PPOL 2110: Science, Technology and Society in China

A Blended-Learning Course

Semester:	Fall 2026-27
Delivery mode:	Blended learning delivery
Class times:	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:00 noon – 1:20 pm
Class venue:	Room 1104 (near LT-A / Lift 19)
Instructor:	**Dr Alvin LI** Division of Public Policy (PPOL), HKUST E-mail: lia@ust.hk
Office Hours:	Zoom (by email appointment)
Teaching Assistants:	Mr Shichang ZHANG, PhD candidate (szhangfi@connect.ust.hk)

Course Description

This course explores the systematic and critical examination of the interplay between science, technology, innovation, and society with a focus on the evolution from traditional to contemporary China. Through a social and critical lens, students will explore the preconditions and impacts of technological and scientific developments.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the significant social, cultural, and political preconditions underlying scientific and technological innovations.
- Analyze the impact of these innovations on society.
- Systematically assess the factors driving innovation in the historical and modern Chinese contexts.

Module 1 of the course will introduce students to some theoretical and conceptual issues that underlie our understanding of science, technology, innovation, and their relationships with society. This will lay the foundation for the rest of the course.

Module 2 will focus on scientific and technological achievements in ancient and medieval China as well as the social, political, and cultural conditions in which these achievements took place. These include, for example, achievements in early-chemistry, which started at alchemy in ancient China.

Module 3 will introduce the industrial revolution and its preconditions and impact, helping students critically examine the 'divergence' between China and the West regarding the development of modern science and technology—the well-known 'Needham question', namely: Why was it that the Industrial Revolution didn't take place in China?

During **Module 4**, students will critically review scientific and technological achievements in modern and contemporary Chinese society using the innovation systems conceptual approach. For instance, what were some of the reforms that led to the take-off in Chinese science and technology?

After we have completed the above four major modules, **five interactive *synchronous* (real-time) lectures** will focus on the development of science, technology, and innovation policies in China since the 1980s, providing students with empirical knowledge about science, technology, and innovation in China and guiding them in applying the previously learned theoretical knowledge to real situations. We will be unpacking the question of how and why China has now risen to become a modern technological titan.

By the end of the course, students should understand the significance of the social, cultural, and political preconditions underlying scientific and technological innovations and be able to gauge the impact of those innovations. They should also be able to systematically analyze the factors that make innovation significant and use this analysis to critically examine the development of science and technology over the course of China's history.

Blended learning arrangement

This course employs a **blended-learning approach**, which combines **self-paced, self-directed *asynchronous*** learning with **in-person *synchronous*** classes. Each week, students are required to independently complete approximately **1-2 hours of pre-recorded video lectures** to digest foundational content at their own speed. These video concepts are then discussed and applied during **1.5 hours of real-time, in-person classes** each week, in line with HKUST credit regulations.

Over the 13-week semester, students will complete **four modules**, each introduced at **two-week intervals**. Each of these four modules comprises both self-directed learning and in-person classes. The in-person classes within these modules will be conducted **once a week** as tutorials, designed to reinforce topics covered in the pre-recorded videos and/or facilitate discussions on contemporary policy examples relevant to the lectures. Prior to attending the in-person classes for each module, students are required to view all pre-recorded videos in their entirety, familiarise themselves with the basic content and knowledge presented, and complete any corresponding quizzes (if any) as detailed in the Course Outline.

Upon the completion of all four modules, students will participate in **five interactive in-person lectures**, which will include dedicated time for Q&As and discussions.

In addition to the abovementioned *asynchronous* and *synchronous* arrangements, students are also required to conduct presentations and complete written assignments.

The course has a **total of 39 contact hours**, which are broken down as follows:

- **~12** hours of pre-recorded lectures
- **~12** hours of tutorials that build upon the content of the videos.
- **~10** hours of in-person lectures.
- **~5** hours of other asynchronous and synchronous activities, including the course introduction, course review sessions, quizzes on Canvas, and discussion sessions.

