City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public Policy
with effect from Semester B 2018/19

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	Behavioral Insights in Public Policy
Course Code:	POL6203
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)*	NIL
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	NIL

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

The making of public policy, and its analysis, has been strongly informed by microeconomics. While it is important for all analytical work in all public sectors the role of behavioural insights (combining knowledge from economics and psychology) has become critically important for better policy making. The objective of this course is to provide students a grounding in microeconomics and the principles of behavioural economics and insights used in public policy making and analysis. To do this the course will help students to understand and appreciate differences between microeconomics and behavioural insights, apply the behavioural insights framework to questions of public policy, and comprehend how behavioural insights can inform public policy in local and international settings. Evidence will be provided from field and laboratory studies, and the practices of governments in policy fields including environment, education and health.

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.	Understand and critically appraise the basic microeconomics understanding on supply and demand, consumer, firm and industry behaviour to construct public choices. Recognize the limits to markets and the nature of market failure, the rationale and form of policy interventions, including regulation, service provision, and redistribution, and the limits of government action		√	√	
2.	Examine, understand and critically apprise how insights from behavioural economics, psychology, and the behavioural sciences challenge traditional microeconomic frameworks to public policy making and analysis.		√	√	√
3.	Critically apply the behavioural insights way of thinking for particular public policy problems, and be able to integrate these knowledges with skills and theoretical constructs from other parts of their studies relating to public policy analysis.		√	√	√
		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				
Lectures	Introduction of the various roles that microeconomics and behavioural insights and its analysis in the realm of public policy. Examination of a range of microeconomic and behavioural insights theories on issues of public policy.	√	√	√				
Class Discussion	Discussion and debate over the merits and demerits of various microeconomic and behavioural insights theories and analysis on issues of public policy.	√	√	√				
Group Presentations and Group projects	Student will have chance to group together and apply and behavioural insights analysis on public policy topics they are interested in.	√	√	√				
Final Test	It is a chance for students to demonstrate their understanding and mastery of the microeconomic and behavioural insights theories and related public policy analysis applications and their limitations.	√	√	√				

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					
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Class Participation and Discussions	√	√	√				20%	Instructor will provide stimulating questions related to the material in each class. Students will be asked to present main concepts of the materials and to critically assess the validity of microeconomic and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.
Group Presentation	√	√	√				10%	Group presentations will provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their behavioural insights

									analysis skills by working together as a group for analysing public policy issues. It is also an opportunity for students to give effective policy presentation under time constraints.
Group Project	√	√	√					30%	After receiving the responds from students and from instructors during the presentations, students need to revise their policy analysis accordingly and to be able to convert the policy analysis into formal policy report.
Final In-Class Test (3 hours)	√	√	√					40%	This in-class test at the end of the semester will cover the student's understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings. To enable students to demonstrate their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in behavioural insights; this test will include questions, requiring students to develop their own microeconomic and behavioural insights reasoning and analysis to policy issues.
Examination: ___% (duration: three 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-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Class Participation and Discussions	Students are able to critically assess the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.	Excellent in critical assessment of the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.	Good in critical assessment of the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.	Adequate in critical assessment of the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.	Marginal in critical assessment of the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.	No understanding in critical assessment of the validity of microeconomics and behavioural insights analysis in public policy issues.
2.Group Presentation	Students are able to demonstrate their behavioural insights analysis skills by working together as a group in evaluating public policy issues using behavioural insights. Able in give effective policy presentation given time constraints.	Excellent in behavioural insights analysis and in group presentation.	Good in behavioural insights analysis and in group presentation.	Adequate in behavioural insights analysis and in group presentation.	Marginal in behavioural insights analysis and in group presentation.	No understanding in behavioural insights analysis and in group presentation.
3. Group Project	Students are about to complete a formal policy analysis report using behavioural insight analysis and are able to	Excellent in completing a formal policy analysis report	Good in completing a formal policy analysis report	Adequate in completing a formal policy analysis report using	Marginal in completing a formal policy analysis report using behavioural	No understanding completing a formal policy analysis report using behavioural

	demonstrate the limitation of their analysis.	using behavioural insight analysis and in demonstrating the limitation of their analysis.	using behavioural insight analysis and in demonstrating the limitation of their analysis.	behavioural insight analysis and in demonstrating the limitation of their analysis.	insight analysis and in demonstrating the limitation of their analysis.	insight analysis and in demonstrating the limitation of their analysis.
4. Final In-Class Test	Students are able to show their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings. They are able to demonstrate their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in microeconomics and behavioural insights; students are able to develop their own behavioural insights reasoning and analysis to policy issues.	Excellent in showing their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings; in demonstrating their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in microeconomics and behavioural insights; in developing their own behavioural insights reasoning and analysis to policy issues.	Good in showing their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings; in demonstrating their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in microeconomics and behavioural insights; in developing their own behavioural insight reasoning and analysis to policy issues.	Adequate in showing their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings; in demonstrating their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in microeconomics and behavioural insights; in developing their own behavioural insight reasoning and analysis to policy issues.	Marginal in showing their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings; in demonstrating their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in microeconomics and behavioural insights; in developing their own behavioural insight reasoning and analysis to policy issues.	No able to show their understanding of the material covered in lectures and the associated assigned readings; to demonstrate their understanding of key concepts and knowledge in behavioural insights; to develop their own behavioural insight reasoning and analysis to policy issues.

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.)

   Behavioural insights, microeconomics, public policy, policy analysis

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.	John, Peter. (2018) How Far to Nudge?: Assessing Behavioural Public Policy. Edward Elgar Publishing.
2.	Druckman, J., D. P. Green, J. H. Kuklinski, and A. Lupia. (2011). Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science
3.	Thaler R, and C. Sunstein. (2008) Nudge: Improving Decision about Health, Wealth and Happiness. New Haven: Yale University Press.

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

1.	Ariely, D. (2008). Predictably irrational: The hidden forces that shape our decisions. London, HarperCollins.
2.	Dolan P. et al. (2010) Mindspace: Influencing Behaviour through Public Policy. London: Cabinet Office and the Institute for Government.
3.	Kahneman, D. (2011) Thinking, Fast and Slow. London, Allen Lane.
4.	Le Grand J. (2006) Motivation, Agency and Public Policy: of Knights and Knaves, Pawns and Queens. Revised paperback edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5.	Le Grand J. (2007) The Other Invisible Hand; Delivering Public Services through Choice and Competition. Oxford: Princeton University Press.
6.	Oliver, A. (Ed) (2013) Behavioural Public Policy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7.	Sousa, Joana Lourenço, Emanuele Ciriolo, Sara Rafael Almeida, and Xavier Troussard. (2016) *Behavioural insights applied to policy: European Report 2016.* European Union: Joint Research Centre.

8.	Sunstein, C. (2016) The Ethics of Influence: Government in the Age of Behavioral Science. Cambridge University Press.
9.	Brafman, O. and R. Brafman. (2008) Sway: the irresistible pull of irrational behavior. Doubleday: New York.
10.	John, Peter, et al. (2011) Nudge Nudge, Think Think. Experimenting with Ways to Achieve Civic Behaviour. London: Bloomsbury.
11.	James, O., S. Jilke and G. Van Ryzin. (Ed) (2017) Experiments in Public Management Research: Challenges and Contributions. Cambridge University Press.