

City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public Policy
with effect from Semester A 2015/16

Part I Course Overview

Course Title:	Evidence-based Policy Issues and Evaluation
Course Code:	POL6202
Course Duration:	One semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	P6
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	Course works and examinations
Prerequisites: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	NIL
Precursors: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	NIL
Equivalent Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	NIL
Exclusive Courses: <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	POL6903 MAPPM Dissertation POL6904 Capstone Project

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course aims to enable students to discover a contemporary and critical perspective on evidence-based policy-making in relation to key policy areas and issues. The research needs of policy makers, practitioners and decision-makers are considered and the research literature about bridging the gaps between research, policy and practice is appraised. In emphasising the use of evidence for making and evaluating policy, the course complements and integrates learning about the classical theoretical approaches and policy processes that are studied in POL6201. Opportunities are provided for focused, in-depth comparative examination of topics drawn from a range of major policy issues that include areas such as ageing and care for the elderly, environmental policy and politics, healthcare policy; education policy, transport policy, housing policy, and economic policy, including issues relating to economic co-operation between regional partners, for example such as between Hong Kong and China or between Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. The selection of topics addressed each year may vary.

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.	Discover and summarize the strengths and limitations of key methods and practices relating to the identification and evaluation of evidence, including research, that can influence policy agenda-setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation;		X		
2.	understand and appraise critically and synthesize evidence arising from research into key policy issues;		X		
3.	Apply a range of electronic databases for accessing and assessing policy-related evidence and be able to indicate how to apply the principles of systematic review to a policy issue;		X		
4.	Analyze the use of evidence in relation to developments in the making or implementation of policy in selected areas of public and social policy;		X		
5.	Evaluate critically inclusive and other approaches to the generation and analysis of policy-related evidence;		X	X	
6.	Apply skills in comparative research and writing, communication, team work, discussion and presentation in relation to policy areas and issues being studied.		X	X	
		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. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

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

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Readings	Reading of assigned readings every week	X	X	X	X	X		
Lectures (including 'Master Classes' by guest expert speakers)	Explain concepts, theories, methods and sources in evidence-based policy-making and evaluation; analyze the role and impact of evidence in policy agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation in relation to specific policy areas and issues.	X	X	X	X	X		
Seminars to enable students to bring their case to discuss in class	Raise questions and make critical observations on the concepts and methods introduced by the lectures; Debate and apply knowledge and methods of evidence-based policy making and evaluation to particular policy issues and to compare the approaches used by different countries in using evidence in making and / or implementing policies in relation to these issues.	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Group Presentation	Group presenters to undertake and present the findings of their comparative group research into evidence-based policy making in relation to a specific policy area. All students to raise questions, critique and give comments on the presentations.	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Group Policy Evaluation Report Writing	Students should perform a policy evaluation and write a report (about 4,000-5,000 words) relating to their group presentation topic. The analysis should identify in a key policy area, preferably in Hong Kong, for a comprehensive analysis. In the report students should define the issue, construct policy alternatives, develop evaluation criteria, project outcomes, evaluate the trade-off, and decide on the recommendation. An executive summary should be included as a policy memorandum for policy makers	X	X	X	X	X	X	

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	6		
Continuous Assessment: 50%								
In-class participation: in order to induce dynamic learn environment, this class encourages students to bring in related policy material to be discussed in each of the class section.	X	X	X	X	X	X	10%	Except the first class, a student can earn 1% of the final grade in each class when she brings related policy material for discussions in class.
Group Presentation about a recent policy evaluation project	X	X	X	X	X	X	10%	
Group Policy Evaluation Report (about 4,000-5,000 words)	X	X	X	X	X	X	30%	Students must consult the instructor for the topic of the report and seek approval before they start to work on the report writing.
Final Examination	X	X		X	X	X	50%	
Examination: 50% (duration: 3 hours , if applicable)							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

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

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. In-class participation	Bring the related part of the program evaluation to discuss in each of the lecture	Bring cases 8-10 times and very willing to discuss in class.	Bring cases to class around 5-7 times and occasionally engage into the discussions.	About 2-4 times brings the case back to class and discuss the policy in a few times.	Seldom bring the cases to class only one time.	Never bring case into class for discussion.
2. Group Presentation	<p>1. synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>2. competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>3. abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and</p>	<p>A strong ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>High degrees of competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Excellent abilities in evaluating the utilization of</p>	<p>A good ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Clearly competent in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p>	<p>Some ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Weak competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Basic abilities in evaluating the</p>	<p>Very basic ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Minimum competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Little ability or skill in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and</p>	<p>Fails to understand or lacks the ability to synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Lacks competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Minimal abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and</p>