The course's blended-learning approach is highly suitable for its content and learning outcomes, which focus on fostering critical understanding, thinking, discussion, and analysis of issues in science, technology, innovation, and societies, adopting a broad and open-ended perspective. While basic theories, concepts, and conceptual approaches will establish the foundation for later learning, students are expected to acquire this basic knowledge through self-learning, enabling them to practice critical thinking during class discussions, written assignments, and presentations.

Given this innovative delivery method, students are expected to be **highly interactive and engaged** with instructors, TAs, and fellow classmates. Up to 20% of the final course grade is allocated to class participation, comprising 10% for Canvas discussions and 10% for engagement in synchronous classes (sharing opinions, debating ideas, and commenting on remarks). Please refer to the assessment rubric for further details on class participation.

Course learning outcomes (CLOs)

CLO 1: Critically understand the common definitions of science, technology, and innovation as well as the general relationships between science, technology, and society.

CLO 2: Understand the driving forces, features, and major achievements in scientific and technological development in ancient and medieval China.

CLO 3: Critically understand the sources, importance, and effects of the Industrial Revolution, especially its importance to global scientific and technological thought. Critically understand and question the 'divergence' between the West and China during the scientific and industrial revolutions.

CLO 4: Critically understand the innovation systems conceptual approach. Apply this conceptual approach to the development of science and technology in China over the last century.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on a mix of individual activities (70%) and group activities (30%):

Class participation:	
In-class active participation:	10%
Canvas discussion engagement:	10%
3 x Written assignments:	30% (10% x 3)
4 x Quizzes:	20% (5% x 4)
Group project slides:	10%
Group presentation and Q&A:	20%

Each component of the course is specifically designed to evaluate different aspects of learning:

- Class participation requires students to engage in discussions and real-time interactions to enhance learning and critical thinking.
- Written assignments focus on applying theoretical knowledge to practical analysis through individual research and reflection.
- Quizzes are used to test understanding of key concepts and theories.
- The group project aims to demonstrate collaborative research and presentation skills on selected topics.

Assessment type	Format & rubrics
Class participation Individual **20%**	**Rubric for class participation** Class participation counts for 20% of your course grade, and in order to gain marks here, you are expected to actively participate both on Canvas discussions and in-person classes. Remember, participation matters the same or even more than the quizzes and group presentations, so don't lose out on these easy marks! **Asynchronous** (online Canvas discussions) - 10% • We will publish questions and topics of discussion in the *Discussions* section of Canvas. Over the course of 13 weeks, we'd like you to submit at least 5 **discussion posts** in total in different topics (150-200 words each, or more if you wish!) contributing to a variety of questions. Here, we are looking for your personal opinions, ideas, thoughts, and reflections, rather than AI-generated bullet points! You may also choose to post constructive **replies** to your fellow classmates' posts; try to engage with classmates who are not in the same assigned group as you. • In order to gain top marks, we expect high quality, thoughtful and constructive comments beyond just mere completion. A.I. is not useful here. Make sure to connect your comments with the course materials, theories, and ideas wherever possible! **Synchronous** (in-person class participation) - 10% • Building on top of the pre-recorded lectures and course readings, the instructor and TA will guide in-class discussions. The success of your learning depends on connecting your wide-ranging ideas and personal perspectives! As such, we expect you and your fellow classmates to interact and engage enthusiastically. • Specifically, we will take special note of students who **speak up** and share their thoughts or constructively build on other classmates' comments. Furthermore, in-class attention and appropriate device use during classes will also be observed and may affect participation scores. We highly welcome all sorts of comments, opinions, and questions!
Written assignments Individual 10% each $\times 3 = \mathbf{30}\%$	Each student will finish three written assignments. • These assignments will take the form of **one or two** annotated bibliographies and **one or two** A.I.-assisted executive summaries (**total of three**). You can also choose to complete all four assignments, and we will choose your top three scores. • For an **annotated bibliography**, you will be asked to conduct rigorous research on a topic relevant to the associated module, strictly *without* the assistance of A.I., and create a bibliography list of around 8 sources, cited in an academic format (e.g. APA), along with short paragraphs summarising each source's information. The purpose of this assignment is to strengthen your research and essay planning skills, practice using multiple credible sources of evidence, and strengthen your ability to form a coherent argument. • For an **A.I.-assisted executive summary**, you will similarly be asked to generate an executive summary on a relevant topic, this time *with* the assistance of the top models of generative A.I. language models like ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity, DeepSeek, etc. Using these tools, you will gather a wealth of information and knowledge, but your key challenge is to summarise all of this into an executive summary on a particular topic. For this assignment, you will also need to list out all

