

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	APSS1MN44														
Subject Title	Thinking Sustainable: Education and Development in Contemporary China														
Credit Value	3														
Level	1														
GUR Requirements Intended to Fulfill	<p>This subject intends to fulfill the following requirement(s) :</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> AI and Data Analytics (AIDA) <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IE) <input type="checkbox"/> Languages and Communication Requirement (LCR) <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) <input type="checkbox"/> Service-Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cluster-Area Requirement (CAR) <input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development [CAR A] <input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment [CAR D] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chinese History and Culture [CAR M] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultures, Organizations, Societies and Globalization [CAR N] <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> China-Study Requirement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes or <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing and Reading Requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English or <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese </p>														
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil														
Assessment Methods	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>100% Continuous Assessment</td><td>Individual Assessment</td><td>Group Assessment</td></tr> <tr> <td>Group work & presentation (for ER requirement)</td><td>10%</td><td>20%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Class participation</td><td>10%</td><td>0%</td></tr> <tr> <td>Review essay - 50% to be assessed by APSS - 10% to be assessed by ELC</td><td>60%</td><td>0%</td></tr> </table>			100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment	Group work & presentation (for ER requirement)	10%	20%	Class participation	10%	0%	Review essay - 50% to be assessed by APSS - 10% to be assessed by ELC	60%	0%
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	<div>(for EW requirement)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned; • Class participation will be assessed by students' attendance, their well-preparedness for and active engagement in classes and online forum discussions. • The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and • Student must pass all component(s) if he/she is to pass the subject. • Students must obtain a D or above on the EW assignment to pass the subject.
Objectives	<p>Based on a historical review of educational events and social phenomena in Chinese society during the late 20th and 21st centuries, this course offers an in-depth exploration of the nexus of education and social development in contemporary society. By adopting contemporary sociological lens and using sustainability as a framework, this course investigates how educational development influences and also has been influenced by social and cultural factors, the evolution of inequality, domestic and international mobilities, and etc. in the contemporary China. Besides, while referencing various social, political, and cultural values and practices of both contemporary Chinese and global societies, the course also examines how different stakeholders perceive, interpret, and probably exercise sustainability across different historical phases.</p> <p>This course introduces students to the key social and cultural dynamics that have evolved from social development during the specified period, focusing on the relationships between rural and urban development, capitalist and working classes, domestic and international communities. It addresses the paradoxes inherent in these dynamics when striving for equality, equity, efficiency, and quality, which are highly imperative to the sustainable development in the contemporary society. Through this process, students will gain a critical understanding of how possibly the pursuit of sustainable social development could be achieved through the education field in both Chinese and global contexts.</p>
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the political, socio-economic, cultural, and/or technological dimensions of educational events, and explain their interactions with the sustainable development in Chinese and global contexts; Evaluate the sustainability of China's educational system using sociological concepts such as equity, justice, ethics, and integrity, from both domestic and international viewpoints; Depict a sustainable future via educational development, supported by past trends and current socio-economic and political conditions in contemporary China and globally; Formulate valid questions about educational development issues and propose feasible solutions, considering social and cultural resources and constraints; Articulate personal perspectives and research findings in accurate and cogent English, both verbally and in writing, fulfilling EW/ER requirements.

<p>Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus</p> <p>(Note 2)</p>	<p>1-2. Introduction to theories of social development and the sustainable development needs in education field</p> <p>The first two lectures will firstly introduce key theories of social development (e.g., functional theory, reproduction theory, cultural production theory, resistance theory, and multiculturalism) to frame students' analytic perspectives for the selective discussant topics included in the following sessions. Secondly, the definition of sustainability and the concept of education for sustainable development will be also introduced and discussed to highlight how education development and reforms can be explained in relevant to social development theories and examined within the framework of sustainability. To meet this end, sustainable development goals and related educational and social phenomena in the Chinese and global contexts (e.g. inequalities facing the rural population, migrant children's educational abandonment, and the rise of study abroad) will be exemplified and illustrated.</p> <p>3. Rural education reforms and sustainable development in rural China</p> <p>This lecture illustrates the political trends of rural education reform in China in the late 20th and 21st centuries and discusses how changing rural-urban relations in different phases of urbanization process in contemporary China have shaped rural education development. Furthermore, it also examines the evolving cultural misrecognition of the conception of rurality in the social development discourse in both Chinese and international contexts. Last but not least, we will also address how such deficit perspective in rural development would jeopardize the sustainable development of rural China and how possibly the platform of education could be reframed in the concept of cultural justice to better the sustainability of rural revitalisation in the context of China.</p> <p>4. The rise and fall of vocational education in contemporary China: How to cultivate a “sustainable” worker for future?</p> <p>This lecture reviews the historical and current development of vocational education in contemporary China with the comparison of international experiences (e.g., Germany and Japanese cases). Also, this lecture discusses the social, political, and cultural rationales underlying the rise and fall of Chinese vocational education. Issues such as the nexus of vocational education and industrialisation, student interns from vocational schools, and the stigma of vocational education, will be raised for classroom discussions. Last but not least, resistance theory and empowerment perspective will be introduced in this lecture to examine how possibly the schooling practices in vocational education could be reformed to enable the students to resist against the prevailing stigmatisation of “vocational school students” and become sustainable, capable workers for future national development.</p> <p>5. Educational pursuit, parenting, and migration</p> <p>This lecture explores in depth the cultural changes in parenting styles and parenting practices in China after the 1978 economic reform. Western studies on social class stratification in parenting beliefs and behaviours are examined here to lead the discussions on whether Chinese parents' educational expectations and participation in children's education have been shifting and</p>
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stratified in the past decades as well and how. Factors of children's number, gender, ethnic minority backgrounds, and exposure to social media on educational choices and population migration will also be discussed. Secondly, this lecture will further examine how parental involvement in children's education has intertwined with their family-based migration decision-making in both domestic and international wide. Last but not least, through discussing the growing culture of "*juan*" (involution) and "*tangping*" (laying down) in education competition in the Chinese context, we will guide students to review and seek possible pathways to sustainability for student development.

