

## Subject Description Form

<b>Subject Code</b>	APSS5203							
<b>Subject Title</b>	Contemporary Issues in Social Policy							
<b>Credit Value</b>	3							
<b>Level</b>	5							
<b>Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion</b>	Nil							
<b>Assessment Methods</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">100% Continuous Assessment</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Individual Assessment</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1. Presentation and Case Study</td> <td style="text-align: center;">50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Term Paper</td> <td style="text-align: center;">50%</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned;</li> <li>▪ The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and</li> <li>▪ Student must pass all components (standard of passing) if he/she is to pass the subject.</li> </ul>		100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	1. Presentation and Case Study	50%	2. Term Paper	50%
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<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To introduce to students in-depth studies on various social policy issues/domains;</li> <li>2. To outline the various institutional arrangements of social policy issues and to appreciate the risks and constraints involved in planning these policies;</li> <li>3. To apply various theoretical approaches used to analyse social policy and development in East Asia.</li> </ol>							
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes</b>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. Basic knowledge and competence of the field of study</b> Students will be able to enunciate in depth major emerging issues in social policy making and social development in a comparative perspective</li> <li><b>b. Effective Communication</b> Students will be able to demonstrate their proficiency effectively in communicating and dissecting major issues emerging in social policy making and planning for social development</li> <li><b>c. Independent critical thinking</b></li> </ol>							

	<p>Students will be able to demonstrate confidently their independence and creativity in solving policy and development dilemmas and tensions associated with policy and development processes</p> <p><b>d. Ethical and Social Understanding</b> Students will be able to identify ethical values and vision crucial to analyzing and exploring responsible policy and development solutions emerging in contemporary international and local contexts.</p>
<p><b>Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Social Policy Issues: Introduction to global and local dimensions</b> An introduction to the broad spectrum of social policy issues facing contemporary welfare capitalism. Particular emphasis would be placed on issues such as: poverty and labour market distortions, changing role of the family, risks and life long income security, and those domains which affect the level of security: housing standard, health care, and the effectiveness of social security system.</li> <li>2. <b>The Role of Government in Social Policy &amp; Social Development</b> An emphasis will be placed on the centrality of government role in achieving balanced social development. The controversy between productivism and developmentalism as different guiding principles of social development will be critically examined to highlight the possibilities and limit of government's role in facilitating the development of household opportunity through asset-building, enhancing family and community functioning. Particular emphasis will be focused the issue of social justice in the process of social policy resource allocation, and the role of the government, in conjunction with the larger society, in building an inclusive environment for the poor and socially deprived.</li> <li>3. <b>The Political Economy of Social Policy in East Asia</b> The focus will be on the shift from explanations emphasizing convergence in the development of welfare states to those focusing on divergence. Particular attention will be paid to the East Asian Welfare Regime where the emphasis on workfare and system integration has been prevailing. Students will need to explore the issue of welfare and social justice within a socio-political context that give undue advantages to capitalists in terms of social resource allocation, and deeply oppose a fairer society through developmental social welfare.</li> <li>4. <b>Impact of Economic Crises on Family Functioning</b> The focus will be on the shifting role of the family as source of mutual aid and how changing global economy has stressed and shaped modern intra-familial relationship. Questions would be raised as to the impact of changing socio-economic policy on the continuing well functioning of the family and how the capacity of normal family functioning could be protected by social policies.</li> <li>5. <b>Do we need health insurance?</b> The focus would be on the problem of increasing health care cost and the problems and risks associated with various forms of health care insurance. The issue of health insurance will be examined comparatively and critically, citing examples of successes and failures. A careful examination will be conducted on the effectiveness and efficiency of the current mixed health care system shared between the state and the market, its advantages and disadvantages, its potential for improvements and possible constraints in the provision of long term care for an</li> </ol>

ageing population.

**6. Why are social security systems failing? Any alternative?**

The focus would be on the problems associated with the prevailing failures of social security systems around western industrial economies and in the context of an extremely volatile global economy in the post financial tsunami era. Special efforts will focus on a critical examination of alternatives to social security and how East Asian societies and governments cope with the problem of long-term income security through system integration and risk management. Institutional arrangements to facilitate the state and family in conjoint effort to build long-term income security will be explored.

**7. The Role of Housing in Social Development**

The unique role of housing policy as both a risk and a growth factor for families in the context of long-term asset building for income security would be carefully examined. Seldom does social policy carry such complex interfaces with both economic and urban policy as housing issues touch on land supply, the construction industry and the banking system. Within the large set of housing policies emphasis will be placed on home ownership policy and the quality of urban life associated with owner-occupation in metropolitan cities like Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei and Seoul.

**8. Consumer Choice, Welfare and Ethopolitics**

Modern welfare policy often conjures up images of choice, autonomy and self-determination in welfare consumption. This lecture will focus on the role and identity construction of welfare recipients. Particular emphasis would be placed on the concept of governmentality and ethopolitics where governance is disguised within a plethora of governing technologies aiming at promoting non-existent choices.

**9. Poverty – its many forms and causes in high growth East Asian Economies**

The focus would be on understanding the form and causes of perpetuating poverty amongst low-income people in Hong Kong. Examples will be drawn from other relevant East Asian countries who are beset with similar problems, and why public policy has failed thus far to alleviate the problem.