	the prompts you've used and write a short paragraph explaining the logic behind these prompts, conduct a fact-check on your own work, and write a short reflection on the challenges you faced using the A.I.. The purpose of this assignment is to perform multi-perspective and accurate research through generative A.I. to recognise the need and importance to fact-check A.I.-generated content against misinformation or 'hallucinations', and to be thoughtful and intentional about why and how you research. • You will typically have 2 weeks to complete each written assignment, which will be released along with each module. Each written assignment is expected to be around **800 words** (excluding references and reflections). • The written assignments will be graded by the teaching assistant according to a rubric (see 'Written Assignments Grading Rubric' at the end of this syllabus, or specific rubrics on the Canvas Assignment page), who will also provide short comments and/or suggestions about the assignments. • Students should follow **academic writing style**. The use of academic references to credible sources is highly valued, as it demonstrates your research skills and ability to consolidate various sources of information. No Wikipedia! • Specific written assignment **submission requirements** are as follows: - File format in .docx only - Display your [SURNAME Firstname] as file name and at the top of document - State the written assignment number and questions on top (or throughout parts) of the essay. - Display word count at the top of essay - Font: Times New Romans, size 11, spacing 1.2, wide alignment - Referencing style: APA 7th edition - Proofread your work with free Grammarly software.
Quizzes Individual 5% each $\times$ $4 = \mathbf{20}\%$	Four quizzes will be conducted *asynchronously,* at your own pace, on Canvas, once during the module window. • The quizzes are intended to test your knowledge of the conceptual, definitional and theoretical issues regarding science, technology, innovation, and the innovation systems conceptual approach, as covered in pre-recorded videos. • Quizzes are attached to the pre-recorded learning videos of Modules 1, 2, 3, and 4. • Each quiz contains **10 multiple-choice** (MC) questions to be completed independently in no more than 15 minutes, while adhering to the academic integrity honor code (except for Quiz 1 with 20 minutes instead of 15.) For these quizzes, any use of A.I. in assistance with your completion of these quizzes is strictly prohibited – you don't need them! • The marks for the quizzes will be automatically calculated by the system.

Group presentation Group **10% slides + 20% presentation**	Students will form groups of 4 (yielding 10 groups) to conduct group presentations in the final weeks. • Brief: Choose a **pre-modern** (before the industrial revolution) or **modern** scientific achievement or technology, and explain on the social, cultural, and political factors that are significant to its development, and its social, cultural, and political influence. Choosing a premodern example allows you to apply more closely the concepts that you've learned during the lectures. Choosing a modern example allows you to explore a scientific achievement or technology that is relatable and relevant to you and your classmates, and this may be more challenging as you will need to apply the concepts learned in this course. The only rule is you cannot choose an achievement already selected for written assignment 4. • Group presentations will last 20 minutes: 12 minutes presenting + 8 minutes of Q&A. • Students will form the groups by themselves on Canvas; the teaching assistant will provide help to students who prefer to be allocated into a group. Group formation must be completed before week 4. The student groups, once formed, will remain in place for the entire semester. • The presentation order will be determined by lucky draw, and presentations will be spaced out according to the schedule in the course outline (Section 5). **Rubric for group presentations** • The format of presentation shall be PowerPoint or Canva, or any other tools that are effective and professional. Canva is highly recommended. • Students must attend every other group's presentations, as this also counts as class participation. Unlike the quizzes and written assignments which test personal abilities, this group assignment emphasises the importance of teamwork, rehearsal, and workload distribution. Some of the best presentations are evidently well rehearsed, coherent, and balanced. The group slides + presentation will be assessed based on: • 8 points for **Content** (Breadth and depth of analysis, connection with course material, and Q&A responses) • 6 points for **Q&A performance** (Breadth and depth of topic knowledge, balanced speakers' responses, time management) • 10 points for **Presentation delivery and style** (Verbal and non-verbal presentation, graphic design of slides) • 6 points for **Teamwork** (Professionalism, coordination, rehearsal, balance, support)

