

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	APSS348			
Subject Title	Economics and Social Problems			
Credit Value	3			
Level	3			
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	N/A			
Assessment Methods	100%	Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment
	1.	Class Attendance and Participation	15%	--
	2.	Seminar Presentation	25%	--
	3.	Written Assignment	40%	--
	4.	Quiz	20%	--
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned; • The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and • Student must pass component 3 – written assignment – if he/she is to pass the subject. 			
Objectives	<p>The subject aims to introduce students to the art of economic analysis and how it can be applied to analyze some major social problems in real life. A special emphasis is the social policy and administration implications, both insights and limitations, of the economic perspectives. Concepts and tools in economics will be taught and illustrated through applying them in examining social problems – a “learning by doing” approach.</p>			
Intended Learning Outcomes	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. master basic and essential knowledge of economic analysis; b. understand how economic analysis can contribute to the analysis of social problems; and c. appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of economic analysis of social problems. 			
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<p>This course has two parts. The first part is a general introduction to basic knowledge of economics. A basic set of assumptions, tools and techniques in economics will be introduced in this part. The second part is on the application of economics to the study of some major social problems.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction and course overview; 			

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. A Framework for the study of Economics and Social Problems 3. Key Theoretical Concepts and Implications 4. Markets as a Social Construction 5. Poverty and Inequality 6. Labour Market and Employment 7. Healthcare 8. Housing and Education 9. Food Production, Consumption and Social Issues 																																																						
Teaching/Learning Methodology	<p>Lectures will be for expounding the concepts and applications of theories and approaches, illustrated by current issues and real life cases. Seminars are for small group discussion and student-centered problem-driven and issue-based learning, which include seminar project, seminar presentation (with peer assessment) and project report.</p>																																																						
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes	<table border="1" data-bbox="456 819 1481 1361"> <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>e</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Class Attendance and Participation</td> <td>15%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Seminar Presentation</td> <td>25%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Written Assignment</td> <td>40%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Quiz</td> <td>20%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100%</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</p> <p><u>Class Attendance and Participation and Seminar Presentation</u></p> <p>Regular attendance and class participation is important for students to understand the basic concepts. Students will present their research findings on a selected social policy issue using economic analysis either following assigned topics or coming up with their original ideas. They are expected to prepare a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the economic reasoning and the insights gained. This exercise helps to enhance their competence and effectiveness in applying economics concepts in analyzing concrete issues as well as polishing their public presentation and communication skills.</p> <p><u>Individual Written Assignment:</u></p> <p>The written assignment will be either a book review or a paper on a topic of student's choice. The topic of the essay must NOT be the same as the seminar presentation topic. Students are expected to demonstrate their written exposition of economic analysis and how well they can learn from their readings and lectures.</p>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d	e		1. Class Attendance and Participation	15%	✓	✓					2. Seminar Presentation	25%	✓	✓	✓				3. Written Assignment	40%	✓	✓	✓				4. Quiz	20%	✓	✓	✓				Total	100%						
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	<p><u>Quiz:</u></p> <p>Students will do two sets of quiz for assessing their mastery of foundational economics knowledge and standard applications of economic analysis in various social issues.</p>	
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:	
	▪ Lectures	27 Hrs.
	▪ Seminars	12 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Self-directed study	40 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation for quiz	10 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation for seminar presentation	10 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation for written assignment	20 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	119 Hrs.
Medium of Instruction	English	
Medium of Assessment	English	
Reading List and References	<p><u>Essential</u></p> <p>Ekstedt, H, & Fusari, A. (2010). <i>Economic theory and social change: Problems and revisions</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Fioramonti, L. (2013). <i>Gross domestic problem: the politics behind the world's most powerful number</i>. London: Zed Books.</p> <p>Frank, R.H. (2016), <i>Principles of economics</i> (6th ed.). New York, N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Education.</p> <p>Le Grand, J., Propper, C, & Smith, S. (2008). <i>The economics of social problems</i> (4th ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>Sharp, A.M., Register, C.A., & Grimes, P.W. (2013). <i>Economics of social issues</i> (20th ed.). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p><u>Supplementary</u></p> <p>Augustin-Jean, L. (2010). "The 'Social construction of the market' in a transitional economy: The sugar industry in China in the context of globalization". <i>Economic Sociology – The European Electronic Newsletter</i>, Vol. 11, Number 3, July, 33-42.</p> <p>Bognar, G., & Hirose, I. (2014). <i>The ethics of health care rationing: an introduction</i>. Routledge.</p>	

