CCCH9008 Hong Kong’s Environment: Issues and Policies

First semester, 2011-2012
Wednesday/ 2:00-4:00 pm
Lecture: James Lee Building, G-05

The University of Hong Kong
Department of Geography
Tutorial: Hui Oi Chow Building, 303

Course teachers:
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Teaching assistant:
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Course description:
This course will provide students with a regional and comparative perspective to examine the complex inter-relationships between the socio-economic-political processes and the deteriorating environmental and ecological conditions of Hong Kong. This perspective will help students develop an in-depth understanding of the larger issues impinging on the city’s ecological future. It will also enable them to think critically of the material causes and consequences of the changing nature of environmental challenges associated with sustained economic and urban growth, both in Hong Kong as well as in its neighboring jurisdictions on Mainland China. The course materials are organized around three major sub-themes to help achieve its overall objectives: the sustainability dimensions of Hong Kong as a compact city; the links between economic restructuring and changing environmental challenges; and the constraints of and opportunities for cross-boundary environmental cooperation.

Learning outcomes:
After completing this course, students are expected to be able to:
• Describe and explain the causes, contours and consequences of major environmental issues in Hong Kong
• Examine critically the strengths and limitations of policies formulated to address environmental problems in Hong Kong
• Compare and contrast the similarities and differences of selected environmental challenges faced by Hong Kong and its neighboring jurisdictions on Mainland China
• Demonstrate an awareness of the complex relations between the socio-economic-political processes and environmental change in a high-density urban setting

Lecture schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 7</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Lee &amp; Ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 14</td>
<td>Air pollution and control</td>
<td>Ng</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>Water pollution, noise pollution and control</td>
<td>Ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 28</td>
<td>Municipal solid waste</td>
<td>Ng</td>
<td>T-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct 5</td>
<td>Public holiday (No lecture)</td>
<td>T-2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Nature conservation</td>
<td>Ng</td>
<td>T-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Reading week (No lecture)</td>
<td>T-2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>Environmental impact assessment</td>
<td>Ng</td>
<td>T-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Public environmental attitudes</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>T-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Politics and environmental policy</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>T-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Urban planning and the environment</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>T-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>Cross-border environmental management</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>T-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 30</td>
<td>Environmental governance</td>
<td>Lee</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Tutorial:
Each student is required to sign up for one tutorial group by Sept 16, 2011, when the course enrolment list is confirmed after the “add/drop” period. Details on the method of signing up for the tutorial groups will be announced at the second lecture.

Tutorial schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Discussion topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T-1</td>
<td>Sept 26-30</td>
<td>Introduction + Hong Kong’s environmental issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>T-2</td>
<td>Oct 3-7</td>
<td>Air pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T-3</td>
<td>Oct 10-14</td>
<td>Municipal waste management (Field-trip)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>T-4</td>
<td>Oct 24-28</td>
<td>Nature conservation (Field-trip)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T-5</td>
<td>Oct 31-Nov 4</td>
<td>Student presentations (Environmental impact assessment +)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>T-6</td>
<td>Nov 7-11</td>
<td>Student presentations (Public environmental attitudes +)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T-7</td>
<td>Nov 14-18</td>
<td>Student presentations (Politics and environmental policy +)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>T-8</td>
<td>Nov 21-25</td>
<td>Student presentations (Urban planning and the environment +)</td>
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<td>13</td>
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Course assessment:
The course grade will be determined by the student’s coursework performance (50 percent) and performance in a written final examination (50 percent). Assessment components and their respective share of the total mark are listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment component</th>
<th>Marks out of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field-trip report</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Term paper
Each student should select a topic of interest relating to an important aspect of Hong Kong’s environment and write a research paper to explore and examine that particular topic. The paper should be based on library research of scholarly materials. This means that the paper should relate to some specific issues (economic, social, cultural, political, or institutional) and highlight policy deliberations discussed and debated in books, journal articles, book chapters, periodicals, government reports, newspapers and other respectable printed sources. This also means that the use of web-based information, except for official reports and respected newspapers, should be kept to a minimum. Grey literature (such as magazines published by environmental groups) could be used, but with great care, because they may not always contain factually correct information. A list of scholarly materials consulted should be included at the end of the essay; and a proper referencing format should be followed. The text of the paper should be about 2,000 words in length.

On Oct 12, 2011, each student should submit the topic of his/her term paper to the TA for the record. Between Week 9 and Week 12, each student is also required to make a 10-minute oral presentation on his/her chosen topic for the term paper at a tutorial session. The oral presentation will account for 10 percent of the total marks of the term paper.

The deadline for submitting the term paper is Nov 30, 2011. Each student is required to submit a Turn-It-in report, together with his/her term paper, by the submission deadline. Details on how to obtain this report will be announced by the TA at the tutorial sessions.
Field-trip report
Three field-trips will be organized: Oct 19, 2011 (Wed), Oct 21, 2011 (Fri) and Nov 12, 2011 (Sat). Each student is required to sign up for and participate in one of these three field-trips and then submit a field-trip report one week afterwards. The field-trip report should focus on and examine one of the themes discussed on the field-trip. The text of the field-trip report should be about 500-750 words in length. Details on signing up for the field-trip will be announced at the fourth lecture.

Tutorial attendance & participation
Students are required to attend all eight tutorial sessions and participate in group discussion at the tutorials. A detailed tutorial schedule, with instructions on how to prepare for the group discussion, will be distributed by the TA at the first tutorial session.

Final examination
The final examination will be scheduled by the University at a later date. The final examination, which will cover materials discussed in lectures and the assigned readings, will contain essay questions only.

Submission of assignments:
1. All assignments should include the following information at the top of the first page:
   Line 1: Course code/ Course title
   Line 2: Your name (LAST, first)/ University number/ Tutorial group number
   Line 3: Date of submission/ Type of assignment

2. Hard copies of assignments and Turn-it-in reports should be submitted to the assignment collection box located inside the General Office of the Department of Geography (Room 301, Hui Oi Chow Building). You need to follow the proper procedure (clearly explained on the collection box) in submitting the assignments.

3. As a Departmental policy, all late submissions will be penalized: 10 percent of the total awarded marks will be deducted for each day of late submission.

Readings:
All of the reading materials are available at the Main Library. Books are either put on reserve in the Main Library or accessible at the Hong Kong Special Collection Section. Journal articles are available through accessing the Electronics Resources database of the Hong Kong University Library System.

Week 1: Introduction (Sept 7)

Essential

Suggested

Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department’s website: http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/eindex.htm

Week 2: Air Pollution and Control (Sept 14)

Essential

Suggested

Week 3: Water Pollution, Noise Pollution and Control (Sept 21)

Essential

Suggested

Week 4: Municipal Waste Management (Sept 28)

Essential

Suggested

Week 5: Public holiday (No lecture) (Oct 5)

Week 6: Nature Conservation (Oct 12)

Essential
**Suggested**

**Week 7: Reading Week (No lecture) (Oct 19)**

**Essential**

**Suggested**

**Week 8: Environmental Impact Assessment (Oct 26)**

**Essential**

**Suggested**

**Week 9: Public Environmental Attitudes (Nov 2)**

**Essential**

**Suggested**
Week 11: Urban Planning and the Environment (Nov 16)

**Essential**

**Suggested**

Week 12: Cross-border Environmental Management (Nov 23)

**Essential**

**Suggested**

Week 13: Environmental Governance (Nov 30)

**Essential**

**Suggested**