Course Outline

Week 0 & 1: Introduction and Orientation

Week 1 Reading: Course Syllabus

Learning Objectives	Learning Activities and Sequence	Assessments and Important Days
Understand the purpose and arrangement of the blended-learning approach *Clarify* the goals, arrangements and assessment of the course	~3hrs: ✓ Course overview (20:00) ✓ Introduction to the blended-learning approach (30:00) ✓ Introduction to the goals, arrangements and assessment of the course (30:00) ✓ Q&A about the course overview (30:00) ✓ Meet-and-greet with each other (30:00) ✓ Discussion: interesting topics about science and technology in China in which each student is interested (40:00)	N/A

MODULE 1

Week 2 & 3: Definitional Issues

Module 1 Reading: Sismondo, Sergio. 2004. *An Introduction to Science and Technology Studies*, Chapter 1, The Prehistory of Science and Technology Studies, pages 1–11.

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
List and *discuss* viable definitions of 'science', 'technology', and 'innovation' *Explain* the relationship between science and technology and society	~1hr, 51mins: ✓ 1.1: Let's Talk about Science: Science as the Scientific Method (12:37); ✓ 1.2: Problems with the Idea of Falsificationism (8:54) ✓ 1.3: Let's Talk about Science (Again): Science is What Scientists Do! (3:23) ✓ 1.4: Kuhn's Major Ideas (17:13) ✓ 1.5: Introducing Technology (19:43) ✓ 1.6: Introducing Innovation (12:07) ✓ 1.7: Examining Innovation (14:51) ✓ 1.8: Relationship Between Science and Technology (9:09)	✓ **Quiz 1**: About the definitions and schools of thoughts mentioned in the videos
	~3hrs: ✓ Answering questions about class videos, quiz questions that students answered incorrectly, knowledge-application activity based on the quiz topics most commonly answered incorrectly by students ✓ Discussion: What is wrong with defining science as the 'scientific method'? In other words, what does this definition of science miss? ✓ Discussion: What are everyday examples of science according to Popper's and Kuhn's definitions? In these examples, what relationships exist between science, potentially relevant technologies, and society? ✓ Answering questions about assignments	✓ **Quiz 1** *due* ✓ **Written Assignment 1:** Annotated Bibliography 1 (assignment brief on Canvas)

MODULE 2

Week 4 & 5: A Look Back into the Distance — Science and Technology in Ancient and Medieval China

Readings:

1) Joseph Needham, China Scholar From Britain, Dies at 94, by Sarah Lyall, published on 27 Mar 1995 (available from: https://www.nytimes.com/1995/03/27/obituaries/joseph-needham-china-scholar-from-britain-dies-at-94.html)
2) The China the West knew nothing about, by Jonathan Spence, published on 18 April 1982 (available from: https://www.nytimes.com/1982/04/18/books/the-china-the-west-knew-nothing-about.html)

