Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Division of Public Policy (Fall 2024)

PPOL 6100U
Special Topics in Public Policy:
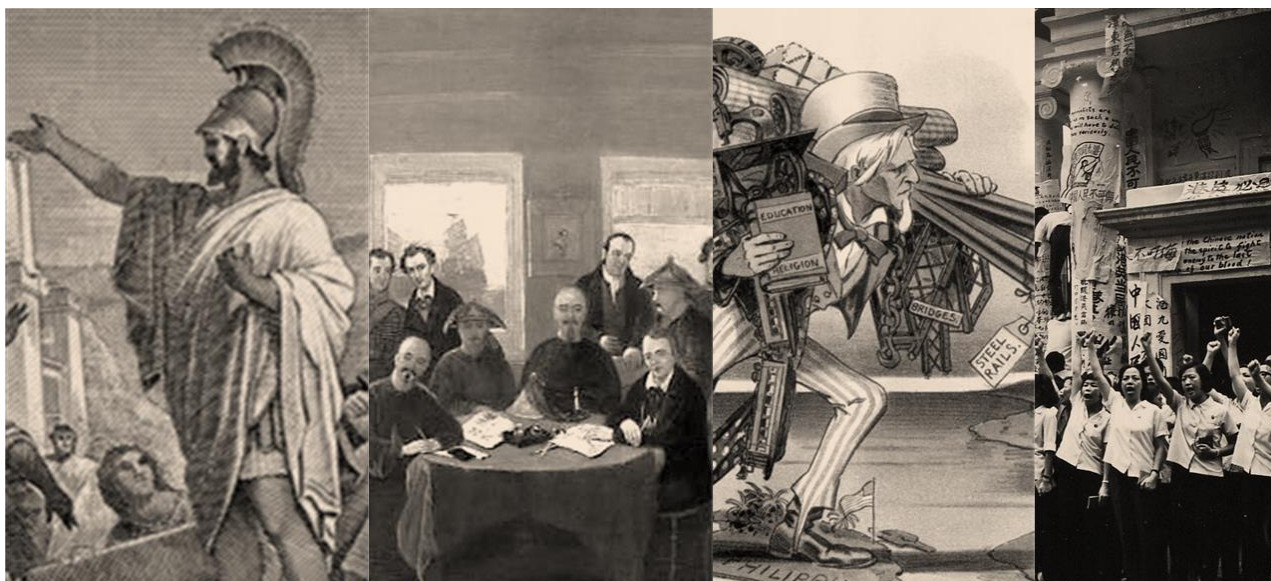Reasoning with the Past: History for Policymakers

Policymakers frequently draw lessons from the past to navigate the complexities of the present: *What policies have succeeded? Why do some policies fail in one context but thrive in another? How can we avoid promoting ineffective policies or 'reinventing the wheel'? Can history serve as a reliable guide for contemporary and future decision-making?*

This course delves deeply into the opportunities, challenges, barriers, and trajectories of integrating historical thinking and reasoning in policymaking. Students will be encouraged to leverage historical knowledge and evidence to develop innovative approaches to examining current and future policies. Through a comprehensive exploration of theoretical frameworks and historical case studies from Hong Kong and around the globe, students will be trained to scrutinise issues surrounding the "usability" of history, including the use, misuse, and abuse of historical narratives, as well as critical concepts such as causality, contingency, and analogies.

In addition to traditional lectures, this course will feature interactive workshops designed to stimulate critical thinking and deepen argumentation skills. These sessions will provide a collaborative environment where students can apply historical analysis to contemporary policy issues, fostering a robust and nuanced understanding of the course content.

By the end of the course, students will be equipped to formulate policy opinions on contemporary issues, grounded in historical context and with clear policy relevance. Inspired by the historian Marc Bloch's concept of "historical sensibility," this course aims to instil in students a profound appreciation for how historical perspectives can inform and enhance public policy. Ultimately, this course prepares students to become adept at using history responsibly to shape effective and informed policies for the future, fostering a deeper understanding of the dynamic relationship between the past and present in the realm of public policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Having taken this course, students will be able to:
1. Describe, discuss, and explain various historical methods and their relevance to public policy;
2. Evaluate the practices, strengths, and limitations of using historical analysis in policymaking;
3. Identify and critically assess the use and misuse of historical narratives in policy formulation and implementation;
4. Employ a diverse set of tools, methods, and frameworks to effectively and responsibly incorporate historical perspectives into contemporary policymaking; and,
5. Develop a "historical sensibility" or an attentive disposition towards the sensitivities and temporalities of the past, recognizing the importance of context and nuance in applying historical lessons to current and future challenges.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course achieves these learning outcomes by employing a combination of lectures, seminar discussions, and assessment geared towards the development of the student's 'historical sensibility'. The first half of the class is dedicated to lectures while the rest of the session is designed for seminar discussion of cases. This structure will also allow students to actively participate in class by leading the discussion, raising questions, and facilitating the process of inquiry. As this is an elective course, knowledge of history or historical methods is helpful but not necessary. This course is open to all students.

