

SOCI A202

Hong Kong Society

Course Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to *SOCI A202 Hong Kong Society*, a middle-level, 10-credit course offered by the School of Arts and Social Sciences, HKMU.

This *Course Guide* tells you something about the course, states its aims and the learning outcomes for you, provides an overview of its major components, and suggests ways to work through it.

About the course

SOCI A202 Hong Kong Society is designed to facilitate your understanding of the major social and political issues of Hong Kong from the perspectives of the social sciences, in particular those of sociology. It introduces you to the cultural outlook and value orientations of the Hong Kong people, as well as the features of and changes in the key social institutions. It also identifies and analyses the major issues and topics of academic concern in the study of Hong Kong society. A strong emphasis will be placed upon various theoretical perspectives and research on the major aspects of contemporary Hong Kong. This will provide you with the necessary analytic tools and information to understand the social structure, processes and development of Hong Kong society. Another focus is the various changes in Hong Kong society, in particular the challenges presented to the government and people in Hong Kong in the post-handover period and the subsequent impact on Hong Kong society.

The course consists of nine units. Each unit deals with a specific topic of Hong Kong society. They are:

1. Introduction: Understanding Hong Kong society;
2. Population;
3. Family;
4. Gender;
5. Social class;
6. Social policy;
7. Politics;
8. Culture and identity; and
9. Conclusion.

Many of these topics are interrelated. You need to be aware of this and integrate what you learn so that you can understand Hong Kong society as a unique historical and sociological configuration.

There are no prerequisites for this course but *SOSC A101 Social Sciences: A Foundation Course*, especially the part on sociology, should provide a good foundation.

Course aims

The overall aim of *SOCI A202 Hong Kong Society* is to develop your understanding of the social structure, processes and development of Hong Kong by means of a critical appreciation of the major issues and debates regarding Hong Kong society before and after the handover in 1997, and a comprehensive and critical examination of the existing literature. Through the study of various important topics in Hong Kong society, you will be able to

understand the impact of social changes, especially those brought about by changing mainland China–Hong Kong relations, on the individuals, daily lives, culture, social policies, and social systems and social institutions.

Specifically, the course aims to:

- *introduce* you to the theories and concepts that are important for analysing Hong Kong society;
- *elaborate* on the major issues concerning the nature, development, and possible future of Hong Kong society, taking into account the socio-economic and political transformations before and after the 1997 handover;
- *equip* you with a critical understanding of the main structural features of Hong Kong society;
- *examine* the norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are characteristic of Hong Kong Chinese people;
- *demonstrate* the interconnections between culture, social structure and social processes; and
- *articulate* the applicability of a range of research strategies to particular research questions, theoretical orientations and social contexts.

Course learning outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- *apply* relevant sociological concepts and perspectives for an all- round understanding of Hong Kong society;
- *identify* the developments in Hong Kong’s economy, social structure and political system from the pre-war period up to the 21st century;
- *discuss* the patterns and changes in the various aspects of social life in post-war Hong Kong, especially in the post-1997 era which witnesses rapidly changing mainland China–Hong Kong relations;
- *analyse* the impact of institutional changes and processes on the culture and identity of the Hong Kong people as well as on the way social policy has been formulated; and
- *discuss* the future prospects for Hong Kong.

Course overview

The nine study units in this course constitute 36 weeks of work. The following table provides an overview of the course and suggests the amount of time needed to complete each unit. As you are an adult learner in an open learning environment, you might want to devise your own schedule while taking into consideration the suggestions here. The estimated time, on average, that you need to spend on this course is eight to ten hours per week. This estimate includes time for reading the study units, studying the assigned readings, completing the activities and self-tests, writing your assignments, reviewing the study materials, attending the tutorials, and preparing for your final examination.

Unit	Title	Assessment	No. of weeks
1	Introduction: Understanding Hong Kong society		3
2	Population	Assignment 1	4
3	Family		4
4	Gender	Assignment 2	4
5	Social class		4
6	Social policy	Assignment 3	4
7	Politics		4
8	Culture and identity	Assignment 4	4
9	Conclusion		3
	Revision	Assignment 5	2
Total		5	36

Course materials

SOCI A202 consists of this *Course Guide*, *Study Units 1–9* with assigned supplementary readings, and assignments (which will be made available on the OLE). Please check that you have all of these materials. If you find that some of these materials are missing, please contact HKMU immediately.