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Identify the driving forces of scientific and technological development in ancient and medieval China *Describe* the characteristics and timeframe of scientific and technological development in the areas of mathematics, astronomy, and alchemy in ancient and medieval China	~1hr, 25mins: ✓ 2.1: History of Scientific Thought in China (17:01) ✓ 2.2: Philosophy of Chinese Science (7:25) ✓ 2.3: The Rise of Chinese Mathematics (15:59) ✓ 2.4: Development of Chinese Mathematics after the Golden Age (12:42) ✓ 2.5: Development of Chinese Astronomy: Calendars and Astrology (17:01); ✓ 2.6: The Advance of Chinese Astronomy: External Influences and the Golden Age (11:29); ✓ 2.7: The Rise of Chinese Alchemy (19:48) ✓ 2.8: The Decline of Chinese Alchemy (9:11)	✓ **Quiz 2**: About key facts related to the scientific and technological developments in ancient and medieval China.
	~3hrs: ✓ Answering questions about class videos, quiz questions that students answered incorrectly, knowledge-application activity based on the quiz topics most commonly answered incorrectly by students ✓ Discussion: To what extent do you think the scientific and/or technological achievements fit the definitions of science and technology discussed in week 2? ✓ Discussion: One of the ideas covered in this module has been the extent to which there was considerable external influence on Chinese astronomy. To what extent do you think external* factors actually positively influence innovative activity? *'External' factors can include influences from overseas, influences from outside a particular system/organization (such as a business unit) or from an 'external' group member (i.e. someone outside a social group such as the government). ✓ Guidance and Q&A about group presentations	✓ **Quiz 2** due ✓ Presentation group finalised before end of week 4 ✓ **Written Assignment 2:** A.I.-assisted executive summary 1 (assignment brief on Canvas)

MODULE 3

Week 6 & 7: The Industrial Revolution in the West, and the Historical Trajectories of Scientific and Technological Development in China and the West

Module 3 Reading: [To be confirmed]

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Explain the importance of the industrial revolution to global scientific and technological thought *Critically question* the industrial revolution in terms of its sources, impact, and its effects *Analyze* the 'divergence' between the West and China during the scientific and industrial revolutions *Deconstruct* the 'Needham Question' in greater depth *Describe* the role of the bureaucracy as a technology and its role in the divergent paths of the West and China	~3hrs 34mins: ✓ 3.1: Pre-Industrial Period: Context of the Changes of the Industrial Revolution (15:21) ✓ 3.2: The Industrial Revolution (19:56) ✓ 3.3: Industrial Revolution or Evolution? Impact of the Changes (15:10) ✓ 3.4: Industrial Revolution in the United States: The Rise of Science-Based Industry (11:47) ✓ 3.5: Industrial Revolution in the United States: Development of Technical Education and Professional Engineer (14:32) ✓ 3.6: Industrial Revolution in Britain: Critical Overview (18:30) ✓ 3.7: Spread of the Industrial Revolution: Critical Overview (14:11) ✓ 3.8: The Needham Question: In-depth Analysis (24:05) ✓ 3.9: Deconstructing the "Needham Question" (17:18) ✓ 3.10: Did the Scientific Revolution Not Take Place in China? (9:55) ✓ 3.11: Bureaucracy as Technology I: The Case of China (11:56) ✓ 3.12: Bureaucracy as Technology II: The Case of China (12:06) ✓ 3.13: Effects of Bureaucracy and its Contribution to the 'Divergence' (12:51) ✓ 3.14: The Flip Side of the Divergence and More Recent Chinese Passivity (8:29) ✓ 3.15: Inability to Narrow the 'Great Divergence' (1820–1949) (7:20)	✓ **Quiz 3**: About key knowledge related to the industrial revolution and the divergence of scientific and technological developments in China and the West.

