

# The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

## Subject Description Form

<b>Subject Code</b>	APSS2S03																
<b>Subject Title</b>	Understanding Learning Difficulties																
<b>Credit Value</b>	3																
<b>Level</b>	2																
<b>GUR Requirements Intended to Fulfill</b>	<p>This subject intends to fulfill the following requirement(s) :</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Healthy Lifestyle</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Freshman Seminar</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Languages and Communication Requirement (LCR)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Leadership and Intra-Personal Development</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Service-Learning</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cluster-Area Requirement (CAR)</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Community, Organization and Globalization</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> History, Cultures and World Views</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>China-Study Requirement</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes or <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Writing and Reading Requirements</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> English or <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese</p>																
<b>Pre-requisite / Co-requisite / Exclusion</b>	NIL																
<b>Assessment Methods</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;">100% Continuous Assessment</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Individual Assessment</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Group Assessment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. In-class assignments in seminars</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Presentation of service plan &amp; work</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Reflective journals</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Performance in community service</td> <td style="text-align: center;">40%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment	1. In-class assignments in seminars	--	10%	2. Presentation of service plan & work	--	20%	3. Reflective journals	30%	--	4. Performance in community service	40%	--
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<b>Objectives</b>	<p>The subject aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. develop a general understanding of the concepts and practices of learning difficulties (LD) through community service;</li> <li>2. nurture a sense of civic responsibility and community engagement in our students;</li> <li>3. cultivate an awareness of the needs, as well as the strengths, of individuals with learning difficulties;</li> <li>4. equip students with knowledge and skills in providing initial support to children and youth with learning difficulties.</li> </ol>
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. recognize some basic types of learning difficulties and have higher sensitivity about the needs of underprivileged children and youth with learning difficulties;</li> <li>b. confidently work and connect with children and youth with LD, and develop genuine dialogues and exchanges during the process;</li> <li>c. develop service activities to support individuals with learning difficulties and critically evaluate the effectiveness with reference to changes within of service recipients;</li> <li>d. reflect upon community service learning experiences from the perspectives of personal growth, civic engagement and academic enhancement.</li> </ol>
<b>Subject Synopsis / Indicative Syllabus</b> <i>(Note 2)</i>	<p>This is a 2-semester subject to be conducted in Semester Two and Summer Term in Hong Kong</p> <p><b>Lectures and seminars (Semester 2)</b>  The lectures and seminars of this course will cover the main topics as indicated below, and are designed to inform the students of essential knowledge and basic methodologies relevant to learning difficulties.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conceptualization of learning difficulties</li> <li>2. Classification and identification of different major types of learning difficulties</li> <li>3. Interventions paradigms and skills in supporting individuals with learning difficulties; psychosocial principles of effective goal selection in working with learning difficulties.</li> <li>4. Discussion of social issues relevant to learning difficulties; misconceptions, potential pitfalls in prevention and intervention.</li> <li>5. Ethical consideration over service delivery and research on learning difficulties</li> </ol> <p><b>Service Learning Activities (Over Semester 2 and Summer term)</b>  The rationales and the significance of the students' community engagement to the potential client will be as an objective of university education; also explain how service learning is related to community engagement and the benefits to</p>

	the recipients and service providers.																												
<p><b>Teaching / Learning Methodology</b> (Note 3)</p>	<p><b>Lectures &amp; Presentations</b></p> <p>The lectures and seminars are designed to introduce the students to the relevant issues in this subject. They also provide a student forum to discuss these issues. There will be opportunities for small group discussions, assignment, and presentations to explore these issues in greater depth.</p> <p><b>Service Learning Activities</b></p> <p>Service learning activities in this subject will emphasize getting to know children or young people with learning difficulties. The nature of the service varies. They can be involved in the planning or rendering of service to clients in non-government organizations (NGOs) service centres or partner schools, researching on issues of learning difficulties, under the supervision and guidance of the project teaching team. In all cases, students will be facilitated to interact with the service clients to understand their needs.</p> <p>Students will be arranged to work either in teams or individually depending on their own study schedule. They will be given opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ carry out interviews with and observation of clients with learning difficulties;</li> <li>♦ work with experience frontline workers to formulate service activities and plans according to their knowledge about the needs and strengths of the clients;</li> <li>♦ assist in the delivery of service and implementation of training activities for LD.</li> </ul> <p>Students will be given supervision and support in their service. They are required to be proactive and reflective in service learning and be informed the proper attitude and manner as service agent. Each student will be required to submit several reflective service logs that serve as a cumulative record of and reflections upon jobs done.</p> <p>Students should always be punctual in attending their community service learning sessions. In case of absence or inability to attend a service session for a personal or other reasons, prior notice should be made to the course instructor at at least 1 day before the involved session. During the process, students should under no circumstance take photos of the clients (children and parents) without prior consent from both the clients and supervisors.</p>																												
<p><b>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</b> (Note 4)</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. In-class assignments in seminars</td> <td>10%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d			1. In-class assignments in seminars	10%	✓		✓	✓		
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Total	100%						

The class discussions and assignments are designed to help students learn and engage their attention to the relevant issues discussed. Students are required to form in a group of three to four to actively participate in class discussions and activities.