Course Guide

This *Course Guide* informs you of the content of the course, pinpoints the main aims and learning outcomes, lists the necessary materials, and suggests how your time might be allocated for study. It also provides you with some information about tutorials, day schools and assignments. Refer to it throughout the course; it will help you to organise your study.

Study units

The study units are fundamental for your learning at HKMU. They introduce you to specific topics, orient you to the assigned readings, and provide activities and self-tests to facilitate your study. The study units, together with the assigned readings, are sufficient for you to fully achieve the aims and learning outcomes set out at the beginning of this *Course Guide*.

Each unit in *SOCI A202 Hong Kong Society* represents approximately four weeks of work and includes an overview, directions for working through the unit, and comments on and summaries of key issues and ideas in the readings.

The units also contain activities and self-tests. The activities stimulate reflection and application; while the self-tests enable you to self-monitor your progress and reinforce your understanding of the course materials.

All the study units share a common format. Each of them starts with an introduction that provides a brief discussion of key concepts, theoretical issues and major themes that recur throughout the unit.

The main part of each unit reviews the important research on the unit topics, explores the major themes and issues in the existing literature, and provides activities for your further

reflection and application. Each unit contains a few self-tests, a summary and assigned readings. The self-tests are provided for you to determine how well you have mastered the materials presented in the unit. The summary recapitulates the main points of the unit to consolidate your knowledge of the course. Finally, the assigned readings are excerpts/copies of journal articles or other published materials that elaborate on the discussion in the unit to deepen your understanding of the subject matter.

Set books

There is no textbook in this course. Selected articles will be given to you as supplementary readings throughout the course.

Other books that you might consult for historical or theoretical backgrounds as well as conceptual clarification are:

- Leung, B. K. P. (1996). *Perspectives on Hong Kong society*. Oxford University Press.
- Lui, T. L., Chiu, S. W. K., & Yep, R. (Eds.) (2019). *Routledge handbook of contemporary Hong Kong*. Routledge.

These books are available in the HKMU library.

Working through the course

In this section, you will see how the study units and the assigned readings fit together, and how you might work through them. In principle, distant learning is a self-paced and self-initiated learning process that is unique for each learner, and should be oriented to your own learning style and approach. Nevertheless, you are strongly advised to read through this section carefully for hints on organising your own study.

The study units

The nine study units of *SOCI A202* are the basis of your learning. The units refer you to assigned readings. It is suggested that you use the study units together with the readings as follows:

1. Begin with the study units.
2. Follow the instructions in the study units, which tell you when to:
 - read the assigned readings; and
 - do the exercises (i.e. activities and self-tests) in the study units.

It is important that you attempt the assigned readings, and do the exercises as suggested in the study units. The study units are not meant to be read alone without the readings. You should study all the materials (study units and readings) to further your knowledge and understanding of the topics raised in the study units, so as to achieve the stated learning outcomes of the course. You will see that the study units provide guidelines and explanations to help you better understand the readings.

The assigned readings

The study units guide you through a comprehensive examination of the different aspects of Hong Kong society from the colonial time up to the first two decades of the 21st century. It does not just provide information about Hong Kong society, but also aims to introduce some major conceptual frameworks and perspectives for understanding and analysing Hong Kong society. The readings serve two major purposes. First, they help to expound and elaborate on concepts, themes or issues raised in the study units that cannot be dealt with in detail. Second, they inform you about the latest research and also provide extra discussion on concepts, theories, themes and issues that are only touched upon cursorily or that are marginalised in the study units.

Here is a suggested approach to the readings.

1. Read the readings carefully and intensively. The readings deal with important themes and issues that should not be overlooked. You should utilise the study units as they offer guides for reading and interpreting the readings, and provide exercises with answers for you to consolidate your knowledge.
2. Pay close attention to the different views and ideas contained in the units and readings as they reflect different ways to look at a subject. The course covers a number of topics and these different topics are not isolated from one another. The interconnection between different aspects of society requires us to examine Hong Kong society in an integrated way. In this sense, understanding how different conceptual frameworks and perspectives deal with various subjects in distinct ways is important because it enables us to appreciate the significance of those perspectives and the interconnectedness of different aspects of social life.

