

PPOL5770 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Semester: 2025-26 Academic year

Course code: PPOL 5770 (0-credit)

Course Coordinator: Dr. Marie Bernal

Target students: MPP Year 1 and MPM Students

Total class quota: 200 (two sessions)

Grading requirement: Pass/Fail – **90% completion of mandatory components is required to pass.**
(Workload equivalent to a 3-credit course – spread through 1 school year).

I. Course description:

This comprehensive course is designed to equip postgraduate students with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel in their PPOL program and ultimately in the field of public policy. The course is divided into four main modules: **Orientation, Engagement, Career Development, and Wellness**

II. Intended Learning Outcomes

- Orientation:**
1. Understand the structure and expectations of the PPOL programs at HKUST.
 2. Develop basic English writing and communication skills necessary for their courses.
 3. Understand the structure and applications of common policy documents frequently assigned in PPOL courses.
 4. Acquire library research skills and understand the importance of citation and scholarship in academic work.
 5. Develop an understanding of the ethical considerations in our program and the principles of academic integrity and professional work and behavior.
- Engagement:**
1. Develop critical thinking skills through active participation in discussions.
 2. Learn to articulate and defend your own viewpoints in a respectful manner.
 3. Gain exposure to diverse perspectives on public policy issues.
 4. Build community and gain practical exposure to public policy in action through participation in outings and field trips.
 5. Incentivize performance and foster community and empathy through the recognition and celebration of achievements in the program through an end-of-year awards ceremony.
 6. Network with peers and professionals in the field of public policy.
- Career Devt.:**
1. Assess and apply job search strategies relevant to the public policy and management sectors, including navigating sector-specific employment platforms.
 2. Demonstrate effective communication skills through the creation of professional written materials and participation in presentation workshops tailored to public service contexts.
 3. Critically evaluate job offers and employment conditions, particularly within the Hong Kong public sector, to make informed career decisions.
 4. Reflect on personal experiences and challenges to develop authentic responses to common and complex interview questions.
 5. Utilize academic and career consultation resources to strengthen professional readiness and align personal goals with sector demands.
- Wellness:**
1. Understand personal strengths and areas for development.
 2. Develop strategies for managing stress and coping with challenges.
 3. Learn effective time management techniques.
 4. Participate in community building and social events to foster a supportive learning environment.
 5. Understand the importance of wellness in academic and professional success.

ABBREVIATED OVERVIEW

A. ORIENTATION

PART 1 – Aug. 28th – Welcome, Let’s Get Ready!

Introduction to HKUST and PPOL
Celebratory Lunch
Introduction to Individual Programs

PART 2 – Sept.-Nov. - Writing and Communication Basics

Referencing and Citation
Policy Analysis: Purpose & Structure
English Communication Tools: Ethics & Applications
Professional Conduct: Academia & Beyond
Library Research Skills
Group Work; Ethics and Best Practice
Writing Effective Briefs

B. ENGAGEMENT

Seminars, Talks & Lectures
PAE Conference
Conferences and Symposia

C. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career Development Workshop: Navigating the Job Market
Career Development Workshop: Decode the most challenging interview questions
Career Development Workshop: Job offer management (HK context)
Academic Writing workshop I
Academic Writing workshop II
Presentation Skills workshop
Individual Consultation (*these sessions will run through two semesters*)

D. WELLNESS

Lumina Spark Program
Lumina Spark Enrichment Sessions
Time Management

CONTENT BREAKDOWN

Please refer to the enclosed **Table of Requirements** for details on each component below.

A. ORIENTATION & PREPAREDNESS

PART 1 – Aug. 28th – Welcome! Let’s Get Ready! Rm. LT-D

- Welcome and Introductions
- Keynote Speech – *Prof. Heiwai Tang*
- Introduction to HKUST and PPOL
- Faculty and Staff Introductions
- Intercultural Expectation and Cultural Awareness
- Academic Integrity and Work Ethics
- Agenda for PPOL 5770

- Break for Lunch – **MPP to Chinese Garden, MPM & RPG to UniBistro** (*Optional*)

MPP Program Orientation (14:00-15:30, Rm. LT-D) *	MPM Program Orientation (14:00-15:30, Rm. 6602) *	RPG Program Orientation (14:00-15:30, PPOL Conf. Rm. 4615)*
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*All individual program sessions are mandatory.

PART 2 – September-November – Writing and Communication Basics

The sessions listed below (PART 2) will take place in the designated classroom and at the times scheduled for your PPOL 5770 course. Please see your academic schedule and the table below for dates and times.