**10. Asset, Risk & Social Policy**

Modern social policies are now concerned with how social policies could enhance family and individual capacity to face both economic and non-economic family crises. Asset-building has been seen as vital life-long process to enhance such capacity. The focus of the lecture will be how government has succeeded or failed to use social policies to enhance such capacity-building.

**11. Disasters and Social Policy**

Modern life is beset with natural disasters of a scale that commonly shattered families and communities within a short time. This often calls for emergency social policies from both the state and the society. Proper coordination in the organization of urgent relief work and long term community rehabilitation calls for prior knowledge and planning. The lecture will focus on recent experiences in earthquakes, SARS and other epidemics to have a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness and equity issues of such relief work.

<b>Teaching/Learning Methodology</b>	<p>Students will involve in interactive lectures to learn the major current issues arising from changing frameworks and theories for understanding social policy and social development in international and local contexts. In particular, scholars/ practitioners will be invited to contribute to guest lectures to allow students to gain a broad perspective. In seminars, students will learn from their group projects designed specifically to focus on a major contemporary policy or social development issue to put their knowledge and skills into practice.</p>																																
<b>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="4">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Presentation of Case Study</td> <td>50%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Term Paper</td> <td>50%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100%</td> <td colspan="4"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</p> <p> <b>Presentation of Case Study</b>  Students will undertake one case study chosen from a list of seminar topics. They are expected to prepare a max 1500 words report identifying the key points of presentation and submit to their tutor at least two days prior to their presentation day. Students are expected also to prepare a power-point for presentation. This exercise will allow students to use their creativity and critical ability to select the best case study to illustrate the knowledge they have learned in class, demonstrate their ability in communicating their own research work, judgments they make independently and capability in resolving ethical and contemporary policy and development issues. </p> <p> <b>Term Paper</b>  The individual term paper should be up to 3,000 words long, choosing from a list of questions/topics to be provided. The policy issues covered should normally be different from those investigated in the seminar presentation. However, if the same presentation area is to be used for the term paper it must be set at an analytic level much deeper than the presentation. This certainly requires more in-depth treatment and wider readings. Prior approval should be sought from tutors in this regard. </p> <p> This piece of assessment will require students to demonstrate they have the knowledge and competence expected in the field, good competence in communicating ideas and research findings, creative and appropriate use of information, good judgments in organizing and delivering arguments and narratives and independent thinking in resolving ethical and social development issues. </p>					Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed				a	b	c	d	1. Presentation of Case Study	50%	✓	✓	✓	✓	2. Term Paper	50%	✓	✓	✓	✓	Total	100%				
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<b>Student Study</b>	<b>Class contact:</b>																																

<b>Effort Expected</b>	▪ Lecture	27 Hrs.
	▪ Seminar presentation and discussion	12 Hrs.
	<b>Other student study effort:</b>	
	▪ Self-directed Study	42 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation of Case Study and Presentation	20 Hrs.
	▪ Preparation of Term Paper	20 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	121 Hrs.
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>	English	
<b>Medium of Assessment</b>	English	
<b>Reading List and References</b>	<p><u>Essential</u></p> <p>Alcock, P., May, M., &amp; Wright, S.D. (Eds.) (2012). <i>The student's companion to social policy</i> (4th edition). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley &amp; Sons.</p> <p>Hill, M. (2006). <i>Social policy in the modern world: A comparative text</i>. Oxford: Blackwell publishing.</p> <p>Lee, J. and Chan, K-W. (Eds.) (2007). <i>The crisis of welfare in East Asia</i>. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.</p> <p>Lee, J. Midgley, J. &amp; Zhu, Y. (Eds.) (2014). <i>Social policy and change in East Asia</i>. Lanham: Lexington Books.</p> <p>Midgely, J., Livermore, M. (Eds.) (2008). <i>The handbook of social policy</i>. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.</p> <p><u>Supplementary</u></p> <p>Alcock, P. (2006). <i>Understanding poverty</i>. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>Amadio, M. (2000). <i>World data on education: a guide to the structure of national education systems</i>. Paris: International Bureau of Education, UNESCO.</p> <p>Agus, M., Doling, J., &amp; Lee, D.S. (2002). <i>Housing policy systems in South and East Asia</i>. Basingstoke, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan,</p> <p>Aspalter, C. (2001). <i>Different worlds of welfare capitalism: Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Hong Kong and Singapore</i>. Discussion Paper No. 80, Public Policy Program. Canberra: Australian National University.</p> <p>Bambra, C. (2005). Worlds of welfare and the health care discrepancy. <i>Social Policy and Society</i>, 4(1): 31-41.</p>	

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- Smuthkalin, W. (2006). *Political regimes and welfare state development in East Asia*:

	<p><i>how state leaders matter to social policy expansion in Taiwan, Thailand, and China</i> [electronic resource].</p> <p>Tang K.L. &amp; Wong, C.K. (Eds.) (2003). <i>Poverty monitoring and alleviation in East Asia</i>. New York: Nova Science Publishers.</p> <p>Twaddle, A. (Ed.) (2002). <i>Health care reform around the world</i>. Westport, Conn.: Auburn House</p> <p>Walker, A. &amp; Wong, C.K. (1996). Rethinking the western construction of the welfare state. <i>International Journal of Health Services</i>, 126 (1): 67-92.</p> <p>Walker, A. &amp; Wong, C.K. (Eds.) (2005). <i>East Asian welfare regimes in transition: From Confusianism to globalization</i>. Bristol: The Policy Press.</p>
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