



HKU

THE UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG
香港大學

COMMONCORE



Exploring Issues of Profound Significance

The Common Core

offers a sophisticated engagement with active transdisciplinary learning for all of our undergraduates. Designed to provide transformative experiences, the Common Core will expand your understanding, enhance your capacities for creative research and collaboration, improve your readiness for your chosen career, and increase your ability to make positive changes in the world.

<https://commoncore.hku.hk>

 HKU Common Core

Engage~
Experiment~
Enjoy!

What are the goals?

- To enable students to develop a broader perspective and a critical understanding of 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 citizens in global, regional, and local communities
- To develop the intellectual, collaborative, and communication skills that will contribute to the quality of their lives now and in their chosen profession

How will you learn?

Since learning occurs best when it is most active, Common Core courses utilize diverse modes of assessment such as essays, journals or observation logs; making a short video, map, or soundscape; engaging in relevant experiments and fieldwork; constructing a website or creating a public exhibit; or undertaking group projects and presentations.

What is the course structure?

Common Core courses normally consist of a 2-hour lecture and a 1-hour tutorial per week. Within these sessions, you may be asked to address difficult questions, create projects, clarify ideas, 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 such as close reading, reflective writing, media production, fieldwork, group projects, artworks, interviews, and other forms of inquiry. The majority of Common Core courses are taught on Wednesday afternoon, although several also occur on Saturday morning. There are also summer classes and blended learning classes that are conducted in a "Flipped Classroom" format.

Areas of Inquiry

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. While these Aols serve as a means of organizing the curriculum, they are very much interrelated rather than mutually exclusive.

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, but the number of courses required and the year in which they are taken vary from programme to programme.

Why are tutorials important?

Tutorials, which are conducted weekly in small groups, are an essential and compulsory element in the Common Core. Tutorials offer an environment for you to improve your communication skills and develop your confidence. Each member of the tutorial group shares the responsibility for creating an effective learning experience for all concerned.

OPCs: Open-Platform Courses

Create Your Own Course! An Open Platform Course is a flexible student- or staff-initiated advanced level course with Common Core prerequisite requirements. The course is an 8-12 student research- and project-based seminar in which students and staff co-create the course. It is open to students from all Faculties.

The Graduation Grade Point Average and the Common Core

In order to encourage students to be exploratory in their selection of Common Core courses, the determination of the Graduation Grade Point Average (GGPA) is subject to a proviso that either five Common Core courses with the highest grades (covering all Areas of Inquiry) or all six courses will be taken into account, depending on which generates a higher score.

CLASS: China Liberal Arts Summer Sessions

CLASS will offer Common Core courses on the Mainland in a compressed format in the summer. In addition to the course itself, there will also be excursions to cultural sites and businesses, depending on the type of course offered. Students will stay in the dormitories of the Partner Universities while on the Mainland.

GLADE: Global Liberal Arts Design Experiments

GLADE is an initiative to create affiliations between programmes around the world that cross disciplines, faculties, and research methodologies. Emerging collaborations are developing around the experience of cities, virtual exchanges between classrooms, women and innovation, and transdisciplinary responses to the Anthropocene.

Common Core Clusters and Transdisciplinary Minors

Students may pursue an organized course of interdisciplinary study tailor-made to their interests. The Common Core has launched two thematic clusters, 'Sustaining Cities, Cultures, and the Earth' and 'The Universe and the Question of Meaning'. A Cluster consists of four Common Core courses and a Transdisciplinary Minor consists of six courses. The Clusters and Minors will offer you a pathway to personalize your Common Core experience that will be acknowledged on the Academic Attainment Profile.

Common Core^{PLUS}

Common Core^{PLUS} provides a co-curricular platform for events connected to the four Areas of Inquiry. It furthers our culture of highlighting student-initiated projects and encouraging the development of creative links between the majors and the Core as well as between the campus, the city, and your future.

Student Learning Festival

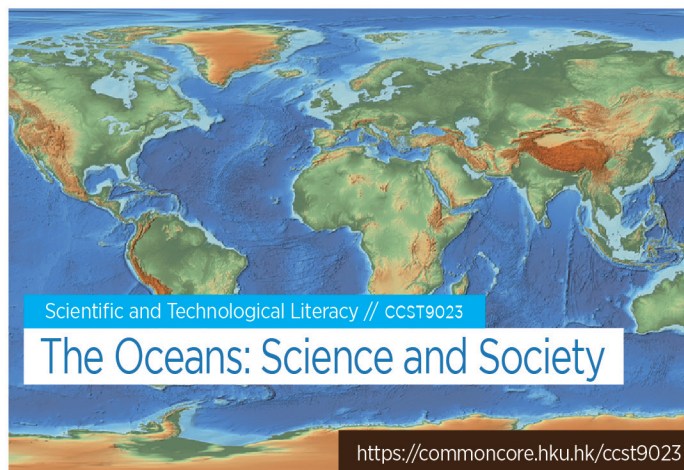
At the end of each semester, we celebrate the breadth, depth, and creativity of student work by displaying it for the wider community. You will have the opportunity to share your learning experiences with your friends, family, and colleagues.

Hong Kong Learning Partners

This project is developing collaborations between the Common Core and organizations, NGOs, and corporations in Hong Kong in order to create more pathways for students to learn about their own areas of interest and how they might best enhance the flexibility, communicative and research skills, and intellectual and emotional depth that are needed in the 21st century workforce.

Nomadic Transdisciplinary Research Teams: Action-Oriented-Research

Nomadic Transdisciplinary Research Teams actively participate in selected events of their choice; do a variety of "light-touch" research tasks around observations, short ethnographies, videos, drawings, apps and such; help out, on occasion, with logistics; and, over time, compose their creations and discoveries into a public presentation, a digital object, an artwork, or a scholarly paper. This is for those interested in applying for post-graduate degrees or whose future work choices lead in similar directions.



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."



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 refugee shelter."



Common Core Student Ambassadors

"Through the diversified and interactive learning approaches, students are strongly encouraged to learn both to work independently and in collaboration. This actually helps to fill the major loophole that the conventional major curriculum is missing, which is to connect the discrete subjects like arts, science and social studies together and get far beyond the conventional academic disciplines."

HKUSU Council Annual Debate 2015

"Not only does the Common Core provide students with horizons in the globalized world as well as the workplace, it also helps bridge the gap between secondary and university studies, assisting freshmen in getting used to the mode of teaching in the university. The assessment methods, which include writing, debates and model United Nations conferences, are good ways to train up students with various skills apart from their major studies."

The Student Experience

Engage~ Experiment~ Enjoy!

Common Core Transdisciplinary Research Exchange

"Throughout our meetings, our time together with our project-mates wandering in Hong Kong, and our sequel adventure in the Netherlands and beyond, every single moment made up the entirety of the transdisciplinary experience and created a lasting intellectual impact on me. To me, the most impressive outcome of the TRE experience is its intercultural stimulation that lies therein. ... As I was applying for this program, I wrote that 'changes begin with small things' and hoped that 'this upcoming research exchange could become one of the those 'small things' that helps me to live my aspiration in the future!'—for that, I am proud to declare that it did."

Common Core Student Ambassadors

"Thanks to the curriculum structure in HKU, I enjoyed exploring knowledge in different fields and sometimes switched my interest among subjects. Finance, economics, arts, architecture and earth science are all exciting for me, although finance is my concentration. Luckily I have had the chance to explore all of these in the Common Core."

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."



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."