6. Digital divide in education: Challenges and opportunities for a sustainable society

This lecture debates the impacts of educational technology as a "double-edged sword" on the development of education in China. By reviewing the evolution and application of educational technology in China's education practices, it highlights the enlarging digital divide in education and leads students to critically reflect on how technology innovation affects the social dimension of sustainability, particularly in terms of equality and justice in education and society.

7. From Confucian roots to Socialist values: The evolution of citizenship education in a global China

This lecture delves into the evolution and current practices of citizenship education in the Chinese educational system from the international comparative perspective. It will also trace its roots from Confucian traditions to contemporary socialist values, and its roles in shaping a unified national identity. The lecture will explore how citizenship education fosters social cohesion and mobility, emphasizing the importance of collective harmony and duty in Chinese culture. Meanwhile, it guides students to thoughtfully balance individual and collective considerations, as well as equality and efficiency, in sustainability practices.

8. School choice frenzy: Policy changes for sustainability?

This lecture's analysis begins by discussing the differing definitions of school choice in Western and Asian contexts. It then examines the historical shifts in the school choice frenzy in China, during the transitions from primary to middle school and from middle to high school, with the focus on the concerns and capabilities of the stakeholders involved. Moreover, by adopting the school choice policy as the case, this lecture explores how the economic and social dimensions of sustainability interactively shape and reshape educational policy reforms in mainland China and what are the societal outcomes.

9. Sustainability as a framework and real-world applications

This lecture revisits the major events and phenomena introduced in the previous eight weeks with a further conceptualization of the historical evolution of sustainability in the context of China's culture and society. For comparison, we will study how other countries/regions address relevant needs from different stakeholders and analyse the underlying societal and cultural conditions and constraints.

	<p>10-12. The following three weeks are designed to guide students in completing their group project through a structured approach to research and analysis. This structured approach enables students to systematically analyse educational issues, evaluate their sustainability, and explore viable solutions for a comprehensive group project.</p> <p>Tutorial week 1: Pinpoint and contextualise educational issues Students will select educational phenomena and conceptualise related issues for their group project, incorporating historical reviews to understand their context and evolution.</p> <p>Tutorial week 2: Evaluate with a sustainability framework Students will assess the sustainability of the selected educational issues from political, socio-economic, cultural, technological, and ecological perspectives.</p> <p>Tutorial week 3: Generate solutions with a glocalised approach Students will explore potential solutions by comparing international approaches, identifying diverse strategies and best practices.</p> <p>13. Conclusion and student presentations</p>
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p> <p>(Note 3)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Problem Posing and Problem Solving: Students will be required to critically reflect on the social theories covered in lectures by proposing cases discovered from their observations of their social surroundings. The instructor will guide their reflections, case analyses, and case interpretations to cultivate students' values for sustainable development and encourage them to propose solutions to animate students' interests. 2. Students will be required to engage in class discussion and group work. The instructor will encourage students to have sociological and ethnographic imagination when discussing issues embedded in different contexts. 3. As part of the reading requirements for subjects with an "ER" designation, students are required to read the assigned book in addition to other readings covered in lectures. They must participate in instructional and assessment activities organised by the ELC to acquire the appropriate reading skills and demonstrate their understanding of the extensive text. 4. As part of the writing requirements for subjects with an "EW" designation, students are required to write a review essay of 1,500 - 2500 words in English on a selected theme or a book chapter of reading materials chosen from a list provided by the instructor and present their main arguments with a case study in Greater China context. They are also required to attend the tutorials organised by the ELC to acquire the appropriate writing skills.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 4)	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)				
			a	b	c	d	e
	1. Group work & presentation (for ER requirement)	30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2. Class participation	10%	✓	✓			✓
	3. Review essay - 50% to be assessed by APSS - 10% to be assessed by ELC (for ER & EW requirement)	60%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Total	100 %					
	Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes: Students are required to read before lectures and critically analyse the conditions and dynamics of the relationships between education and social mobility and sustainable development. They are also required to discuss and debate on the selected topics related to the subject. Students will be grouped into groups and are required to conduct a small case study on the selected topics related to the subject and present their observations, critical reflections, and proposed actions on their studies to their fellow classmates in class under the instructors’ instructions and supervision. Students are required to write a review essay of 1500—2,500 words on a selected theme or a book chapter of reading materials chosen from a list provided by the instructor and present their main arguments with a case study in Greater China context. 10% of the subject will be assessed by the ELC. Students are required to discuss with their fellow classmates in class on various questions concerning challenges to the sustainable development in Chinese society in order to better evaluate issues and challenges. Their class participation will be assessed by students’ attendance, their well-preparedness for and active engagement in classes—and online forum discussions.						
	Class contact:						
	▪ Lecture						39 Hrs.

