THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Course Outline

Part I

Programme Title	:	All undergraduate programmes
Programme QF Level	:	5
Course Title	:	Advanced Methods for Public Policy Analysis and Evaluation: Quantitative Research
Course Code	:	SSC4260
Department	:	Social Sciences and Policy Studies
Credit Points	:	3
Contact Hours	:	39
Pre-requisite(s)	:	Nil
Medium of Instruction	:	EMI
Course Level	:	4

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"):
● **P**rofessional **E**xcellence;
● **E**thical **R**esponsibility; **&**
● **I**nnovation.

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

This course seeks to train students in advanced methods for policy analysis and evaluation, allowing student to acquire in-depth, sophisticated skills associated with quantitative techniques. Specifically, it will equip students with advanced quantitative analytical skills, including data collection and organisation, use of graphs and descriptive statistics, regression analysis and statistical inference and developing policy implications of empirical findings. It will use a series of concrete examples to demonstrate the usefulness and practicality of these skills, thereby ensuring student understanding the applicability and applications of a quantitative research concept to solve real-world problems in public decision making.

Some online learning and teaching initiatives will be introduced to enhance online pedagogical practices, strengthen quality online teaching and support learner-centred learning when the online teaching mode is adopted. For example, SPSS/Microsoft Excel, Qualtrics, and various educational tools (e.g., Padlet and Moodle Forum) will be used where appropriate.

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

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
CILO$_1$:   Formulate appropriate research questions and set research hypotheses;
CILO$_2$:   Develop an appropriate research design;
CILO$_3$:   Conduct and analyse quantitative data using SPSS and/or Excel;
CILO$_4$:   Appreciate and critically evaluate social research methods; and
CILO$_5$:   Conduct policy study independently.

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

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
Formulate appropriate research questions and set research hypotheses	$CILO_1$	• Lectures, group discussion, and group exercise
Develop an appropriate research design	$CILO_{1-2}$	• Lectures, group discussion, and group exercise
Conduct and analyse quantitative study	$CILO_{1-4}$	• Lectures, group discussion, and group exercise
Appreciate and critically evaluate social research methods	$CILO_{1-4}$	• Lectures, group discussion, and group exercise
Conduct a group policy study independently	$CILO_{1-5}$	• Lectures, group discussion, and supervision

4. **Assessment**

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILO
(a) **Class Discussion and Participation:** The assessment of students' attendance and participation will be considered to encourage their active engagement. Details will be provided in course syllabus.	20%	$CILO_{1-5}$
(b) **Assigned Quantitative Project and Analysis:**	40%	$CILO_{1-5}$

Students will be assigned a policy problem / example, with students asked to prepare a quantitative analysis of the problem in relation to the use of various quantitative approaches and to assess critically the most appropriate quantitative tools and approaches in assessing the policy problem / case example.		
(c) **Group Presentation:** The class will be separated into several groups. Students are expected to formulate a research question and some arguments using quantitative research methods addressed in the lectures. After the presentation, students are expected to submit an individual reflective essay (200 words) to report the entire learning experience in the group project (self-evaluation of individual contribution to the group project should be included).	40%	*CILO$_{1-5}$*

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)**

Earl Babbie (2010). The Basics of Social Research. Australia: Wadsworth.

Kirkpatrick, L.A., Feeney, B.C. (2013). A Simple Guide to IBM SPSS Statistics for Versions 20.0. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth.

Pallant, J. (2010). SPSS Survival Manual: A Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS. Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill.

7. **Recommended Readings**

Bardach, E., 2011. A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving, Fourth Edition. Los Angeles: CQ Press.

Bell, J. (2005). Doing your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science (4th ed.). Maidenhead, England: Open University Press.

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2001). How to Research. Buckingham: Open University Press.

B. Guy Peters, Guillaume Fontain (Eds) (2020). Handbook of research methods and applications in comparative policy analysis. Edward Elgar Publishing. Available at: https://ezproxy.eduhk.hk/login?url=http://www.lib.eduhk.hk/cgi-bin/ebookcentral?6190748.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2003). The Craft of Research (2nd ed.). Chicago, Il: US: University of Chicago Press.

Della Porta, D. & Keating, M. (2008). Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dunn, W. N., 2008. Public Policy Analysis: An Introduction, Fourth Edition. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Gerald, S.K. (2009). Evidence and Explanation in Social Science: An Interdisciplinary Approach. London: Routledge.

Harvey, F.P. & Brecher, M. (Eds.). (2002). Evaluating Methodology in International Studies. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (Eds). (1995). Theory and Methods in Political Science. Basingstoke, England: Macmillan.

Quirk, T. J., & Quirk, T. J. (2016). Excel 2016 for Social Science Statistics. Springer International Publishing.

StataCorp, L. P. (2019). Stata user's guide (release 16). College Station, TX: Stata Press, Stata-Corp LP.

8. Related Web Resources

Census and Statistics Department, HKSAR: http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/home/index.jsp
East Asian Social Survey: www.eassda.org
National Bureau of Statistics, PRC: http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/
University of California, Los Angeles (Institute for Digital Research and Education): https://stats.idre.ucla.edu/other/annotatedoutput/
World Bank data base: http://databank.worldbank.org

9. Related Journals

Use as necessary

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

Nil.

Last updated: 11 July 2025