- Introduction to your Postgraduate Development Course – *by Dr. Marie Bernal*
- Referencing and Citation – *by Dr. Michael Tyralla*
- Policy Analysis Structure – *by Dr. Alvin Li*
- Professional Conduct: Academia & Beyond – *by Prof. Stuart Gietel-Basten*
- English Communication Tools – *by Dr. Marie Bernal*
- Library Literacy – *by Dr. Victoria Caplan*
- Group Work; Ethics and Best Practice – *by Ms. Nerice Gietel*
- Writing Effective Policy Briefs – *by Dr. Michael Tyralla*

B. ENGAGEMENT

Content: **PPOL-organized Talks, Seminars, and Lectures** - *It is the students’ responsibility to seek office staff and be marked present. Attendance after the first 10 minutes will not be marked/recorded. Cumulative attendance will be posted at the end of each term.*

PAE Conference – *Mandatory for MPP students.*

Conferences and Symposia - *Minimum attendance is required for 1 conference per year if/when available. It is the students’ responsibility to seek office staff and be marked present.*

C. CARREER DEVELOPMENT

Content: **Career Development Workshop:** Navigating the Job Market: Job Search Strategies (bonus track: CV & Cover Letter Writing)
Career Development Workshop: Decode the most challenging interview questions: Bonus track: How to talk about failures in a job interview?
Career Development Workshop: Job Offer Management (Hong Kong context)
Academic Writing Workshop I
Academic Writing Workshop II for MPP
Academic Writing Workshop II for MPM (*optional*)
Presentation Skills Workshop for MPP
Presentation Skills Workshop for MPM (*optional*)
Individual Consultations with our Academic Tutor, Ms. Cynthia Hui

D. WELLNESS

Content: Lumina Spark Program Self-Test
Lumina Spark Program Debriefing Session
Lumina Spark Enrichment Sessions (*2 sessions available, optional*)
Time Management
Divisional Gatherings and Social Activities (*Optional*)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

- To pass the course, you must complete at least **90%** of the mandatory components as outlined in the provided table and discussed during class.
 - MPP students** who do not meet this requirement will be required to retake the entire course in their second year.
 - MPM students** who fail to complete the course will not be eligible to graduate.
- Details regarding dates, times, and locations for events held **outside of regular class hours** will be shared via email.
- Punctual attendance** is essential. Late arrivals will not be accepted under any circumstances. You are expected to attend all scheduled events and lectures, with a strict minimum as specified above. To avoid issues or misunderstandings, we strongly recommend **exceeding the minimum** attendance requirement.
- Please bring your **student ID** to all events to ensure you are marked present. No exceptions will be made.
- Attendance will only be counted within the first **10 minutes** of each event. Arriving late will result in your attendance not being recorded, so please be respectful and arrive on time.
- Photos of the event, photos of you in an event, photos of your ID at an event or any other attempt at submitting **photographic evidence** of your attendance to an event will **under no circumstance be accepted**. As stated above, please ensure that you arrive on time or slightly early, and that you check in with the TA or dedicated officer to mark your attendance.
- Any requests to **substitute** a PPOL seminar (or conference) with one from another division, department or even university needs to be made in advance, before the event takes place, and it is not guaranteed to be granted. We will only take into consideration events that promote the course's intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and are relevant to your degree.
- Excused absences will only be granted to students who submit a doctor's **note** that **specifically** says that you're unable to attend class.
- Instructional materials from sessions will be uploaded to Canvas. If materials are not posted, you may politely request them directly from the instructor or guest speaker.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please refer to the enclosed Table of Requirements for details on each component below. Note that **PPOL5770 R1 & R2** will meet every Monday at 1:00 pm and at 10:30 am respectively. You're free to sign up for either session.

Day	Event	MPM & PT: MPM Required	Time	Location
28-Aug	PPOL Orientation & Preparedness	x	9:30 am - 3:30 pm	LT-D
01-Sep	Start of the Fall Term			
01-Sep	Intro to PGDev	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
08-Sep	Referencing and Citation	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
15-Sep	Policy Analysis		1:30 pm - 2:50 pm	MIL13003
22-Sep	Professional Conduct: Academia & Beyond	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
29-Sep	Referencing and Citation + Effective Policy Briefs	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
06-Oct	Library Research Skills	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
09-12-Oct	Lumina Self-test Period	x	-	-
13-Oct	Lumina Debrief	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
20-Oct	Academic Writing Workshop I for MPM		10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
27-Oct	Academic Writing Workshop II for MPM		10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
03-Nov	Group Work; Ethics and Best Practice		1:30 pm - 4:20 pm	MIL13003
10-Nov	Time Management		1:30 pm - 4:20 pm	MIL13003
17-Nov	Navigating the Job Market: Job Search Strategies		3:00 pm - 4:20 pm	2303
24-Nov	English Communication Tools: Ethics and Applications	x	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13001
29-Nov	Last day of Fall Term			
02-Feb	First Day of Spring Term			
09-Feb	Decode the most challenging interview questions		10:30 am - 12:00 pm	MIL13002
23-Feb	Job Offer Management (Hong Kong context)		10:30 am - 12:00 pm	MIL13002
02-Mar	Presentation Skills		1:00 pm - 2:20 pm	MIL13004
	Presentation Skills		10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13002
09-Mar	Lumina Spark Advance Learning - Writing about Yourself to Land a Job		10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13002
16-Mar	English Communication Tools: Ethics and Applications	x*	1:00 pm - 2:20 pm	MIL13004
	English Communication Tools: Ethics and Applications	x*	10:30 am - 11:50 am	MIL13002
20-Apr	Lumina Spark Advance Learning - Stress Mangrmt.		1:00 pm - 2:20 pm	MIL13004
29-May	Last Day of Spring Term			
x*	You're only required to attend the session you're enrolled in. Both sessions offer identical content.			