COURSEWORK/ASSESSMENT

Grading is based on 100% of the coursework.

Annotated Bibliography (15%)   Due: 05 October 2024
A bibliography is a compilation of works that are relevant to your topic of choice. An annotated bibliography includes a commentary and description of the works and why it is relevant to your topic. This task allows for students to have a grasp of the many views and perspectives related to a topic and allow for students to position themselves within historical discourse. A more detailed instruction will be given in class.

Historical Debate (25%)   Due: 28 November 2024
This is a group task. A historical debate entails the discussion of a current issue discussed and grounded on historical policies. The objective of this assessment is to see contemporary issues in light of historical antecedents. This activity allows for students to see these issues from multiple perspectives operating on a variety of contexts and contingencies. The topics will be decided and assigned in the middle of the semester. More instructions will be provided in class.

Historical Policy Paper (40%)   Due: 14 December 2024
Policy papers are pieces that have an enduring impact. The aim of this task is for students to showcase their historical sensibility by examining the continuities and discontinuities of the past and present. Students are tasked to write a historical policy paper, based on a real-life example, that employs one of these approaches: *reasoning through process, reasoning through comparison,* or *reasoning through analogy*. The target is to produce a 4,000 to 5,000-word piece that adheres to high standards and grounded on historical sources.

Active Participation and Seminar Attendance (20%)   Throughout the semester
Cases on historical policies will be discussed throughout the term. Students will be given a grade according to the degree to which you fulfil the requirements for preparation and participation within the

seminars. Active engagement with the material and with others is expected. Students should note that they will be expected to complete most of the readings for each seminar in order to contribute to the discussions. Students who consistently neglect the weekly readings will be asked to leave the course and will receive a Fail grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Date	Week	Topic and Activity
05 September	1	Introduction. What is History?
Module I: Evidence and Interpretation		
12 September	2	Sources and Documentation
19 September	3	Analysis and Interpretation
Module II: Approaches and Tools to Writing Policy History		
26 September	4	Causality, Context, Contingency Case: The Treaty of Nanjing: 1842
3 October	5	Comparative Historical Analysis Case: The Treaty of Nanjing (1842), Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895), and Treaty of Paris (1898)
10 October	6	Historical Analogies Case: From the Treaty of Nanjing (1842) to the Sino-British Joint Declaration (1984)
17 October	7	Models, Frameworks, and Methods Case: From Spanish Flu to COVID-19
24 October	8	Pitfalls: Historical Determinism and Presentism Case: The World's Fair 1904
Module III: Focusing on Issues in History		
31 October	9	Historical Issues I: Agency Case: Roe vs. Wade
7 November	10	Historical Issues II: Placement Case: Hong Kong's 1967 Riots
14 November	11	Historical Issues III: Institutions Case: The Emancipation Proclamation
21 November	12	Historical Issues IV: Environment Case: Famine in the 20th Century
Module IV: The Future of History and Policy		
28 November	13	The Future Chief Executive: The Task of the Historian-Policymaker

All readings and materials will be posted on Canvas. At the very least, students are expected to have read the posted materials. It will be very difficult to follow in the lectures and discussions if students do not at least prepare for the class.

There is no single textbook for this course. However, students may benefit from the following works as guide for this course:

Ashford, Douglas E. *History and Context in Comparative Public Policy*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010.

Bayly, C. A., Vijayendra Rao, Simon Szreter, and Michael Woolcock. *History, Historians and Development Policy: A Necessary Dialogue*. Manchester University Press, 2020.

Berger, Stefan, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore, eds. *Writing History: Theory and Practice*. London; New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020.

Cauvin, Thomas. *Public History: A Textbook of Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Donnelly, Mark, and Claire Norton. *Doing History*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2020.

Green, Alix R. *History, Policy and Public Purpose: Historians and Historical Thinking in Government*. Springer, 2016.

Jordanova, Ludmilla. *History in Practice*. London: New York: Arnold; Oxford University Press, 2000.