	<p>Brinton, M. C. (2005). "Education and the Economy", in N. J. Smelser & R. Swedberg (Eds), <i>Handbook of economic sociology</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press.</p> <p>Cahuc, P., Carcillo, S., & Zylberberg, A. (2014). <i>Labor economics</i> (2nd ed.). MIT Press.</p> <p>Chan, K. W. (2000). "Prosperity or inequality: Deconstructing the myth of home ownership in Hong Kong". <i>Housing Studies</i>, 15:1, 29-44.</p> <p>Callon, M. (ed.) (1998). <i>The laws of the market</i>. Oxford: Blackwell.</p> <p>Chiu, S.W.K. & Wong, S.L. (2013). <i>Hong Kong divided? Social structures of inequality in the twenty-first century</i>. Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.</p> <p>Chiu, S. & Levin, D. (1999). "The organization of industrial relations in Hong Kong; Economic, political and sociological perspectives". <i>Organization Studies</i>, 20: 2, 293-321.</p> <p>Coyle, D. (2014). <i>GDP: A brief but affectionate history</i>. Princeton University Press.</p> <p>Delman, J. & Yang, M. H. (2012). "A value chain Gone awry: Implications of the 'Tainted milk scandal' in 2008 for political and social organization in Rural China", in Bislev & Thogersen, <i>Challenges facing Chinese political development: Organizing rural China</i>. Lanham: Lexington Books.</p> <p>Dolfsma, W. (2013). <i>Government failure: society, markets and rules</i>. Edward Elgar.</p> <p>Garcia-Parpet M.F. (2007). "The social construction of a perfect market: The strawberry auction at Fontaines-en-Sologne", in D. MacKenzie, F. Muniesa & L. Siu, <i>Do economists make markets? On the performativity of economics</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press.</p> <p>Goodstadt, L. (2013). <i>Poverty in the midst of affluence</i>. Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press.</p> <p>Guinness, L., & Wiseman, V. (eds.) (2011). <i>Introduction to health economics</i> (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.</p> <p>Kafka, T. (2010). <i>Poverty</i>. Lucent Books.</p> <p>Held, D. & Kaya, A. (Eds.) (2007). <i>Global inequality</i>. Cambridge: Polity.</p> <p>Heiner, R. (2010). <i>Conflicting interests: Readings in social problems and inequality</i>. Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Leung, B., & Chiu, S. (1991). <i>A social history of industrial strikes and the labor movement in Hong Kong 1946-89</i>. Social Sciences Research Center, University of Hong Kong.</p> <p>Mankiw, N.G. (2015). <i>Essentials of economics</i> (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.</p> <p>McPake, B., Normand, C., & Smith, S. (2013). <i>Health economics: an international perspective</i> (3rd ed.). Routledge.</p>
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	<p>Mok, F. & Lee, J. (2013). “Just housing policy: Is there a moral foundation for a homeownership policy?”. <i>Housing Studies</i>, 28:6, 891-909.</p> <p>Perkins, D.H., et al. (2013). <i>Economics of development</i> (7th ed.). W.W. Norton & Company.</p> <p>Ridge, T., & Wright. S. (2008). <i>Understanding inequality, poverty and wealth: Policies and prospects</i>. Policy Press.</p> <p>Shemilt, I. et al. (eds.) (2010). <i>Evidence-based decisions and economics: Health care, social welfare, education and criminal justice</i> (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.</p> <p>Streeck, W. (2005). “The sociology of labor markets and trade unions”, in N. J. Smelser & R. Swedberg (eds.), <i>Handbook of economic sociology</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press.</p> <p>Wong R. Y. C. (2013). <i>Diversity and occasional anarchy: On deep economic and social contradictions in Hong Kong</i>. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press (Chapter 16).</p>
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