



# HKU

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF HONG KONG  
香港大學



# COMMONCORE

Exploring Issues of Profound Significance to Humankind

offering

# 170

courses in 2014-15



The HKU Common Core Curriculum provides a sophisticated exposure to active and cross-disciplinary learning for all of our undergraduates. Designed to provide transformative educational experiences, and focusing on issues that are of profound significance to us all, the Common Core will expand your understanding, enhance your practical capacities for collaboration and creative research, and increase your ability to make positive changes in the world. Through the courses, and in a way that complements your major, the Common Core will assist you in developing the intellectual power, the communicative skills, and the ethical values that the entire HKU community is striving toward.

<http://commoncore.hku.hk>

## What are the goals?

The overarching goals of the Common Core are:

- to enable students to develop a broader perspective and a critical understanding of the complex connections between issues in their everyday lives
- to cultivate students' ability to navigate the similarities and differences between their own and other cultures
- to enable students to more fully participate as individuals and citizens in global, regional, and local communities
- to develop the intellectual and communication skills that will be further enhanced in students' disciplinary studies, and, in turn, contribute to the quality of their lives after graduation

## What will you study?

The Common Core is designed to help you see connections across human history, culture, knowledge, and experience through an exploration of:

- the artistic and imaginative expressions of ideas and emotions
- the reciprocal relationships, on various scales, between individuals and communities
- the relationships between human beings, scientific ways of knowing, technology and nature
- identity-formation, social tensions, and the negotiation of differences
- continuity and change that link the past, present and future

## How is it structured?

In order to ensure a balanced exploration, the Common Core is divided into four Areas of Inquiry (Aols): Scientific and Technological Literacy, Humanities, Global Issues and China: Culture, State and Society. However, it is important for you to realize that while these Aols serve as a means of organizing the curriculum, they are interrelated rather than mutually exclusive.



“The one real goal of education is to leave a person asking questions.”  
- Max Beerbohm

## What are the requirements?

You are normally required to take six 6-credit courses, one from each Aol and not more than two from any Aol. However, the number of courses required and the year in which they are taken vary from programme to programme. In general, you are not allowed to take more than one course from any Aol in an academic year. The majority of Common Core courses are taught on Wednesday afternoon, although a number of them occur on Saturday morning.

## How will you learn?

Student workload hours for a 6-credit course amount to between 120 and 180 hours. Common Core courses normally consist of 36 contact hours, with a 2-hour lecture and a 1-hour tutorial per week. Within these sessions, you may be asked to solve complex problems, address difficult social questions, discuss different perspectives, or decide on issues you wish to investigate further. The remainder of the hours will be accounted for through engaging in a variety of learning activities including, among others, close reading, reflective writing, media production, fieldwork, group projects, interviews, and other forms of research.

## How will you be assessed?

Since learning occurs best when it is most active, Common Core courses utilize diverse modes of assessment such as essays; journals, scrapbooks, or observation logs; making a short video, map, or soundscape; engaging in relevant experiments and fieldwork; constructing a website; creating an exhibit of work; or undertaking group projects or presentations. Occasionally, there will also be a traditional exam or a quiz.

## Why are tutorials important?

Tutorials, which are normally conducted weekly in small groups, are an essential and compulsory element of study in the Common Core. The purpose of tutorials is to provide a context for you to clarify and deepen your understanding through dialogue with others in an interactive setting. Additionally, tutorials offer an environment for you to improve your communication skills and develop your confidence. Each member of the tutorial group has responsibility for creating an effective learning experience for all concerned, and it is therefore important that you prepare adequately by reviewing lectures, formulating questions for discussion, and completing any preset tasks such as reading, writing, or research requirements.



Scientific and Technological Literacy // CCST9008

### Infectious Disease in a Changing World

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccst9008>



Scientific and Technological Literacy // CCST9030

### Forensic Science: Unmasking Evidence, Mysteries and Crimes

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccst9030>



Humanities // CCHU9015

### Sex and Intimacy in Modern Times

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/cchu9015>



Humanities // CCHU9052

### The Best Things in Life: A Philosophical Exploration

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/cchu9052>



Global Issues // CCGL9001

### Hong Kong Cinema through a Global Lens

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccgl9001>



Global Issues // CCGL9021

### Globalization and Tourism

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccgl9021>



China: Culture, State and Society // CCCH9001

### Chinese House and Garden: Architecture, Landscape, and Material Culture

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccch9001>



China: Culture, State and Society // CCCH9035

### Music Along the Silk Road

<http://commoncore.hku.hk/ccch9035>

### Sexuality and Gender: Diversity and Society

"I think this course is very close to us at heart. We feel connected to the issues and we are encouraged to raise questions about the issues."



### Social Divisions in Contemporary Societies

"This course makes me think about something I've never thought about before. It has changed my perspective towards different groups of people in society – especially after our visit to a refuge shelter."



### Love, Marriage and Sex in Modern China

"The assessment method of this course is very interesting – video production instead of exams!"



### Body, Beauty and Fashion

"It helps me develop critical thinking skills and raises my awareness of a lot of issues that wouldn't have caught my attention had I not taken the course."



### Catastrophes, Cultures, and the Angry Earth

"I am amazed to learn the connection between past and present events."



# The Students' Experiences

"Common Core courses provide a new environment for us to learn because it is rare to have students from different disciplines discussing issues together. I've become more accepting of different perspectives."

### Poverty, Development, and the Next Generation: Challenges for a Global World

"Interactive. Interesting. It makes me think deeply about issues relating to development."



### Origin and Evolution of Life

"There are lots of videos used in class to stimulate thoughts, and we are learning in a fun way."



### Local Cultures and Global Markets

"This course integrates many aspects of things in real life. It shows the inter-relationship of issues and is very inspiring."



### Our Living Environment

"This course has changed the way I look at things. It helps me look far beyond the surface with a curious mind."



### Hong Kong Culture in the Context of Globalization

"I like the interdisciplinary approach, incorporating different examples of Hong Kong culture to illustrate an encompassing point."



### The Science of Crime Investigation

"Discussions during our tutorials are stimulating. As a result of these discussions, I am able to think diversely, taking into consideration other people's views."