Each student will be required to engage in a total of 40 hours of service related to LD within 1 semester. The students will be required to develop a good understanding of the needs of service recipients and prepare a service learning project plan. Students will be observed and evaluated on their performance and attitude in the delivery of service, namely adequateness in pre-service preparation, responsibility, degree of engagement with service recipients, response appropriateness, communication and teamwork with other students and service supervisors.

Each student will be required to submit 4 individual reflective service journals during the stage of service delivery (each with 1 A4-sized page). The journals should be considered as a cumulative record of the jobs done, with detailed description of some carefully selected interactions and events happened. Also, students can indicate struggles and successes they have encountered in the process and share their feelings and thoughts.

After the stage of service delivery, students will be required to do a short presentation about their service learning experiences. During the presentation, students are expected to demonstrate a clear understanding of the clients' needs, a logical theoretically-based analysis of their situation with careful selection and detailed description of critical events and processes, and an ability to raise genuine discussion and reflection.

1. The final grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned for each assessment component.
2. Successful completion and submission of all component assignments is required for passing the subject, and
3. Every student must pass the specific component(s) (standard of passing) if he/she is to pass the subject.

<b>Student Study Effort Expected</b>	Class contact:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lectures A total of 6 lectures will be held from week 1 to 6, during which essential knowledge and skills about working with LD clients will be introduced.</li> </ul>	18 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Case discussion, skill consultation &amp; project presentation Over the seminar sessions from week 7 to 11. Instructors will be available for discussion and service consultation. Week 12 and 13 are for students' presentation of service learning experiences.</li> </ul>	21 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self Study &amp; planning Recommended readings and articles will be posted on Blackboard. Students can discuss the themes and ideas from the readings over seminars and lectures.  Also, students are expected to prepare service plans with reference to the materials.</li> </ul>	30 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service preparation and delivery Service sessions will be held within the period from <u>week 4 of Semester 2 to week 6 of Summer Term</u>. Two major sites will be provided for students to engage in services on supporting children or youth with learning difficulties: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Local partner schools and local NGO agencies</i> – Delivery of after-school tutoring programs for students with learning difficulties or low academic achievement.</li> <li>2. <i>Manulife Centre for Children with SLD at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University</i> - Participate in the planning and the delivery of training activities and related research work.</li> </ol>  <i>Other off-campus service opportunities may also be arranged in an ad hoc manner.</i> </li> </ul>	40 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preparation of reflective journals A total of 4 single-paged reflective service journals with clear and detailed description of events and processes and personal reflection and insight.</li> </ul>	10 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>	English supplemented with Chinese	

<b>Medium of Assessment</b>	English
<b>Reading List and References</b>	<p><u>Recommended Text</u></p> <p>Lerner, J. W., &amp; Johns, B. H. (2012). <i>Learning disabilities and related mild disabilities: Teaching strategies and new directions</i>. Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.</p> <p><u>Supplementary</u></p> <p>Chinn, S. J. (2004). <i>The trouble with Maths: A practical guide to helping learners with numeracy difficulties</i>. London: Routledge Falmer.</p> <p>Ho, C. S. H, Wong, H. Y.-K., Lo, C.-M, Chan, D. W., Chung, K. K.-H. and Lo, S. C (2014). <i>Helping Children with Reading Disability in Chinese: The Response to Intervention Approach with Effective Evidence-Based Curriculum</i>. In X. Chen, Q. Wang &amp; Y. C. Luo (Ed.), <i>Reading Development and Difficulties in Monolingual and Bilingual Chinese Children Literacy Studies 8</i> (pp.103-124). Netherlands: Springer.</p> <p>Lai A.C. (2011). <i>Understanding dyslexia and overcoming reading difficulties</i> (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). H.K.: Sun Yan Publication (HK) Ltd.</p> <p>Rapin, I., &amp; Allen, P. (1987). <i>Developmental dysphasia and autism in pre-school children: characteristics and subtypes</i>. Paper presented at the First International Symposium on Speech and Language Disorders in Children, London.</p> <p>Taylor, I., &amp; Taylor, M. M. (1995). <i>Writing and literacy in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese</i>. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.</p> <p>Wong, B. Y. L., Graham, L., Hoskyn, M. &amp; Berman, J. (2008). <i>The ABCs of Learning Disabilities</i>. London, UK: Elsevier Academic Press.</p>