Postgraduate Development Program (PPOL5770) Point Requirements and Allocation

Module	Objectives	Date	Instructor/ Speaker	Event	# of Sessions Available in the School Year	Make-up work available in case session is missed	MPM Requirements	Attendance Point Count towards Requirements	MPM Part- Timers Requirements	Attendance Point Count towards Requirements	
ORIENTATION	Higher awareness and understanding of the division and our educational approach. Expectation management.	28-Aug	PPOL	PPOL Orientation & Preparedness	1	No Make-up	Mandatory	0	Mandatory	0	
			Program Directors	Individual Program Briefings	1	No Make-up	Mandatory	0	Mandatory	0	
	Clear understanding of the PPOL values, program expectations, and academic integrity standards. Build essential skills to support success in postgraduate policy studies.	1-Sept	Marie Bernal	PGDev Program Introduction and Information	1	No Make-up	Mandatory	0	Mandatory	0	
		8-Sept	Michael Tyrala	Referencing and Citation	1	Make-up Work	Mandatory	1	N/A	0	
		15-Sept	Alvin Li	Policy Analysis: Purpose & Structure	1	Make-up Work	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		22-Sept	Stuart Gietel Bast	Professional Conduct: Academia & Beyond	1	Make-up Work	Mandatory	1	Mandatory	1	
		29-Sept	Michael Tyrala	Referencing and Citation + Effective Policy Briefs	1	Make-up Work	Mandatory	1	Mandatory	1	
		6-Oct	Victoria Caplan	Library Literacy	1	Make-up Work	Mandatory	1	Mandatory	1	
		3-Nov	Nerice Gietel	Group Work; Ethics and Best Practice	1	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		16-Mar	Marie Bernal	English Communication Tools: Ethics and Applications	1	Make-up Work	Mandatory	1	Mandatory	1	
ENGAGEMENT	Higher engagement, high-level learning and networking.	Varies	-	Divisional Seminars, Lectures and Talks	20-25 per year	No Make-up	6 Mandatory	6	4 Mandatory	4	
		11-May	-	PAE Conference	1	No Make-up	Optional	2 (Can count as your Conference Requirement)	Optional	0	
		Varies	-	Conferences and Symposia	1-2 per year	Can Make-up by attending 3 extra lectures/talks	1 Mandatory (details to follow)	2	Optional	0	
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Career development, professional competency and program satisfaction.	17-Nov	Career Centre; Grace Siu	Navigating the Job Market: Job Search Strategies (bonus track: CV & Cover Letter Writing)	1	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		9-Feb	Career Centre; Noor Yousaf	Decode the most challenging interview questions: Bonus track: How to talk about failures in a job interview?	1	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		23-Feb	Career Centre; Grace Siu	Job Offer Management (Hong Kong context)	1	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		21-Oct	Cynthia Hui	Academic Writing workshop I	1	Make-up Work	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		27-Oct	Cynthia Hui	Academic Writing workshop II for MPP	1	Make-up Work	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		27-Oct	Cynthia Hui	Academic Writing workshop II for MPM	1	Make-up Work	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		2-Mar	Cynthia Hui	Presentation Skills	1	Make-up Work	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		All year	Cynthia Hui	Individual Consultation	Upon Request	0	0	Optional	0	Optional	0
		15-29 Oct	-	Lumina Spark Self-A assessment	1	No Make-up	Mandatory	2	Mandatory	2	
		13-Oct	Marie Bernal	Lumina Spark Debriefing Session	1	No Make-up	Mandatory	2	Mandatory	2	
WELLBEING	Increase self-awareness, and communication, teamwork, leadership and coping with pressure skills.	09-Mar & 20-Apr	Marie Bernal	Lumina Spark Advance Learning Sessions	1 - 2 per year	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		Varies	PPOL	Community Building and Social Events	3-4 per year	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
		10-Nov	Nerice Gietel	Time Management	1	No Make-up	Optional	0	Optional	0	
TOTAL							4	4	TOTAL	4	
Total Mandatory Attendance Points Required for Passing PPOL5770							14	11			