

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Public and International Affairs  
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Special Topics for Development and Sustainability

**Course Code:** PIA5511

**Course Duration:** One Semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** P5

**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

This course offers students an opportunity to explore in-depth some specific aspects of sustainability issues in Hong Kong and the Region. Students are free to choose from any substantive area of interest that falls within the broad subject of sustainability with a focus on policy and management issues. In the process of independent reading and research throughout the semester, students will develop a broader and deeper knowledge of their substantive area. Both practical skills as well as theoretical analytics need to be enhanced in order to help train their understanding about the key sustainability policy and management issues which might be related to students' future career plan.

### 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.	Identify a relevant aspect of sustainability in Hong Kong and the Region on which to undertake a substantial piece of individual research based on their various learning experiences	20%	✓	✓	✓
2.	Think and debate critically on a focused subject area of the course	20%	✓	✓	✓
3.	Define the scope and provide a rationale for the specific focus of their research paper	20%	✓	✓	✓
4.	Discover and critically analyse, synthesize and evaluate appropriate knowledge and theories relating to their topic	20%	✓	✓	✓
5.	Present the analysis and conclusions of their research in a written paper	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 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.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
Lecture	Lecturers and visual materials	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Presentation	A group of students will present some of the required reading and lead the discussion in classes.	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Research Paper	Students are asked to analyse some specific sustainability financing mechanisms of a country or a city and present the findings to the class at the end of 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	4				
Continuous Assessment: <b>100%</b>								
1. In-class participation & discussion: i. Attendance: Class attendance is compulsory. ii. Students are expected to go through their readings PRIOR TO CLASS and participate in discussion, share ideas and opinions in a respectful manner, and analyse case studies critically and constructively.	✓	✓	✓	✓			20%	
2. Presentation	✓	✓	✓	✓			30%	
4. Research Paper	✓	✓	✓	✓			50%	
Examination: N/A% (duration: N/A, if applicable)								
							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 before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
In-class participation & discussion	To demonstrate the activeness of classroom participation	Very good to excellent participation in presentations and class discussion	Good participation in presentations and class discussion	Satisfactory participation in presentations and class discussion	Adequate participation in presentations and class discussion	Lack of attendance or participation in class discussion and presentations; and/or substantial plagiarism
Presentation	To assess individual presentation	Demonstration of excellent understanding of the course	Demonstration of good to very good understanding of the course	Demonstration of general knowledge of the course	Demonstration of adequate knowledge of the course	Fail to demonstrate basic knowledge of the course
Research Paper	To assess the ability to write a 3,000-3,500 words essay	Demonstration of <u>excellent</u> understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies	Demonstration of good to very good understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies	Demonstration of general knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies	Demonstration of adequate knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies, but without good critical evaluation	Failure to demonstrate basic knowledge of impacts of problems and policies; inability to engage in critical evaluation

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. In-class participation & discussion	To demonstrate the activeness of classroom participation	Very good to excellent participation in presentations and class discussion	Good participation in presentations and class discussion	Satisfactory participation in presentations and class discussion	Lack of attendance or participation in class discussion and presentations; and/or substantial plagiarism
2. Presentation	To assess individual presentation	Demonstration of excellent understanding of the course	Demonstration of good to very good understanding of the course	Demonstration of general knowledge of the course	Fail to demonstrate basic knowledge of the course
3. Research Paper	To assess the ability to write a 3,000-3,500 words essay	Demonstration of <u>excellent</u> understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies	Demonstration of good to very good understanding and critical evaluation of impacts of problems and policies	Demonstration of general knowledge of main features of impacts of problems and policies, but without good critical evaluation	Failure to demonstrate basic knowledge of impacts of problems and policies; inability to engage in critical evaluation

### **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.)*

Sustainability; sustainable development; literature review; central thesis; supporting and counter-arguments; methodology; research and writing

#### **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.)*

Alchian, A.A. & Demsetz, H., 1972, "Production, Information Costs, and Economic Organization," *The American Economic Review*, vol. 62, no. 5, pp. 777-795.

Baker, S. 2006. 'Challenges in the Third World', in *Sustainable Development*. Oxon: Routledge.

Barron, W. 2009. *The Great Disconnect*. Hong Kong: Institute for the Environment, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

Bordie, R., S. Wilson a & J. Kuang, "The Importance, Development and Reform Challenges of China's Rail Sector," in L. Song, R. Garnaut & C. Fang (Eds), *Deepening Reform for China's Long-term Growth and Development*, Canberra: ANU Press, 2014.

Bulkeley, H. et al. 2011. *Cities and Low Carbon Transitions*. Oxon: Routledge. Ch. 3. Ch. 6

Campos, J., & P. Cantos, 1999, "Rail Transport Regulation," *The World Bank Group Working Paper*, pp.4-18 (<http://info.worldbank.org/etools/docs/library/64576/2064rail.pdf>).

Carter, N. 2001. 'Sustainable Development and Ecological Modernization', *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coase, R. H., 1959, "The Federal Communications Commission," *Journal of Law and Economics*, vol. 2, pp. 1-40.

Demsetz, H., 2002, "Towards a Theory of Property Rights," *American Economic Review*, vol. 57, issue 2, pp.653- 672.

Li, H. & Rozelle, S., 2004, "Insider privatization with a tail: the screening contract and performance of privatized firms in rural China," *Journal of Development Economics*, vol. 75, no. 1, pp. 1-26.

Naughton, B., 2010, "China's Distinctive System: can it be a model for others?" *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 19, no. 65, pp. 437-460.

Neil T. Carter & Arthur P.J. Mol (eds.) *Environmental Governance in China*, London: Routledge.

Roberts, J. 2004. 'Sustainable Development and the goals of environmental policy' *Environmental Policy*, London, New York: Routledge.

Susan Baker, 2006. *Sustainable Development*. Oxon: Routledge.

Terri Mottershead. 2004. *Sustainable Development in Hong Kong*, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

##### **2.2 Additional Readings**

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

Button, K.J. 1994, "Privatisation and deregulation: its implications for negative transport externalities," *The annals of regional science: an international journal of urban, regional and environmental research and policy; official journal of the Western Regional Science Association*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 125-138.

Kopicki, R., & Louis S. Thompson, 1995, "Best Methods of Railway Restructuring and

Privatization,” World Bank CFS Discussion paper Series, pp. 1-17, 19-39  
(<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRAILWAYS/Resources/b35.pdf>).

Naughton, B., 2005, “SASAC Rising,” China Leadership Monitor, no. 14, pp. 1-11.

Naughton, B., 2013, “The Return of Planning in China,” Modern China, vol. 39, no. 6, pp. 640-652.

OECD, 2003, Railway Reform in China promoting competition, OECD report.

Online resources:

Agenda 21: The United Nations Programme of Action for from Rio  
<http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/>

Built Cultural Heritage and sustainable urban development  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204607001442>

Creating space for sustainable food systems: lessons from the field  
<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1016095421310#page-1>

Integrated Conservation of cultural built heritage <http://dare2.ubvu.vu.nl/handle/1871/10934>

Sustainable Cities <http://www.sustainablecities.org.uk/>

Sustainable Development Fund <http://www.susdev.gov.hk/html/en/sd/index.htm>

United Nations documents on Sustainable Development:

<http://www.un-documents.net/k-001303.htm>