

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences  
with effect from Semester A 2024/2025**

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**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	Human Behaviour and Diversity
<b>Course Code:</b>	SS5212
<b>Course Duration:</b>	One Semester
<b>Credit Units:</b>	3
<b>Level:</b>	P5
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	English
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	English
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course provides knowledge and understanding, and its application to practice issues of human development and social functioning at the individual, small group, and community/organizational/societal levels through an inter-disciplinary team. Through the use of both developmental theory and research findings, students explore the complex interrelatedness of individuals and the various systems that comprise their social environment. Particular emphasis is placed on understanding how human diversity, such as race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and socioeconomic factors contribute to and influence personal development and the social functioning of individuals and family systems across life span. Implications for social work practice, and especially for relationship building, are drawn from the process.

This course introduces students to:

1. explain both the traditional and alternative theoretical perspectives and empirical foundations used to understand human development and behaviour;
2. identify the biological, psychological, and social systems that influence development for each age group;
3. describe normal developmental tasks and milestones for each age group;
4. understand and describe the interaction between the predisposition's of the individual and the constraints and/or support of the social environment as an essential element in the human development process;
5. discuss, as appropriate, the differential effects of class, ethnicity, gender, culture, and sexual orientation in the human development process, particularly as it influences our understanding of both the traditional and alternative theoretical perspectives for social work practice.

## 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.	Explain human growth and development taking into account the interactions of biological, psychological, emotional, and social factors;	20%	✓	✓	
2.	apply concepts of growth and development within the context of a multi-layered, dynamic environment;	25%	✓	✓	✓
3.	demonstrate an explicit understanding of principles of critical thoughts, and the ability to reflect on issues and/or theories systematically;	25%	✓	✓	✓
4.	evaluate an ethical issue and present a solution in a systematic way;	15%	✓	✓	✓
5.	Recognize the importance of human diversity and its implications for social work practice	15%	✓		✓
		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 self-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	
LTA1: Lecture	Lectures are primarily used to highlight the basic concepts, theories, and empirical findings about human behaviour in individuals and families taking into account biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of human behaviour and experience, which serves as a foundation for generalist social work practice. Providing core information on human behaviour is useful and applicable to knowledge-guided efforts in practice on groups, communities and organizations, and the practicum.	√	√	√	√	√	
LTA2: Experiential Learning Activities	A variety of activities are employed to enhance students' understanding of the themes on various human behaviour theories issues, and the interdisciplinary perspectives of concerns through lifespan. These activities include group project, mutual feedback, and class discussions.	√	√	√	√	√	
LTA3: Video Illustration	To stimulate students' interest to further understanding the link between person and environment in an ecological way, audio visual materials including television series and movie scripts are used in lectures to demonstrate some unique features of social work values, ethics and other theoretical concepts. Case demonstrations and stories are also used to stimulate students' interest in lectures.	√	√	√		√	
LTA4: Student Presentation	Student presentations allow students to work as a group to deliver findings of their research project and to share their opinions and thoughts about a chosen related issue across lifespan with the class for deliberation. The aims of this peer-directed activity enhance the students to develop competence in applying knowledge in practice, working as a team, evaluating an ethical issue and presenting a solution in a systematic way, and providing constructive feedback to other groups through cooperative learning.	√	√	√	√	√	

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

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

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CLO No.					Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
<p>AT1 Individual Paper</p> <p>This individual paper requires students to apply relevant developmental theories and research findings to reflect upon their own developmental stories. In this paper, students will choose 3-5 age points in their lives and 2-3 specific topics from this course, encompassing at least 2 domains from the 3 domains of physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Suggested outline as below:</p> <p><i>(1) State your developmental stories and life challenges (3-4 pages)</i></p> <p><i>(2) Investigate factors that support or affect healthy development in your experiences by applying relevant developmental theories and research findings (3-4 pages)</i></p> <p><i>(3) Reflection and insight from your personal experiences (3 pages)</i></p> <p>The total text length for this paper must not exceed 10 pages (2,400 words) excluding references</p>	√	√	√	√	√	40%	
<p>AT2 Group Presentation</p> <p>Students are required to work in small groups and make a 30-minute presentation with power-point slides. Each group will present on critical developmental needs, contemporary issues and/or life challenges in one of the following stages in the life span: infancy and toddlerhood, early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, young adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood.</p> <p>Students will also lead the discussion and stimulate other students' reflections on various chosen issues. The presentation should critically assess human</p>	√	√	√	√	√	30%	