May, Ernest R. *"Lessons" of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Neustadt, Richard E., and Ernest A. May. *Thinking In Time: The Uses Of History For Decision Makers*. Simon and Schuster, 1986.

Rothman, David J., and Stanton Wheeler. *Social History and Social Policy*. Elsevier, 2013.

Sayer, Faye. *Public History: A Practical Guide*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

Tosh, John. *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*. 5th ed. 1984. Reprint, Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2010.

Tosh, John. *Why History Matters*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

A great resource for the writing of historical policies is the *History and Policy* (H&P) website (https://www.historyandpolicy.org/). H&P is a non-profit network hosted by the Institute of Historical Research based in the UK of over 500 academic historians committed to promoting better public policy through a greater understanding of history. Samples of current policies that are backed with historical insights are found on this website.
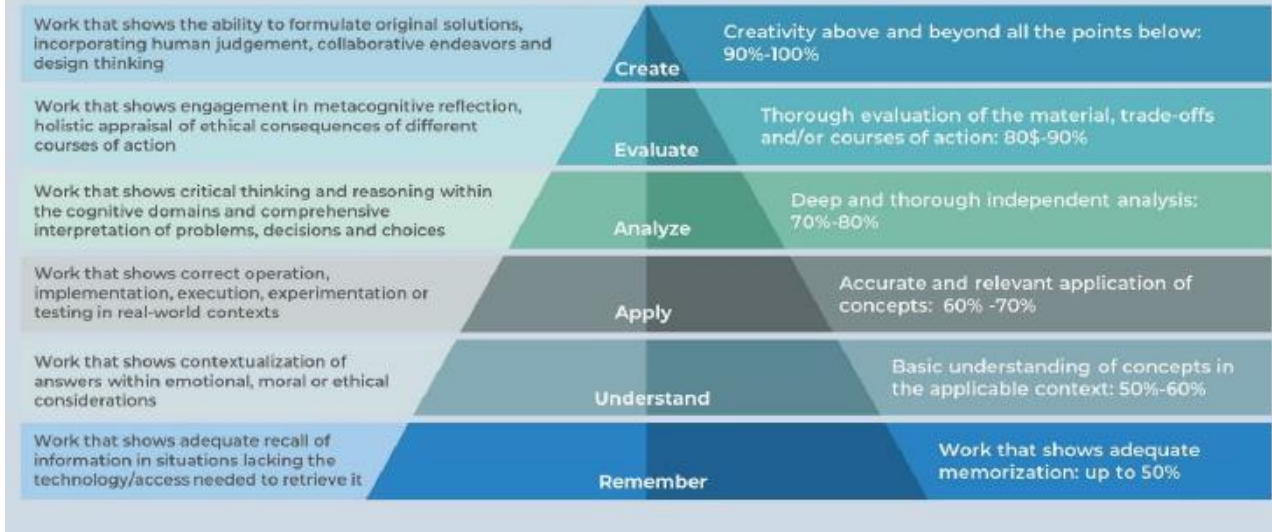
GRADING

The Division of Public Policy rigorously upholds the University's high academic standards and commitment to intellectual integrity. For each assignment, we will provide detailed outlines and marking rubrics. As you prepare your work, it is advisable to consult Bloom's Taxonomy as a guiding framework (see the guide below).

VERY IMPORTANT: Please note that meeting basic requirements does not guarantee an 'A' grade. Even a 'very good' piece of work, aligning with the 'evaluate' level of Bloom's Taxonomy, may receive a 'B' or 'B+' at best. An 'A' paper represents the highest calibre of scholarship: it demonstrates adept use of sources, original thought, nuanced arguments, accurate citations, and a logical, coherent flow. In essence, an 'A' paper is of publishable quality, suitable for submission to international journals and other scholarly platforms.

ALSO IMPORTANT: Late submissions will **automatically** receive a one-letter grade deduction unless an extension has been granted by the instructor (a late submission after one week will automatically receive an 'F' grade). If you anticipate difficulties completing the task within the given timeframe, it is strongly recommended that you contact the instructor or teaching assistant as early as possible. Extensions are granted only with a compelling justification and supporting evidence, so it is in your best interest to address any issues promptly.

