City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public and International Affairs
with effect from Semester A 2022/2023

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title: Research Methods in Public Policy and Management

Course Code: PIA6603

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)   POL6603 Research Methods in Public Policy and Management

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

With an emphasis on ability and accomplishment this course aims to provide students with basic knowledge and skills in social research methods so that they can analyse questions in policy and management. Students will be required to devise innovative primary research questions, to collect and interpret data and to contribute constructively and creatively to paired and small group work tasks. Particular emphasis will be placed on the critical evaluation of both published research and raw data as presented in a variety of formats. Students will be able to describe and relate various methodological positions, to justify the rationale for conducting primary research and to compare and contrast different types of research.

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.	Explore the meaning of research, identifying its purpose, key methodological positions and potential contribution to knowledge.	15%	√	√	
2.	Conduct a literature review on a relevant subject matter in order to generate appropriate and innovative primary research questions	15%	√	√	
3.	Select the appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods for research design	30%		√	√
4.	Identify appropriate ways of analysing a given data set to answer a research question	20%		√	√
5.	Creatively relate the principles of inventory design to the construction of a survey instrument; Prepare, design, conduct and analyse an interview; Interpret raw and published statistical data, charts and graphs	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 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	
Lectures/Workshops	presentation of theories, concepts and ideas based on academic literature (including course readings). Course lecturer responds to questions raised by students attending the workshops and facilitates discussion and class exercises.	√	√	√	√	√	
Individual and group-based work	part summative, part formative the work sheets have been created to reinforce and expand learning gained through the lecture content of workshops. Students will be required to demonstrate their mastery of a variety of research methods and accomplish set tasks creatively	√	√	√	√	√	
Canvas	PowerPoint slides to support workshops posted for students to download.	√	√	√	√	√	
Independent reading	Readings contained in Course handbook to be read by every student. • The focus of the readings is guided by accompanying worksheets that highlight important concepts and give students an opportunity to apply ideas	√	√	√	√	√	

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%							
Research proposal: select a topic, develop research question(s), hypothesis and outline the appropriate research methods. (1000-1200 words)	√	√				40%	Individual
In-class activities: interview, questionnaire design, and interpreting statistical data.		√	√		√	20%	Small groups
In-class exam				√	√	40%	Individual
						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 in Semester A 2022/23 and thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
Research proposal	Design of topic	A+: High standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. A: Highly innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. A-: Strong demonstration of critical ability to select the appropriate methodology and interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Excellent accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Strong ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.	B+: Fairly high standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. B: Fairly innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory.	B-: Fairly good demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Good accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Fairly strong ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence. C+: Rudimentary standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. C: Little innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory.	Almost no standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. No innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. Almost no demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Very inadequate accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Almost no ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.
Questionnaire (in-class activity)	Design of the questionnaire				
Interpretation of data (in-class activity)	Interpretation skills				
Interview questions and analysis (in-class activity)	Analytical skills				
In-class exam	Interpretation and analytical skills				

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Research proposal	Design of topic	A+: High standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. A: Highly innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. A-: Strong demonstration of critical ability to select the appropriate methodology and interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Excellent accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Strong ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.	B+: Fairly high standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. B: Fairly innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. B-: Fairly good demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Good accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Fairly strong ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.	C+: Rudimentary standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. C: Little innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. C-: Weak demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Basic accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Basic ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.	Poor standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. Very little innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. Very little demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Weak accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Very little ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.	Almost no standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct methodological approaches drawn from social sciences. No innovative ability to relate literature review of cutting-edge topic to creation of primary research inventory. Almost no demonstration of critical ability to interpret a broad range of graphs, charts and statistical data. Very inadequate accomplishment of grounded interview data following preparation and application of interview questions related to critical subject matter. Almost no ability to conduct relevant and creative documentary analysis for given set of documentary evidence.
Questionnaire (in-class activity)	Design of the questionnaire					
Interpretation of data (in-class activity)	Interpretation skills					
Interview questions and analysis (in-class activity)	Analytical skills					
In-class exam	Interpretation and analytical 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.)

   Theory and philosophy of research; quantitative and qualitative research methods; conducting literature review; generating primary research questions; questionnaire design and measurement; data analysis; interpreting graphs and charts, qualitative and quantitative document analysis, interview techniques; focus groups; case study; participant and non-participant observations; research ethics

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.)

   Text(s):
   1. Babbie, E (2010) *The Practice of Social Research* (12th edition.), Belmont, Calif : Wadsworth Cengage, (available in the book store and semi-close reserve of the library) [8th (1998) 9th (2001) 10th (2003) and 11th (2006) editions can also be used].
   2. Creswell, W. (2018). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. 5th Edition. London, Sage.
   3. Miller, G.J. and Yang, K. (2007). Handbook of research methods in public administration. CRC press.

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