City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public and International Affairs
with effect from Semester A 2024/25

Part I   **Course Overview**

Course Title:	**MAIS Capstone Project**
Course Code:	**PIA6018**
Course Duration:	**PIA6018 - Two semesters** (2 credits in Semester B + 1 credit in Summer Term)
Credit Units:	**3**
Level:	**P6**
Medium of Instruction:	**English**
Medium of Assessment:	**English**
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	**Nil**
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	**Nil**
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	**Nil**
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	**PIA6015 Master's Thesis**

Notes: Students who intend to write a "Master's Thesis" (PIA6015) in lieu of the Capstone Project (PIA6018) must complete PIA5026 Research Design for the Social Sciences in semester A, with a grade of A or above.

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

This course aims to enable students to undertake an original piece of group research in international studies, to integrate problems identified in the international studies field with different theoretical perspectives in a creative and innovative way, and to apply theories and research techniques to a chosen subject matter. Students will work in groups of three or four to work on a topic of their choice.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Formulate a research project on a topic related to international studies;	20%	✓	✓	✓
2.	Work and communicate effectively and creatively with others;	20%	✓	✓	
3.	Critically analyse a specific topic in international studies;	20%	✓	✓	
4.	Seek and apply quantitative or qualitative data and materials relevant to the project objectives; and	20%	✓	✓	
5.	Identify and critically analyse, synthesise and evaluate knowledge and theories relating to international studies.	20%	✓	✓	
		100%			

A1:   Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
A2:   Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.
A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
1. Oral presentations	students will work in groups to lead class discussions and structured question and answer sessions on relevant topics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2. Research paper	students will identify relevant materials to jointly write a research paper	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5			
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Written report Each group will submit a written research project report. The report will identify a compelling research question in international studies, present a suitable research design to answer it, analyze relevant qualitative or quantitative data and report and discuss the findings. Students will demonstrate understanding of and ability to apply practices for academic research and writing in their discipline, as expected at a master's level.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		70%	
Presentation of research project Each group will identify an original and effective way to present their research project. While the written report will target an academic readership, the presentation will be more informal, and should be designed to communicate the project to a broader, non-academic audience. Students will identify different ways to engage with various target groups (policy makers, other stakeholders, the general public, etc.). Examples of possible modes of presentation include, but are not limited to, traditional slide-based presentations, short documentary videos, informational podcasts, engagement through social media campaigns, interactive infographics and posters.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		30%	
Examination: 0 % (duration: **N/A**, if applicable)								
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

<u>Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter</u>

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Written Report	Ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project; quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings; ability to integrate theory and practice.	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is excellently demonstrated and applied. Very high quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings. Demonstrate ability to integrate theory and practice.	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is well demonstrated and applied. Good quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings. Some Indication ability to integrate theory and practice	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is rudimentarily demonstrated and applied. Fair quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings. Limited ability to integrate theory and practice.	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is limited. Superficial critical thinking and limited effort in the review of literature, analysis and evaluation and poor written communication, and limited creative findings. Minimal ability to integrate theory and practice.	Unable to demonstrate and apply knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project. No critical thinking and little effort in the review of literature, analysis and evaluation and very poor written communication, and very limited creative findings. No demonstration of the ability to integrate theory and practice.
2. Presentation of research project	Ability to summarize and present project rationale, relevance and findings to non-academic audiences. Ability to engage different stakeholders by using various media formats and communication channels.	Excellent ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and well-designed communication strategies.	Some evidence of ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and good-designed communication strategies.	Limited evidence of ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and fair-designed communication strategies.	Poor demonstration of ability to communicate project relevance or findings effectively.	No demonstration of ability to communicate project relevance or findings effectively.

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. Written report	Ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project; quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings; ability to integrate theory and practice.	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is excellently demonstrated and applied. Very high quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings. Demonstrate ability to integrate theory and practice.	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is well demonstrated and applied. Good quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings. Some Indication ability to integrate theory and practice	Knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project is limited. Superficial critical thinking and limited effort in the review of literature, analysis and evaluation and poor written communication, and limited creative findings. Minimal ability to integrate theory and practice.	Unable to demonstrate and apply knowledge and skills required to undertake an original discovery research project. No critical thinking and little effort in the review of literature, analysis and evaluation and very poor written communication, and very limited creative findings. No demonstration of the ability to integrate theory and practice.
2. Presentation of research project	Ability to summarize and present project rationale, relevance and findings to non-academic audiences. Ability to engage different stake holders by using various media formats and communication channels.	Excellent ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and well-designed communication strategies.	Some evidence of ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and good-designed communication strategies.	Limited evidence of ability to present project's relevance and finding through original, engaging and fair-designed communication strategies.	No demonstration of ability to communicate project relevance or findings effectively.

Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. **Keyword Syllabus**
    (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

    Supervised group project; literature review; problem identification; qualitative and quantitative research methods; research and writing.

2. **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
    (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

Creswell, John W. 2009. *Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hall, Peter. 2005. "The Elements of a Good Dissertation Prospectus or Research Proposal." Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Gray, David E. 2009. *Doing Research in the Real World*. London: SAGE.

Oliver, Paul. 2010. "The Student's Guide to Research Ethics." Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Ridley, Diana. 2012. "The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students." London: SAGE.

Roberts, C.M. 2004. "The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending your Dissertation." Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Sharp, John A., John Peters, and Keith Howard. 2002. *The Management of a Student Research Project*. Burlington, VT: Gower.

2.2 **Additional Readings**
    (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

Brady, Henry E. and David Collier. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.

City University of Hong Kong. (N/A) "Academic Honesty: Fundamental Principles for Knowledge Discovery and Innovation." Accessed online on 14 June 2020 at: http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/ah/

Elster, Jon. 2007. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2: 131-150.

George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press.

Gerring, John. 2001. *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework*. Cambridge University Press.

Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, Janet Buttolph, H.T. Reynolds, and Richard Joslyn. 2001. *Political Science Research Methods*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton University Press.

The University of Hong Kong. (N/A). "What is Plagiarism?" Accessed online on 14 June 2020 at: http://www.rss.hku.hk/plagiarism/