developmental needs, problems and hazards in different life stages with social work implications, the influence of social environment on human behavior in the Hong Kong context and demonstrate an understanding of how diversity may affect human behavior and development.									
AT 3 Quiz  Quiz is designed to strengthen students' knowledge and understanding of the core concepts and theories being covered. It is composed of multiple-choice questions and short questions. Materials covered in lecture notes, textbook and supplementary readings are reviewed.	√	√					30%		
Examination: 0% (duration: hours, 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. Individual Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to identify and summarize personal experiences that related to own developmental trajectories in own life;</li> <li>b. Ability to demonstrate self-reflective inlearning and to strive for professional competence</li> <li>c. Ability to discuss how developmental trajectories influence own life in different areas</li> <li>d. Apply developmental theories and research findings appropriately</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
2. Group Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to assess human developmental needs in the given stage in the lifespan;</li> <li>b. Ability to assess contemporary issues and life challenges with social work implications;</li> <li>c. Ability to demonstrate the influence of social environment on human behavior in the Hong Kong context;</li> <li>d. Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of how diversity (such as culture, race, gender and socioeconomic factors) may affect human behavior and development;</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
3. Quiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to acquire a good knowledge of concepts</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

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. Individual Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to identify and summarize personal experiences that related to own developmental trajectories in own life;</li> <li>b. Ability to demonstrate self-reflective inlearning and to strive for professional competence</li> <li>c. Ability to discuss how developmental trajectories influence own life in different areas</li> <li>d. Apply developmental theories and research findings appropriately</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Not even reaching marginal levels
2. Group Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to assess human developmental needs in the given stage in the lifespan;</li> <li>b. Ability to assess contemporary issues and life challenges with social work implications;</li> <li>c. Ability to demonstrate the influence of social environment on human behavior in the Hong Kong context;</li> <li>d. Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of how diversity (such as culture, race, gender and socioeconomic factors) may affect human behavior and development;</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Not even reaching marginal levels
3. Quiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ability to acquire a good knowledge of concepts</li> </ul>	High	Significant	Moderate	Not even reaching marginal levels



**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.)*

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

**1.1 Traditional paradigm on human growth and development**

Life course perspective; systems theory framework; bio-psycho-social-spiritual and cultural theories; human development across the life course: conception, pregnancy, childbirth, infancy, toddlerhood, early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood, late life, very late life; end of life care issues;

**1.2 Understanding of multi-layered, dynamic environment contexts**

social contexts of family, organizational and community systems; human diversity and populations-at-risk; characteristics, structures, and dynamic functioning of individuals and families; assessment of human well-being; importance of human diversity and the impact of discrimination and oppression.

**1.3 Shifting paradigms in essential knowledge for social work practice**

Social work core competence; theoretical perspectives on well-being, strengths, resiliency, empowerment, dysfunction, oppression, and developmental processes are analyzed critically, especially concerning applicability to a social work practice that supports client strengths, appreciates diversity, and promotes social justice.

**2. Recommended Reading**

**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.	Feldman R. S. (2014) <i>Development Across the Life Span</i> , Global Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 9781292157962 8 <sup>th</sup> ed. E-book; 9781292157955(pb)
2.	Zastrow, C., & Kirst-Ashman K.K. <i>Understanding human behavior and the social environment (11<sup>th</sup> edition)</i> . International edition. CA Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9780495603740 8 <sup>th</sup> ed. and ISBN:9781337556477 11 <sup>th</sup> ed. E-book
3.	Arnett, J.J., & Jensen, L.A. (2018). <i>Human development: A cultural approach</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. ISBN-13: 9780134700595

**2.2 Additional Readings**

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

1.	American Psychological Association (2001). <i>Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association</i> (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: APA.
2.	Ashford, J. B., & Lecroy, C. W. (2010). <i>Human behavior in the social environment: A multidimensional perspective</i> (4 <sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.

3.	Hutchison, E. D. (2003). <i>Dimensions of human behavior: The changing life course</i> . Sage Publications, Inc.
4.	Kirst-Ashman, K. K. (2008). <i>Human behavior, communities organizations, and groups in the macro social environment: An empowerment approach</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA:Brooks/Cole.
5.	Koenig, T., & Spano, R. (2004). Sex, supervision and boundary violations: Pressing problems and possible solutions, <i>Clinical Supervisor</i> , 22, 3-19.
6.	Longres, J. (2000). <i>Human behavior in the social environment</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.). Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock.
7.	Lesser, J. G., & Pope, D. S. (2007). <i>Human behavior and the social environment: Theory and practice</i> . Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
8.	McGoldrick, M., Carter, B., & Preto, N. G. (2011). <i>The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives</i> (4 <sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon
9.	Rogers, A. T. (2010). <i>Human behavior in the social environment</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
10.	Sheafor, B. W. (Eds.) (2010). <i>Social work: A profession of many faces</i> (12 <sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
11.	Urdang, E. (2008). <i>Human behavior in the social environment: Interweaving the inner and outer worlds</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
12.	Walsh, F. (2003). <i>Normal family processes</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford Press.
13.	Zastrow, C., & Kirst-Ashman, K. K. (2010). <i>Understanding human behavior and the social environment</i> (7 <sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.