The Cognitive Process Dimensions:
Evaluation of Student Work

(Adapted from: Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001, pp. 67–68 and Oregon State University Ecampus: Bloom's Taxonomy Revisited)

Work that shows the ability to formulate original solutions, incorporating human judgement, collaborative endeavors and design thinking	**Create**	Creativity above and beyond all the points below: 90%-100%
Work that shows engagement in metacognitive reflection, holistic appraisal of ethical consequences of different courses of action	**Evaluate**	Thorough evaluation of the material, trade-offs and/or courses of action: 80$-90%
Work that shows critical thinking and reasoning within the cognitive domains and comprehensive interpretation of problems, decisions and choices	**Analyze**	Deep and thorough independent analysis: 70%-80%
Work that shows correct operation, implementation, execution, experimentation or testing in real-world contexts	**Apply**	Accurate and relevant application of concepts: 60% -70%
Work that shows contextualization of answers within emotional, moral or ethical considerations	**Understand**	Basic understanding of concepts in the applicable context: 50%-60%
Work that shows adequate recall of information in situations lacking the technology/access needed to retrieve it	**Remember**	Work that shows adequate memorization: up to 50%

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: I have little tolerance for academic dishonesty. Such behaviour is detrimental to both educators and students, undermining the integrity of the academic experience. The University defines academic dishonesty to include the following:

- Obtaining examination or test questions without the instructor's permission, or sharing these questions with others without authorisation
- Giving or receiving unauthorised assistance during examinations or tests
- Having someone else take an examination or test on your behalf, or taking one for someone else
- Submitting assignments that have received unapproved assistance from others, or providing such assistance to others
- Fabricating facts or references in assignments
- Using another person's work in an assignment and presenting it as your own
- Assisting another student in cheating

All submissions will undergo a Turnitin check, and thus, must be submitted through our academic platform, Canvas.

PLAGIARISM: HKUST defines plagiarism as "presenting work which is not your own and originates from other sources as if it is your own, without appropriate attribution to the sources." *This includes the use of generative AI for content creation*. This also covers all forms of work submitted for assessment as part of a University examination (e.g., theses, dissertations, take-home examinations, assignments, and projects). Plagiarism is considered a very serious academic and disciplinary offence which could result in expulsion from the University. The Division of Public Policy adheres and implements these rules strictly. If in doubt, please ask or seek for further advice.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

Citation
Whether using the author-date system or footnotes, all citations in written assignments will follow the **17th ed. Chicago Manual of Style**. Please refer to this: https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Lectures
Everyone is expected to attend lectures. Powerpoint slides of the lectures will not be uploaded. Everyone is also expected to take notes (whether via notebooks or laptops) in class. There is no make-up work for participation activities unless you email the teaching assistant (ztangbf@connect.ust.hk) before class if you are going to be absent. If you are absent for the lecture, kindly inform the instructor or/and the teaching assistant.

Readings
There is no standard textbook for the course. The readings for the course will be taken from a variety of sources including journals, book chapters, etc. and will be made available via Canvas. Students are expected to be responsible for their readings to facilitate learning and interaction during the seminars.

Use of Electronics
While we are all accustomed to using our gadgets for research and communication, laptop use within the classroom must only be used insofar as it helps in the learning process. Mobile phones must be switched off or put on silent at all times. Disruptions caused by these gadgets will entail deductions on your participation grade. Likewise, playing games or browsing through social media apps in class will have the same consequences.

Use of AI
This class acknowledges the convenience brought by AI-assisted technologies (e.g., Grammarly, ChatGPT, Quillbot, ProWritingAid, Whitesmoke, Jenni.ai, Poe, etc.) in student research and writing. While HKUST maintains a tolerant policy regarding the use of AI, it also recognises that these tools have significantly altered how students gather and process information. As a result, there has been an increase in errors, such as unverified information and false citations. Moreover, these technologies have also impacted the way we approach writing in history and policy.

To address these changes, students are permitted to use AI technologies **only in certain tasks**, such as improving grammar and readability, **but not for content creation**. *If AI tools are used, students must include a declaration at the end of their essay, detailing how these technologies were employed in the context of their work.*

NOTE: All submitted essays will be subjected to the Turnitin AI detector. Essays found to be generated in whole or in significant part by AI will be considered plagiarised. Additionally, <u>any essay that uses AI without an accompanying declaration will also be treated as plagiarised</u>. Essays identified as plagiarised will be handled according to HKUST's policies on plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Accommodation
Our classroom is, above all, a safe space for your thoughts, feelings, and identity. This class embraces the diversity of every individual, acknowledging the unique contexts from which each of you come from. It is essential that we extend the same respect to others that we ourselves wish to receive.

If you have any special needs or encounter challenges in your learning, please reach out to the instructor without hesitation. We are committed to doing everything within our power to ensure that your learning experience is safe, enjoyable, and meaningful.