	<p>implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>4. skills in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.</p>	<p>evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Very strongly developed skills in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.</p>	<p>Well-developed abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Generally competent in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.</p>	<p>utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Research, writing, team-work, oral presentation and communication skills present, but not much higher than minimum standards.</p>	<p>implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy or in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Underdeveloped competence in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.</p>	<p>implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy or in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Inadequate competence in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.</p>
3. Group Policy Evaluation Report	1. synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence relating to key policy	A strong ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based	A good ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically	Some ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based	Very basic ability to understand, synthesize and appraise critically research-based evidence	Fails to understand or lacks the ability to synthesize and appraise critically research-based

<p>issues.</p> <p>2. competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>3. abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>4. skills in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and</p>	<p>evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>High degrees of competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Excellent abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Very strongly</p>	<p>research-based evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Clearly competent in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Well-developed abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically</p>	<p>evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Weak competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Basic abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy and in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing</p>	<p>relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Minimum competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Little ability or skill in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy or in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Underdeveloped competence in research, writing, team-work and in oral</p>	<p>evidence relating to key policy issues.</p> <p>Lacks competence in drawing upon various electronic data bases to facilitate the assessment of policy-related evidence and in the application of the principles of systematic reviews to a policy issue.</p> <p>Minimal abilities in evaluating the utilization of evidence in relation to the development and implementation of policy in a selected area of public or social policy or in assessing critically inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data.</p> <p>Inadequate competence in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and</p>
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	communication.	developed skills in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.	inclusive or other approaches to generating and analyzing policy-related data. Generally competent in research, writing, team-work and in oral presentations and communication.	policy-related data. Research, writing, team-work, oral presentation and communication skills present, but not much higher than minimum standards.	presentations and communication.	communication.
4. Final Examination	<p>1. knowledge of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice.</p> <p>2. ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.</p>	An excellent standard of knowledge of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice and a highly developed ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.	A generally good standard of knowledge of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice and a sound ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.	Rudimentary standard of knowledge of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice and a basic ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.	Poor knowledge of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice and a very little ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.	Almost no knowledge or understanding of key theories, methods and practices entailed in the identification, evaluation and utilization of evidence for policy making and practice. No discernible ability to discuss relative strengths and limitations of different methods.

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.)

Evidence-based policy-making; policy evaluation; systematic review; inclusive policy making; comparative policy; ageing policy and care for the elderly; environmental policy and politics; education policy; transport policy; housing policy; economic policy and economic co-operation between regional partners.

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.	Online material at BetterEvaluation.org: An international collaboration to improve evaluation practice and theory by sharing and generating information about options (methods or processes) and approaches. http://betterevaluation.org/
2.	Hand-outs, reading material and academic journal articles assigned.
3.	Ian Scott. The Public Sector in Hong Kong. 2010. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. (E-book available at CityU library)

2.2 Additional Readings

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

1.	Basic Guide to Program Evaluation (Including Outcomes Evaluation) http://managementhelp.org/evaluation/program-evaluation-guide.htm#anchor1575679
2.	Marco Segone (ed.) Bridging the gap: The role of monitoring and evaluation in evidence-based policy making. Online available at: http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/evidence_based_policy_making.pdf

Other Recommended Readings:

Blundell, R. and Costa Dias, M. 2000. Evaluation Methods for Non-Experimental Data, *Fiscal Studies*, 21, 427–468.

Boaz, A., Grayson, L., Levitt, R. and Solesbury, W. 2008, ‘Does Evidence-based Policy Work? Learning from the UK experience’, *Evidence & Policy*, 4, 233-53.

Bonnal, L., Fougère, D., and Sérandon, A. 1997 ‘Evaluating the Impact of French Employment Policies on Individual Labour Market Histories’, *Review of Economic Studies*, 64, 683–713.

