	<i>CILO₁₋₄</i>

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

Asante, I. H. G., Essaw, D., Argmor, E., & Fiassergbor, D. (2025, November). Globalization and governance: Analyzing the effects of globalization on economies, politics, and societies, and exploring ways to improve governance and resource management.

Dreher, A. (2016). Does globalization affect growth? Evidence from a new index of globalization. *Applied Economics*, 38(10), 1091–1110.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00036840500392078>

Fiassergbor, D., Asante, G., Omari, S., & Nimako, R. (2025, November). The socioeconomic impact of galamsey on Ghanaian communities: To evaluate the economic benefits and costs of galamsey to local communities and the nation.

Heshmati, A. (2017). The relationship between income inequality, poverty, and globalization. *IZA Discussion Paper Series*, 10742, 1–35.
<https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2965057>

KOF Swiss Economic Institute. (2020). Globalization and economic development: Evidence from panel analysis. *Economic Modelling*, 85, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econmod.2019.11.012>

Kumar, V., & Paramanik, R. N. (2025). How financial development shapes globalization's impact on income inequality in Asia. *Economic Analysis and Policy*, 86, 1083–1098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eap.2024.10.012>

Lerskullawat, A. (2025). Globalization, poverty, and inequality: A case study of Thailand. *SAGE Open*, 15(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251360497>

Ravallion, M. (2018). Inequality and globalization: A review essay. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 56(2), 620–642. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.20171419>

Rodrik, D. (2018). Populism and the economics of globalization. *Journal of International Business Policy*, 1(1–2), 12–33. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s42214-018-0001-4>

Zhang, X., & Chen, K. Z. (2020). Globalization, structural change, and poverty reduction. *World Development*, 135, 105065. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105065>

Zhou, Y., Li, X., & Zhou, L. (2021). Globalization, institutional quality, and income inequality: Evidence from cross-country panel data. *Economic Systems*, 45(3), 100910. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecosys.2021.100910>

8. Related Web Resources

Name of the Web Page	Web Link
Commission on Poverty	https://www.commissiononpoverty.gov.hk/eng/welcome.html
Census and Statistics Department	http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp
The HK Council of Social Service	http://www.hkcass.org.hk/e/
Society for Community Organization	https://soco.org.hk/
Future of Children	https://futureofchildren.princeton.edu/
Heritage Foundation	http://www.heritage.org
Institute for Research on Poverty	http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp
Joint Center for Poverty Research	https://www.macfound.org/grantee/north-western-university--university-of-chicago-joint-center-for-poverty-research-25828/
Michigan Program on Poverty and Social Welfare Policy	https://fordschool.umich.edu/policy-topics/poverty-and-social-policy
National Poverty Center	http://www.npc.umich.edu

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 10 April 2026