

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Media and Communication  
with effect from Semester A 2022 / 23**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Independent Studies

**Course Code:** COM8009

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** R8

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

*(A 150-word description about the course)*

The course aims to:

develop an in-depth understanding of a topic, through independent directed reading. To enable students to:

- Understand the range of issues underlying a particular area of communication study
- Critically read and evaluate a selection of existing literature in the field; and
- Identify and develop a specific focus for an in-depth study relevant to individual contexts of specialization

There is no specified syllabus for this course. The student will be required to work with a designated supervisor, who initially will suggest a reading list in the area that the student has selected. The student, through independent study, will add to the reading list to develop a comprehensive annotated bibliography on the selected topic.

### 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 and identify important issues in the field of communication and issues for communication research		✓		
2.	Evaluate and analyze these issues and topics in light of theoretical perspectives			✓	
3.	Conduct research on important issues using appropriate and innovative research methods, to discover new knowledge in the relevant domain		✓	✓	✓
* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.		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	
Reading	Weekly Readings on the selected areas of study	✓			Throughout the class
Research	Conduct research on selected issues using appropriate methods		✓		Throughout the class
Discussion	Weekly discussions of issues with the instructor			✓	Throughout the class

### 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: <u>100</u> %					
Analysis of selected issues	✓			40%	
Research Project: individual or group research project of selected issues using appropriate methods		✓		50%	
Class discussion and participation			✓	10%	
Examination: <u>NA</u> % (duration: _____, if applicable)					
* The weightings should add up to 100%.				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)
1. Analysis of selected issues	Ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues	Demonstrate the ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues.	Some indication of the ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues.	Limited ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues.	No demonstration of the ability to explain the concepts with proper methodological tools in analysing selected issues.
2. Research Project	Capacity for self-directed learning to critically identify and analyze an in-depth communication issue	Demonstrate the ability to generate in-depth scientific communication knowledge through empirical analysis.	Some indication of the ability to generate in-depth scientific communication knowledge through empirical analysis.	Limited ability to generate in-depth scientific communication knowledge through empirical analysis.	No demonstration of the ability to generate in-depth scientific communication knowledge through empirical analysis.
3. Class discussion and participation	Ability to explain the concepts and demonstrate original thinking	Demonstrate the significant participation through in-class discussion	Some indication of the class participation through in-class discussion	Limited contribution through in-class discussion	No demonstration of the significant contribution through in-class discussion

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)
1. Analysis of selected issues	Ability to explain the concepts with proper	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

	methodological tools in analysing selected issues					
2. Research Project	Capacity for self-directed learning to critically identify and analyze an in-depth communication issue	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
3. Class discussion and participation	Ability to explain the concepts and demonstrate original thinking	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	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.)*

Communication research, communication study, issue studies, topical studies, communication theory, empirical research

**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	Chaffee, S. H., & Berger, C. R. (1987). What communication scientists do? In C. R. Berger and S. H. Chaffee (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Communication Science</i> (pp. 99-122). CA: Sage.
2	Pan, Z. & McLeod, J.M. (1991). Multi-level Analysis in Mass Communication Research. <i>Communication Research</i> . 18: 138-171.
3	Neuman, W.R., Davidson, R., Joo, S.H., Park, Y.J., & Williams, A.E. (2008). The Seven Deadly Sins in Communication Research. <i>Journal of Communication</i> , 58: 220-237.
4	Sullivan, J.L. (2013). <i>Media Audiences: Effects, Users, Institutions, and Power</i> . CA: Sage.
5	Frey, L.R., Botan, C.H. & Kreps, G.L. (2000). <i>Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods</i> . Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**2.2 Additional Readings**

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