Brian Head “Evidence-based policy: principles and requirements”
http://www.pc.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/96208/03-chapter2.pdf

- Burtless, G. 1995 ‘The Case for Randomized Field Trials in Economic and Policy Research’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 9(2), 63–84. DOI:10.1257/jep.9.2.63.
- Coffey, Kevin “Evaluation, Experimentation, and Evidence Based Policy.” UNDP Asia Pacific Regional Centre.
<http://www.unescap.org/stat/di6launch/session4.1-UNDP-Regional-Centre.pdf>
- Davis, S. J. and Haltiwanger, J. 1990 ‘Gross Job Creation and Destruction: Microeconomic Evidence and Macroeconomic Implications’, in *National Bureau of Economic Research Macroeconomics Annual*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 123–168.
- Gerfin, M. and Lechner, M. 2002 ‘A Microeconometric Evaluation of the Active Labour Market Policy in Switzerland’, *The Economic Journal*, 112, 854–893.
- Head, B. 2010 ‘Evidence-based policy: principles and requirements’, *Strengthening Evidence-based Policy in the Australian Federation*, Chapter 2, Roundtable Proceedings, Productivity Commission, Canberra, 17-18 August 2009 Volume 1: Proceedings
- Heckman, J. 2000, ‘Microdata, Heterogeneity and The Evaluation of Public Policy’, Bank of Sweden Nobel Memorial Lecture in Economic Sciences December 8, 2000 Stockholm, Sweden.
- Heckman, J.J., LaLonde, R. and Smith, J.A. 1999, ‘The Economics and Econometrics of Active Labor Market Program’, in O. Ashenfelter and D. Card (eds.), *Handbook of Labor Economics*, vol. III A, pp. 1865-2097, Amsterdam: North-Holland.
- LaLonde, R. 1986 ‘Evaluating the Econometric Evaluations of Training Programs with Experimental Data’, *American Economic Review*, 76(4), 604–620.
- Palangkaraya, Alfons, Elizabeth Webster and Ittima Cherastidtham “Evidence-Based Policy Data Needed for robust evaluation of industry policies: A Report for the Australian Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.” Intellectual Property Research Institute of Australia, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, The University of Melbourne.
http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/hilda/Bibliography/Other_Publications/Palangkaraya_etal_Evidence-based_policy.pdf
- Rogers, Patricia, Bob Williams, Kaye Stevens. “Evaluation of the stronger families and communities strategy.” <http://mams.rmit.edu.au/2taw7vrtfd76.pdf>

Sophie Sutcliffe and Julius Court (2005) “What is it? How does it work? What relevance for developing countries?” Overseas Development Institute, November 2005.
<http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3683.pdf>

Segone, Marco (ed.) “Bridging the gap: The role of monitoring and evaluation in Evidence-based policy making.” UNICEF http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/evidence_based_policy_making.pdf

Social Work Policy Institute, EVIDENCE-BASED Practice.
<http://www.socialworkpolicy.org/research/evidence-based-practice-2.html#resources>

Susan St John & M. Claire Dale “Evidence-based evaluation of social policy.”
http://nzae.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/St_John_and_Dale_Evidence_Based_Evaluation_of_Welfare_Reform.pdf

World Bank (2011) Writing Terms Of Reference For An Evaluation: A how-to-do guide
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTEVACAPDEV/Resources/ecd_writing_TORs.pdf

World Bank (2009) Institutionalizing Impact Evaluation Within the Framework of a Monitoring and Evaluation System.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTEVACAPDEV/Resources/4585672-1251461875432/inst_ie_framework_me.pdf

Wong, Christine (2012) “Toward Building Performance-Oriented Management in China: The Critical Role of Monitoring and Evaluation and the Long Road Ahead.” ECD Working Paper Series No. 27.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTEVACAPDEV/Resources/wp_27_china_me.pdf

Additional, policy-specific readings will be recommended by the lecturers concerned.

Other online Resources:

International impact evaluation initiative (3ie): an important initiative to push for impact evaluations and systematic reviews that generate high quality evidence on what works in development and why.
<http://www.3ieimpact.org/>

World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group has a website which consists of many hands-on countries’ experiences and how to do guides.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTOED/EXTEVACAPDEV/0,,contentMDK:22314660~menuPK:6362030~pagePK:64829573~piPK:64829550~theSitePK:4585673,00.html>

ERC Evidence network: www.evidencenetwork.org

Policy Brief: www.Policybrief.org

The International Campbell Collaboration: www.campbellcollaboration.org

Information for Development in the 21st Century (id21): www.id21.org

Policy Hub: www.policyhub.gov.uk (tools section)