	~3hrs: ✓ Answering questions about class videos; ✓ Discussion: It is clear that the trajectory of the industrial revolution is very different in Great Britain and the United States. What social, cultural, or political factors explain this difference? ✓ Discussion: Great Britain industrialized without significant amounts of inward technology transfer. Yet, much of Europe relied on technology transfer from Great Britain. Given this difference, to what extent do you think technology transfer is important for industrialization? ✓ Discussion: Given the important role that bureaucracy played, what opinion(s)/position(s) do you hold in terms of conceptualizing bureaucracy as a 'technology'?	✓ **Quiz 3** due before class ✓ **Written Assignment 3:** Annotated Bibliography 2 (assignment brief on Canvas)

MODULE 4

Week 8 & 9: Impact of Modern Science and Technology (S&T) in China, and Systems of Innovation and Innovation Policy

Readings: **1)** Needham, Joseph. 1978. Science reborn in China: Rise and fall of the anti-intellectual 'gang'. *Nature* 274 (August 31): 832–34.
2) "The 'system of innovation' approach, and its relevance to developing countries," 1 April 2005, by SciDev.Net.

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Explain briefly how science and technology have developed in China over the various periods in the last century *Describe* how and why science and technology policy has become increasingly important in China *Demonstrate* the usefulness of the innovation systems conceptual approach *Apply* the innovation systems conceptual approach to understand China's emerging innovation system	~4hrs: ✓ 4.1: Science and Technology in the Early People's Republic of China (21:55) ✓ 4.2: Reforms in Science and Technology in China (15:40) ✓ 4.3: The Role of Science and Technology in China (15:24) ✓ 4.4: The Chinese Model of Growth: Success and Challenges (17:36) ✓ 4.5: Development of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (19:07) ✓ 4.6: Framework Conditions for Innovation: Education, Competition, Corporate Governance and Financing of Innovation (14:01) ✓ 4.7: Framework Conditions for Innovation: Intellectual Property Rights, Standards and Public Procurement (15:22) ✓ 4.8: Main Features of China's Innovation System (10:53) ✓ 4.9: Importance and Relationship of Research and Development to Innovation (15:00) ✓ 4.10: Innovation Systems (11:17) ✓ 4.11: The Innovation Systems Conceptual Approach (15:19) ✓ 4.12: Advantages and Disadvantages of the Innovation Systems Conceptual Approach (12:09) ✓ 4.13: Main Actors in an Innovation System (17:30) ✓ 4.14: Importance of Linkages in Innovation Systems (15:06) ✓ 4.15: Innovation Systems and Innovation Policy (14:20) ✓ 4.16: Status of China's Emerging Innovation System (17:25)	✓ Quiz 4: About the Innovation Systems conceptual approach

	~3hrs: ✓ Answering any questions about class videos (30:00) ✓ Discussion: What are the advantages or attractions of the 'linear model of innovation'? What are its disadvantages? ✓ Discussion: Based on your knowledge, in what aspects of the framework conditions do you think China does or does not excel? ✓ Discussion: Explain in your own words why it is that some countries, such as the Scandinavian countries, Japan, the USA, etc., are willing to spend so much of their GDP on R&D while other countries (which may also be relatively rich) are unwilling to do so?	✓ **Quiz 4** due after the class ✓ **Written Assignment 4**: A.I.-assisted executive summary 2 (assignment brief on Canvas)

WEEKLY TOPICAL ISSUES

Week 10: Technology Policy in China, 1980–2000

Week 10 Reading: Cong Cao, Ning Li, Xia Li, and Li Liu. 2013. "Reforming China's S&T System." *Science* 341 (2 August):460–462.

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Evaluate the development of and changes in technology policy in China, 1980–2000	~3hrs: ✓ Lecture: Technology Policy in China, 1980–2000 (1hr) ✓ Q&A about the lecture (30mins) ✓ Discussion: What aspects of China's technology policy do you think is successful and problematic (30mins)? ✓ Group presentation: 1, 2, 3, 4 (20mins each)	✓ **Written Assignment 4** due before group presentations ✓ **Group presentation**: two groups per 1.5 hours class

Week 11: Recent (post-2000) Transformation of China's Innovation System

Week 11 Reading: Huang, Can and Naubahar Sharif. "Global Technology Leadership: The Case of China." *Science and Public Policy* 43, no.1 (2016): 62-73.

