Subject Description Form

Subject Code	APSS5740
Subject Title	Family Systems and Adolescent Development
Credit Value	3
Level	5
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Assessment Methods	

100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment
1. Group practice project	0%	20%
2. Individual reflection paper	30%	0%
3. Individual assignment	50%	0%

- The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned;
- The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject.

This course will critically examine a range of theories of adolescent development in the context of family, with specific reference to a range of issues related to culture, gender, and the wider contexts. Adolescent-related problems/ behaviours/ phenomena such as drug abuse, internet addiction, delinquency, mental health challenges, gang problems, disabling relationships, low motivation, etc. would be discussed particularly in the context of Hong Kong.

Objectives	

The objective of this module is to help student critically examine the major challenges and issues confronting today's youths using critical, developmental and systemic perspectives. The module examines personal, familial, and societal factors that lead to problems or affect the positive and sustainable development during adolescence. Intervention models and tools , especially that in relation to the family, that target specific issues, such as substance abuse, mental health challenges (e.g., depression), and disengagement from the community/ society are examined and evaluated for their effectiveness.

Intended Learning Outcomes	

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:

a. critically appraise the usefulness of different theories of adolescent development;
b. recognize the importance of family context with regard to adolescent development, with specific reference to the local context;
c. identify the professional roles of the learners in working with adolescents in the light of different theories of adolescence;
d. devise programs for youth and their families in the light of the research evidence on different type of programmes; and
e. have the knowledge and skills in working with other professionals or stakeholders in

	helping youths and their families.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	1. **Overview of issues and challenges of adolescents and youth work through time and contexts** This session examines "What is adolescence?" through an overview of the characteristics of youth in the context of time, the definition of youth and adolescents in the context of different countries, with a particular focus on the general profile and challenges of Hong Kong youth and adolescents 2. **The major adolescence theories and concepts** This session begins with a discussion on the importance of theories in understanding adolescence, and critiques on a range of adolescent contemporary perspectives and their development: psychoanalytic, psycho-social, interpersonal, social-cognitive, contextual, and youth empowerment perspectives 3. **The adolescent-peer-family triangle** This session attempts to review the notion and definition of "family" and peer, and their impact on adolescent development, particularly divorce, parenting style, attachment, parent child relationship, gangs, peers, and the tension between peers and parents on adolescent development. 4. **The contexts of adolescence: The school, workplace, community and the media** This session looks at the major salient contexts for adolescent development including the school workplace, community and the media. "Effective schools" would be scrutinized, school subsystems, school bullying and violence, academic achievement and dropping out of school would be some of the issues discussed. Theories of career and life development would be applied to reviewing the career development and guidance for adolescents, the impact of summer jobs, full time employment and volunteer work on adolescent development would be appraised. The function and impact of media on adolescent development, and the impact of "pathological videogame use" on adolescent-parent relationship would be introduced d based on empirical evidence. 5. **The major issues/challenges adolescents encounter nowadays** "How do people define the problematic or at-risk behaviors of adolescents?" is used to begin the examination of criteria for determining and classifying some prevalent or emerging behaviors of adolescents. The risk and protective factors are suggested for some of the challenges adolescents face in this session. In-depth exploration is made on some problematic or high-risk behaviors of adolescents such as gang problem, social withdrawal, high-risk sexual behaviors, etc. 6. **Reviewing mental health problems and suicidal ideation in youth, and introducing interventions** After a review of the risk and protective factors of mental health challenges in adolescents, this session focuses on reviewing mental health challenges encountered by youth and adolescents with different perspectives and introducing intervention (s) with case studies. 7. **Juvenile delinquency & youth crime: Prevention, diversion and treatment** The concept and theories of juvenile delinquency will be reviewed and the salient factors associated to the phenomenon will be presented for discussion and debated. Specific attention will be paid to the juvenile delinquency problems in the context of Hong Kong, in relation to the risk and protective

factor. A survey and comparison of the juvenile delinquency prevention, intervention and diversion programs available locally and internationally will be conducted.

