

**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: Sustainable Development: Theory and Policy

Course Code: PIA6502

Course Duration: One Semester

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) POL6502 Sustainable Development: Theory and Policy

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title) Nil

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course pursues two innovative objectives: first, it provides students with the knowledge of and capability to critically think about the principles, alternative conceptions and theoretical interpretations of the notion of sustainable development; second, it introduces students to cutting-edge research on sustainable development policy and practices and to the processes of policy-making for sustainability at the international and local level. Students will then be able to discover for themselves how theory, politics and process of policy-making are applied through the use of local, regional and international case studies related to the sustainability of resources such as air, water and climate as reflected in emerging international experience in the field.

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.	Outline and critique the principles and notions of sustainable development		✓		
2.	Compare and contrast different interpretations of sustainable development		✓		
3.	Integrate the major political issues and the different stages of policy-making for sustainable development			✓	
4.	Judge the main scientific issues relating to the sustainable use of resources			✓	
5.	Reflect on personal behavioural patterns in relation to principles and practices for sustainable development		✓		
		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		
Lectures	to provide an introduction to and guide students in discovering the debates, definitions, theories, actors, processes and institutions relating to sustainable development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Class discussions	guide students to question, reflect, discover and apply the lectures to specific themes, case studies and personal patterns of behaviour			✓	✓	✓		

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%								
1. Mid-term test: to evaluate a student's competency on the theoretical content of the course	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		25	
2. End of term Essay: to assess a student's ability to creatively apply the theoretical content of the course to a specific empirical question	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		50	2,500-3,000 words
3. Class discussions: to assess students' ability to discover, critique, defend and debate concepts, theories, and applications of sustainability in an innovative and congenial manner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		25	
Examination: N/A (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.)

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

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Mid-term test	Students' performance	High standard of knowledge of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Fairly good understanding of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Satisfactory understanding of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Rudimentary understanding of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Almost no knowledge of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.
2. End-of-term Essay	Quality of students' works	Outstanding ability to creatively explain and argue about the principles and notions of sustainable development and to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour. Both papers should also be able to demonstrate an ability to show innovation in the uptake of theories and case studies and use of references.	Good ability to creatively explain and argue about the principles and notions of sustainable development and to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	The principles and notions of sustainable development are well understood but the student demonstrates an adequate ability to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	The principles and notions of sustainable development are adequate understood but the student demonstrates a limited ability to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	The principles and notions of sustainable development are not understood. The student is unable to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.
3. Class Discussions	Students' discussion performance	Outstanding ability to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are	Good ability to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are	The ability to debate and argue about specific case studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and	The ability to debate and argue about specific case studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and	The student lacks competence to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
		identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. Demonstrable evidence of creativity in providing innovative solutions and alternative ways of thinking in a persuasive manner. Excellent use of debating skills.	identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. Demonstrable evidence of creativity in providing innovative solutions and alternative ways of thinking in a persuasive manner as well as debating skills are above average.	contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued is average. The student demonstrates a limited ability to provide innovative solutions. Debating skills are at an average level.	contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued is adequate. The student demonstrates and adequate ability to provide innovative solutions. Debating skills are at an adequate level.	development are identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. The student lacks competence in debating skills.

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. Mid-term test	Students' performance	High standard of knowledge of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Fairly good understanding of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Rudimentary understanding of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	Almost no knowledge of the different approaches of sustainable Development, the core concepts and techniques of policy related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.
2. End-of-term Essay	Quality of students' works	Outstanding ability to creatively explain and argue about the principles and notions of sustainable development and to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour. Both papers should also be able to demonstrate an ability to show innovation in the uptake of theories and case studies and use of references.	Good ability to creatively explain and argue about the principles and notions of sustainable development and to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	The principles and notions of sustainable development are well understood but the student demonstrates a limited ability to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.	The principles and notions of sustainable development are not understood. The student is unable to compare theories, and identify research and policies related to the use of natural resources and of own patterns of behaviour.

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
3. Class Discussions	Students' discussion performance	Outstanding ability to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. Demonstrable evidence of creativity in providing innovative solutions and alternative ways of thinking in a persuasive manner. Excellent use of debating skills.	Good ability to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. Demonstrable evidence of creativity in providing innovative solutions and alternative ways of thinking in a persuasive manner as well as debating skills are above average.	The ability to debate and argue about specific case studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued is average. The student demonstrates a limited ability to provide innovative solutions. Debating skills are at an average level.	The student lacks competence to debate and argue about specific cases studies in which the principles and notions of sustainable development are identified and contrasted and in which policies related to the use of natural resources are critiqued. The student lacks competence in debating skills.

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.)

sustainable development (definitions, debates and dilemmas), the politics of sustainable development, ecological modernisation, international sustainable governance, global and local sustainability (low carbon communities, high consumption countries, developing countries), sustainable air quality, water quality, climate, sustainable tourism, sustainability and heritage, sustainability and food, sustainable future

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.)

1. Baker, S. 2006. 'Challenges in the Third World', in *Sustainable Development*. Oxon: Routledge.
2. Barron, W. 2009. *The Great Disconnect*. Hong Kong: Institute for the Environment, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
3. Bulkeley, H. et al. 2011. *Cities and Low Carbon Transitions*. Oxon: Routledge. Ch. 3. Ch. 6
4. Carter, N. 2001. 'Sustainable Development and Ecological Modernization', *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Neil T. Carter & Arthur P.J. Mol (eds.) *Environmental Governance in China*, London: Routledge.
6. Roberts, J. 2004. 'Sustainable Development and the goals of environmental policy' *Environmental Policy*, London, New York: Routledge.
7. Susan Baker, 2006. *Sustainable Development*. Oxon: Routledge.
8. Terri Mottershead. 2004. *Sustainable Development in Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

2.2 Additional Readings

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

Online resources:

1. Agenda 21: The United Nations Programme of Action for from Rio <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/>
2. Built Cultural Heritage and sustainable urban development <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204607001442>
3. Creating space for sustainable food systems: lessons from the field <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1016095421310#page-1>
4. Integrated Conservation of cultural built heritage <http://dare2.ubv.vu.nl/handle/1871/10934>
5. Sustainable Cities <http://www.sustainablecities.org.uk/>
6. Sustainable Development Fund <http://www.susdev.gov.hk/html/en/sd/index.htm>
7. United Nations documents on Sustainable Development <http://www.un-documents.net/k-001303.htm>