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Analyze the development of and changes in China's innovation system after 2000.	~3hrs: ✓ Lecture: Recent (post-2000) Transformation of China's Innovation System (1hr) ✓ Q&A about the lecture (30mins) ✓ Discussion: What aspects of China's technology policy after 2000 do you think show an improvement or transformation from the erroneous or underdeveloped aspects of the technology policy in the 1980–2000 period? (30mins) ✓ Group presentation: 5, 6, 7, 8 (20mins)	✓ **Group presentation**: two groups per 1.5 hours class

Week 12: Future Prospects for China's Technological Innovation

Week 12 Reading: Weiss, Jessica Chen. "A World Safe for Autocracy: China's Rise and the Future of Global Politics". *Foreign Affairs* 98 (2019): 92–109.

Learning objectives	Learning activities and sequence	Assessments and important days
Define the future prospects for China's innovation system (based on past development)	***Week 12*** (~3hrs): ✓ Lecture: Future Prospects for China's Technological Innovation (1hr) ✓ Q&A about the lecture (30:00) ✓ Discussion: What aspects of China's technology policy do you think need improvement or transformation in the recent future? (30:00) ✓ Group presentations 9, 10 (20mins)	✓ **Group presentation**: two groups per 1.5 hours class

Week 13: Wrap up, Review, Survey

Asynchronous: **Post-course Survey** (20mins)

Synchronous: **Wrap up and Review** (1hr, 30mins)

⚠ Academic Integrity

Please be informed of the University's policy on academic integrity, which can be found online. In this course, violation of academic integrity includes: (i) cheating on examinations or quizzes, (ii) copying written assignments from other students or from works by other authors without citation, and (iii) claiming credit for work that you have not done.

Special care will be given to detecting plagiarism in written assignments. A zero score will result for that written assignment if plagiarism is detected for the first time. Repeat offenders will be referred to the University for disciplinary action as prescribed under the University's policy on academic integrity.

A useful guide to APA 6th Edition citations: https://libguides.ust.hk/apa.

AI policy and integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the learning process and professional development in this course. While AI tools are increasingly prevalent in academic and professional settings, their use in this course must be thoughtful and limited. Students may, under special circumstances, utilise AI tools for general search purposes, fact-checking, writing enhancement, and reference verification, but these tools must not generate the substantial portion of any assignment. When AI assistance is used, students must explicitly acknowledge its use and demonstrate critical evaluation of AI-generated information, including providing your prompt history and conducting self-fact-checking to verify its truthfulness. The focus remains on developing original thinking, analytical capabilities, and independent judgment. Students must verify all AI-generated information against reliable academic sources and scientific journal evidence. Personal reflection and original analysis should form the core of all submitted work. This policy aims to foster responsible AI use while maintaining the course's educational objectives and academic standards. All work submitted must adhere to university guidelines regarding plagiarism, proper citation, and academic honesty. ***All submitted works will undergo a AI-checking process, including checking the authenticity of each source reference.***

Active participation policy

The classroom environment in this course is designed as a collaborative learning space where knowledge and insights emerge through dynamic interaction. Our sessions will follow a flipped classroom approach, emphasising mutual knowledge generation and collective wisdom-building. My teaching philosophy emphasises inquiry-based learning through open-ended questions that explore your unique insights, perspectives, and critical thinking rather than seeking predetermined answers. Our classroom serves as a safe space for constructive dialogue, where students are encouraged to build upon each other's contributions, whether in agreement or respectful disagreement.

I completely welcome spontaneous questions during our classes to ensure clarity and deeper understanding. Active participation extends beyond mere attendance - it involves engaging with case materials, contributing to discussions, and sharing your unique perspectives drawn from your diverse backgrounds and experiences. This approach is particularly vital in public policy, where our background differences may affect the effectiveness of various ideas messages, styles, and preferences.