Course assessment

Your grade in *SOCI A202* is assessed with respect to your performance in the five assignments and the final examination. The assignments and the examination each carry half of the course marks.

1. Five assignments
 - There are a total of five assignments in this course. Each of them will consist of an essay of 1,500–2,000 words. The essay will test your understanding of the course materials, and your ability to formulate an argument to address a question. It will also test your analytical skills, critical application of knowledge and independent thinking.
 - Each assignment is designed to assess your knowledge and understanding of one or two study units. Assignments will be released on the OLE as the course proceeds, including the questions, things to note and ways to approach the questions effectively.
 - Among the five assignments, only the best four will count towards your final course mark. The marks for the best four assignments together amount to 50% of the course assessment.
 - Each of the best four assignments that you submit on time carries 12.5% (i.e. one quarter of that 50%). Together they constitute the “coursework” component of the course.

- The passing score for each assignment is 40 out of a maximum of 100. You need to get a minimum total of 160 marks on your best four assignments in the continuous assessment.

2. Final examination

- There is a final examination at the end of the course, which carries 50% of the total course mark.
- The examination will last for three hours. It aims to test your knowledge of Hong Kong society and your ability to answer questions on various topics critically and independently. You are required to answer three out of six essay-type questions, which each carries equal marks.
- In order to pass this course, you are required to get a pass in the coursework as well as the final examination. A specimen examination will be given to you in due course. The specimen will be similar in format to the final examination but not equivalent in content.

Here is a summary of the assessment for *SOCI A202*.

Assessment	Details
Assignments (1–5)	Best 4 of 5 (12.5% each) = 50% of the course mark *a minimum total of 20% out of this 50% is required for an overall pass for this course.
Final examination	50% of the course mark *a pass, 20% out of this 50%, is required for an overall pass for this course
Total	100% of the course score

Tutorials and day schools

Tutorials are held on a regular basis to facilitate your understanding of the course, and provide you with a valuable opportunity to discuss various topics in the course with your tutor and other students.

HKMU will notify you promptly of the dates, times and venues of the tutorials and day schools, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as tutorial groups are confirmed.

Your tutor will lead the tutorials, mark your assignments with appropriate comments, and keep a close watch on your progress. Pay close attention to the tutor's comments on your assignments, and seek advice within the designated time period for telephone tutoring when you encounter difficulties or need help and direction. The following are the normal circumstances in which you might contact your tutor:

- you have difficulty understanding a part of a study unit, an assigned reading, an assignment, etc., after making a sufficient effort to understand the material on your own, as suggested in this *Course Guide* and individual study units;
- you are interested in a topic and want to explore it further, or you have developed some ideas on specific subjects and you would like to discuss these ideas further;
- you have some questions about an assignment, your tutor's comments on an assignment, or the grades that you received; or

- you want to ask for a seven-day extension for an assignment, or you want to confirm whether or not your tutor has received your assignment.

Besides tutorials, there are also four day schools, each three hours long, which are provided to deal with important topics and to facilitate your study. They will be in the form of: a) lectures that consider certain topics of the course in depth; b) structured seminars that generate discussion or enable problem-solving among students; or c) talks to guide students in the preparation of their study or examination.

While neither tutorials nor day schools are compulsory, you are strongly advised to participate to get a better understanding of the course and to reflect upon the state of your progress.

A note about the developer of this course

Dr. Beatrice Dang was a senior lecturer at HKU SPACE Po Leung Kuk Stanley Ho Community College, teaching various subjects in social sciences, such as Understanding Hong Kong Popular Culture, and Hong Kong and Chinese Societies in Transition.

Dr. Dang's academic journey began at Murdoch University, where she completed her BA. She then moved to Birmingham University, where she obtained both her MA and MPhil. After that, she earned her EdD from Bristol University.

Conclusion

SOCI A202 Hong Kong Society is designed to give you a thorough, in-depth and theoretically informed understanding of the social structure, processes and development of Hong Kong society. I hope that in the course of your study you can attain an understanding of Hong Kong society. Above all else, I hope that you find the course stimulating and that the course encourages reflection for you as a member of Hong Kong society.