Student Study Effort Expected	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Self-study before lectures	20 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation for group presentation	30 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation for essay writing	20 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	109 Hrs.
Reading List and References	<p>Reading List to Meet ER Requirement:</p> <p>Required reading list (in total 202 pages):</p> <p>Hannum, E., & Park, A. (Eds.) (2007). <i>Education and reform in China</i>. Routledge. [Selected chapters 1 (pp.1-21), 2 (pp.27-43), 3 (pp.44-63), 4 (pp.64-80), 7 (pp.117-132), 9 (pp.154-172), and 13 (pp.224-247), in total 134 pages will be selected from this book]</p> <p>Sachs, J. (2015). <i>The age of sustainable development</i>. Columbia University Press. [Selected chapters 1 (pp.1-44) and 8 (pp. 251-274), in total 68 pages will be selected from this book]</p> <p>Supplement reading list:</p> <p>Anyon, J. (2011). <i>Marx and education</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Apple, M.W. (1982). <i>Cultural and economic reproduction in education: Essays on class, ideology, and the state</i>. Routledge & Kegan Paul.</p> <p>Barth, M. (2014). <i>Implementing sustainability in higher education: Learning in an age of transformation</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Cuervo, Hernán. (2016). <i>Understanding social justice in rural education</i>. Springer.</p> <p>Freire, Paulo. (1970). <i>Pedagogy of the oppressed</i> (M.B. Ramos (trans.)). Continuum.</p> <p>Guo, Shibao, and Yan Guo, (Eds.) (2016). <i>Spotlight on China: Chinese education in the globalized world</i>. Sense Publishers.</p> <p>Hansen, M. H. (2013). Learning individualism: Hesse, Confucius, and Pep-Rallies in a Chinese rural high school. <i>The China Quarterly</i>, 213, 60–77.</p> <p>Howlett, M., Ramesh, M., & Perl A. (1995). <i>Studying public policy: Policy cycles and policy subsystems</i>. Toronto: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Kong, P. A. (2016). <i>Parenting, education, and social mobility in rural China: Cultivating dragons and phoenixes</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Kong, P.A., Emily Hannum, and Gerard A. Postiglione. (Eds.). (2021). <i>Rural education in China's social transition</i>. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.</p> <p>Lareau, Annette. (2003). <i>Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press.</p> <p>Law, W.-W. (2011). <i>Citizenship and citizenship education in a global age: Politics, policies, and practices in China</i>. P. Lang.</p>	

	<p>Levinson, B.A., & Holland, D. (1996). <i>The cultural production of the educated person: Critical ethnographies of schooling and local practice</i>. State University of New York Press.</p> <p>Li, J. (2023). <i>Sustainable education policy development in China: Challenges and strategies</i>. Springer Nature Singapore.</p> <p>Li Y., Ranieri M. (2013). Educational and social correlates of the digital divide for rural and urban children: A study on primary school students in a provincial city of China. <i>Computers & Education</i>, 60(1), 197–209.</p> <p>Murphy, R. (2009). <i>Labour migration and social development in contemporary China</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Solomon, G., Allen, N. J., & Resta, P. E. (Eds.). (2003). <i>Toward digital equity: Bridging the divide in education</i>. Allyn and Bacon.</p> <p>Thøgersen, S. (2002). <i>Country of culture: Twentieth-century China seen from the village schools of Zouping, Shandong</i>. The University of Michigan Press.</p> <p>Wang, D. (2013). <i>The demoralization of teachers: Crisis in a rural school in China</i>. Lexington Books.</p> <p>Woronov, T. E. (2015). <i>Class work: Vocational schools and China's urban youth</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Wu, Q., Zhang, X., & Waley, P. (2016). Jiaoyufication: When gentrification goes to school in the Chinese inner city. <i>Urban Studies</i>, 53(16), 3510–3526.</p> <p>Zhong, B., Zhu, F., & Xia, L. (2021). Is there a digital divide between urban students and migrants in China? <i>Sage Open</i>, 11(2).</p> <p>Zhong Z. J. (2011). From access to usage: The divide of self-reported digital skills among adolescents. <i>Computers & Education</i>, 56(3), 736–746.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.