Assignment policy

Regarding assignments, the assessment structure is carefully crafted to develop crucial knowledge and practical skills relevant to public policy. While high standards and full effort are expected, I acknowledge the demands of your studies and other commitments. If you experience any genuine difficulties meeting deadlines, email me *and* the TA to arrange reasonable extensions. My goal is to create a supportive learning environment that prioritises meaningful learning and skill development over rigid deadlines. This flexible approach is for you to produce your absolute best work while maintaining a healthy balance with other academic and personal commitments during your postgraduate learning journey.

Under **exceptional circumstances**, students are welcome to email me and the teaching assistant to request reconsideration of assignment grades if you genuinely believe your work merits a higher mark. However, please

understand that we utilise our extensive experience in assessment and our grading schemes are deliberately designed to accurately reflect whether student work achieves specific competency levels expected. While we might occasionally overlook nuanced points or encounter borderline cases requiring further consideration, our assessment practices follow established academic standards and criteria.

Should you wish to request a re-grade, you must **email us within two working days** of receiving your score, accompanied by a **written justification** clearly articulating why you believe your grade should be reconsidered. Your justification should reference specific assessment criteria, provide evidence from your work, and demonstrate substantive academic reasoning rather than mere disagreement with the grade awarded.

Important note: Please be aware that while grade reconsideration might result in no change or a slight increase in your mark, **it may equally result in a decrease** should our re-evaluation reveal aspects we initially assessed too generously. By submitting a reconsideration request, you accept this possibility and acknowledge that the revised grade will be final.

Grading Rubric for Written Assignments (the three criteria are weighted evenly in grading)**:**

Grading Criteria	5 (Exemplary)	4 (Very good)	3 (Good)	2 (Satisfactory)	1 (Beginner)
Selection and Relevance of the Topic	The topic is clearly identified and highly relevant to the requirement of the written assignment.	The topic is relatively clearly identified, and is overall relevant to the requirement of the written assignment.	The topic is somewhat clearly identified, and is only loosely relevant to the requirement of the written assignment.	The topic is somewhat clearly identified or the topic is loosely relevant to the requirement of the written assignment, but the two standards are not achieved simultaneously.	The topic is neither clearly identified nor relevant to the requirement of the written assignment.
Argument and Evidence	The piece of writing informs the argument with clear, concise, compelling, and factually correct evidence. The analysis of the evidence is comprehensive and critical. The argument is logically coherent.	The piece of writing informs the argument with clear, concise, and factually correct—although not necessarily compelling—evidence. The analysis of the evidence is comprehensive but not necessarily critical. The argument is logically coherent.	The piece of writing provides informs the argument with factually correct—although not necessarily compelling, clear, and concise—evidence. The analysis of the evidence is overall comprehensive but not necessarily critical. The argument may have minor coherence issues.	The piece of writing informs the argument with factually correct—although not necessarily compelling, clear, and concise—evidence. The analysis of the evidence is neither comprehensive nor critical. The argument may have some coherence issues.	The piece of writing shows clear factual problems and the evidence is not compelling, clear, or concise. The analysis of the evidence is neither comprehensive nor critical. The argument may have major coherence issues.
Structure and Writing	The piece of writing is well structured. Each part is logically connected with the others. The writing is fluent and grammatically sound.	The piece of writing is well structured. Each part is logically connected with the others. The writing is overall fluent, but there are some grammar problems.	The piece of writing is overall well structured. There may be some logical connection problems. The flow of the writing is adequate, with some grammar problems.	The structure of the piece of writing is unclear or unbalanced. The parts are logically connected to each other poorly. The flow of the writing is adequate, with frequent grammar problems.	The structure of the piece of writing is unclear or unbalanced. The parts are poorly logically connected to each other. There are major problems with grammar and sentence structure.