

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Law  
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

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**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	<u>Environmental Law</u>
<b>Course Code:</b>	<u>LW5625</u>
<b>Course Duration:</b>	<u>One Semester</u>
<b>Credit Units:</b>	<u>3</u>
<b>Level:</b>	<u>P5</u>
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>LW4625 Environmental Law</u>
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

The course aims to teach students rules and principles of environmental law, which is the body of law incorporating common law doctrines and legislative enactments in pollution control and conservation of natural resources. Students are introduced to major environmental law issues with local, regional and international significance.

### 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.	Discuss analytically and critically the legal system of Hong Kong and its regulatory framework in environmental protection	40%	√	√	√
2.	Apply the law to propose solutions to legal problems, existing and emerging in the environmental area	30%	√	√	√
3.	Critically evaluate the law in action, the dynamic interplay between law and other social phenomena, real-life situations and international policies and their co-evolution	30%	√	√	√
		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 real-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.)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.				Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	
Lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A weekly outline of the taught topics and recommended lists of reading will be distributed. Students must read the basic assigned preparatory literature and cases prior to and after each lecture.</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	3 hours/week or a total of 39 hours of teaching

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For each week's topic, a general preparatory reading of chapters in a reputed textbook and journal articles will be assigned, which will provide a framework as well as introduce students to the detailed topics to be covered in that seminar.</li> <li>• The seminars are designed to explore difficult environmental law issues through advanced discussion in each weekly seminar. Seminars will be based on an interactive learning and exchange of ideas between the lecturer and the students.</li> <li>• Seminars will draw nexus of various aspects of environmental law. The lecturer/course leader will seek to identify students' prior knowledge and experience and fill gaps in their prior knowledge by raising critical questions which will enhance student's in-depth understanding of environmental law and its operation in practice.</li> </ul>					
<p>Compulsory Assignment/ Small group activities/ Class presentations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These activities will focus on analysis and application of concepts of environmental law to factual situations. Students are expected both to attend and to participate actively in such activities.</li> <li>• In order to train and develop advanced critical thinking and problem solving skills, problem based learning in class will be encouraged to allow students to identify, summarize and present relevant environmental law principles involved in particular problem based on cases or scholarly opinions.</li> <li>• Compulsory Assignment is aimed to develop student's skills: such as independent research skills in retrieving primary material; analytical skill in penetrating official documents; skills of synthesis in piecing together legal materials through coherent writing.</li> <li>• The presentations will provide students an opportunity to express their point of view in a coherent manner and develop their presentation skills. They will also get feedback from the course leader on the content of their paper.</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	

#### 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		
Continuous Assessment: 40%						
Class participation	√	√	√	√	15%	
= Group Presentation	√	√	√	√	25%	
Examination: 60% (duration: 2 hours)						
Examination	√	√	√	√	60%	
					100%	

The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Students must obtain an aggregate mark of 50% and a minimum of 50% in each of the continuous assessment and the examination elements of the assessment.

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 and thereafter

Students must obtain an aggregate mark of 40% and a minimum of 40% in each of the continuous assessment and the examination elements of the assessment.

#### **Formative Assessment**

Participation during the interactive small group sessions/class presentations will allow students to demonstrate their capacity to understand, analyse and apply rules and principles to the problem concerned. Some of the more difficult questions will require students to demonstrate their ability to synthesise international and local environmental law material and be able to advise clients or companies in novel situations. Responses in these sessions will enable students and teachers to assess the adequacy of learning and how to improve it where necessary. Students will also receive formative feedback which will allow them to fill gaps in their knowledge and improve content of their coursework assignment/research.

#### **Summative Assessment**

Students' performance during the class participation will be assessed. This will count as 15% of the assessment (5% attendance and 10% classroom interaction). The ability of the student to approach the problem, explain it to his team and discuss the legal challenges posed will be assessed.

Students will also be divided into groups to make a presentation on an environmental law aspect. This will assess their ability to synthesise primary and secondary material into a coherent and persuasive argument, which will count as 25%.

The remaining 60% of assessment is in the form of an examination. This will test knowledge and understanding of the rules and principles and ability to apply these rules and principles to particular sets of circumstances.

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

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

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. <u>Class Participation</u>	Demonstrate mastery of CILOs through participation in lecture and/or tutorial discussion, which includes asking questions about areas of uncertainty, responding to questions by the lecturer/tutor. and presenting on assigned topics in class.	High	Significant	Moderate	Inadequate
2. Group Presentation	Students will be divided into groups for presenting on assigned topics. Students will be graded on their understanding and application of the law, as well as their ability to provide the audience with evidence of a persuasive legal argument.	High	Significant	Moderate	Inadequate
3. <u>Examination</u>	The examination will test students' ability to apply legal principles to problem style questions on topics not covered in the assignment.	High	Significant	Moderate	Inadequate

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 and thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. <u>Class Participation</u>	Demonstrate mastery of CILOs through participation in lecture and/or tutorial discussion, which includes asking questions about areas of uncertainty, responding to questions by the lecturer/tutor. and presenting on assigned topics in class.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching basic levels
2. Group Presentation	Students will be divided into groups for presenting on assigned topics. Students will be graded on their understanding and application of the law, as well as their ability to provide the audience with evidence of a persuasive legal argument.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching basic levels
3. <u>Examination</u>	The examination will test students' ability to apply legal principles to problem style questions on topics not covered in the assignment.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching basic 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.)*

- Common law doctrines dealing with environmental pollution;
- Nuisance, negligence and strict liability;
- Environmental law-making in pollution control;
- Environmental impact assessment;
- Local conservation laws;
- Regional environmental law;
- Cross-border environmental issues affecting Hong Kong and the Mainland China;
- International environmental law;
- Trade and environment

### **2. Reading List**

#### **Recommended Journals**

- Yearbook of International Environmental Law
- Yearbook of European Environmental Law
- Journal of Environmental Law
- Harvard Environmental Law Review
- Transnational Environmental Law
- Ecology Law Quarterly
- American Journal of International Law
- European Journal of International Law
- International and Comparative Law Quarterly
- Chinese Journal of International Law
- Columbia Journal of Environmental Law
- Columbia Journal of Environmental Law
- Fordham Environmental Law Journal
- Stanford Environmental Law Journal
- Fordham Environmental Law Journal
- Virginia Environmental Law Journal
- Journal of World Energy Law & Business
- Climate Law
- Asia Pacific Journal of Environmental Law

#### **Recommended Online Resources**

- World Resource Institute: <https://www.wri.org/>
- Sustainable Energy for All: <https://www.seforall.org/>
- Natural Resources Defence Council: <https://www.nrdc.org/>
- Renewable Energy 21: <https://www.ren21.net/>
- Bloomberg New Energy Finance: <https://about.bnef.com/>
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: <https://unfccc.int/>
- European Parliament Environment Committee: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/policy/links/Link1094717137>
- The Environment Directory: <http://www.webdirectory.com/>
- Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/>
- Columbia Centre on Global Energy Policy: <https://www.energypolicy.columbia.edu/>

- Atlantic Council (Energy & Environment): <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/issue/energy-environment/page/2/>
- Centre for Strategic & International Studies (Energy Security & Climate Change): <https://www.csis.org/programs/energy-security-and-climate-change-program>

### **Recommended Podcasts**

- Political Climate
- Energy Gang
- Energy Policy Now
- The Interchange
- Energy 360
- Columbia Energy Exchange
- DNVGL