8. **Adolescent drug use, internet use and youth with prolonged withdrawal behaviours (YPSW)**

    The cause assessment and treatment of drug abuse and internet addiction would be presented for discussion, with a particular focus on cultural and context issues. The issue of YPSW would also be discussed. Application of family perspective would be included, with reference to specific research and interventions in Hong Kong, and Asian and Western countries. The concept of "expanding sources of recognition" will be elaborated regarding how to reengage YPSW by involving family members and other stakeholders.

9. **Youth not in education, employment, or training (NEET), youth unemployment and poverty**.

    The causes of youth unemployment and poverty will be discussed. The impacts of poverty and unemployment on youth development and wellbeing will be highlighted. Family-based intervention will be introduced. The NEET phenomenon will be discussed with a global perspective. The expanded notion of work model (ENOW) and an experience-driven (ED) framework will be introduced and demonstrated regarding how it works to support NEET youth and adolescents in or near poverty in family and community settings.

Teaching/Learning Methodology	The participation of students both in the lectures and seminars are crucial for learning in this module. The subject lecturer will be responsible for providing students with the theoretical and knowledge inputs about adolescence and their family development. Students are expected to share on topics and case discussion guided by the lecturer as the subject is delivered. Teaching methods include lectures, discussion forums, video presentation, case discussion, and group project presentation. Overseas and local guest speakers who are expert in the area of working with youths are invited where possible.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)				
		a	b	c	d	e
1. Group practice project	20%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Individual reflection paper	30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Individual assignment	50%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total	100 %					

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

Students are expected to actively share and discuss their learning and ideas with others during lectures and seminars, and participate in a group practice project. All students

	are required to complete an individual assignment before participating in the group practice project, and an individual reflection paper after the group practice project. The overall purpose of these individual and group projects is to give students a platform to integrate the theories and concepts of adolescence learnt in classroom setting, and increase their first hand understanding of the issues and challenges related to working with youths. **Course requirement** **1. Individual Assignment [55%]** The individual assignment requires students to apply a theory/ model/ approach/ framework in understanding, accounting for, or reviewing a certain behavior/ problem/ issue/ phenomenon related to adolescents . Total word length for this paper must not exceed 2,000 words, excluding references. The topic selected for individual assignment must be different from group project. **2. Group Practice Project [20%]** Students will form groups and select an issue relating to youth in Hong Kong (e.g., parent-adolescent conflict, pre-marital sex, boy-girl relationship, use of digital media, career choice etc.). Each group will conduct an interview with one of the stakeholders related to the issues (e.g., the youth, family members, social workers, teachers etc.) and make a presentation on their work. The presentation is around 30 minutes. **3. Individual Reflection Paper [25%]** The students are expected to participate in an assigned family program and interact with the participants. Based on their observation and reflections, the students are requested to write a reflection paper, with a word limit of no more than 1,000 words.
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:	
	• Lecture	24 Hrs.
	• Seminar	15 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	• Preparatory and discussion for group projects	16 Hrs.
	• Reading prescribed books & articles	30 Hrs.
	• Assignment	20 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	105 Hrs.
Reading List and References	**Essential** Corcoran, J. (2011). *Mental health treatment for children and adolescents* [electronic resource]. Oxford: Oxford University Press

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Chow, N.W.S. (1987). *A comparison of delinquent youth and non-delinquent youth on the aspects of parental supervision and schooling : a follow-up study.* Kwai Tsing & Tsuen Wan District Board.

D'Ambrosio, Jay. (2006). *Rethinking adolescence: using story to navigate life's uncharted years.* Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield.

Frey, A., Ruchkin, V., Martin, A., & Schwab-Stone, M. (2009). Adolescents in transition: School and family characteristics in the development of violent behaviors entering high school. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development,* 40(1), 1-13.

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effects of stressful life events on adolescent depression are buffered by parent-child closeness. *Development & Psychopathology*, 21(2), 621-635.

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Haegerich, T. M., & Tolan, P. H. (2008). Core competencies and the prevention of adolescent substance use. *New Directions for Child & Adolescent Development*, 2008(122), 47-60.

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Su, X., & Wong, V. (2022). Enhancing the career capabilities of NEET youth in Hong Kong: an experience-driven framework, International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10775-022-09531-5

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