

City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of English
with effect from Semester A 2017 / 2018

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Popular Culture

Course Code: GE2105

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: A2, B2

√ Arts and Humanities

Proposed Area: Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

(for GE courses only) Science and Technology

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites: None
(Course Code and Title)

Precursors: None
(Course Code and Title)

Equivalent Courses: None
(Course Code and Title)

Exclusive Courses: None
(Course Code and Title)

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

‘Popular Culture’ is a Gateway Education course that will introduce students to the theory and practice of popular cultural. We are surrounded by popular culture and practices, and popular culture influences the ways we imagine, think and feel about ourselves and our social worlds. Now with easier access to resources and technology, we are increasingly both consuming and producing popular culture. Beginning with an introduction to theories of popular cultural studies, the students will explore the ways in which popular culture is produced and consumed. Combining the use of local and global authentic texts, the course will engage students to think and write critically about popular culture.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs [#]	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Understand basic theoretical approaches in the field of popular culture studies		√		
2.	Evaluate critically issues related to popular culture and develop higher-order thinking skills by doing so		√		
3.	Identify and evaluate the popular cultural elements in daily experiences and practices using a communicative and collaborative format for information exchange				√
4.	Apply and reflect on theoretical frameworks in understanding popular cultural practices			√	
5.	Cultivate and reflect on both local and global perspectives on popular culture			√	
		100%			

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
1.	<p>Mini-lectures (more transmission mode) Each week, students will be introduced to popular cultural theoretical texts in the lecture. Students will be shown demonstration of theoretical application.</p>	√			√	√	
2.	<p>Reading discussion workshops (more interactive mode) Each week students will be required to discuss the texts in tutorials. Students will learn to apply what they have learnt in the lecture in relation to the academic reading. Students will contribute, share and evaluate authentic materials they sourced.</p>		√	√		√	
3.	<p>Small group discussions and demonstration Each week students will be required to demonstrate their theoretical understanding by applying it to either local or global popular cultural practices. Students contribute, share and evaluate authentic materials they sourced.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	
4.	<p>Group presentation and projects Students will be required to choose one popular cultural practice for cross-cultural or cross-disciplinary comparison, analysis and evaluation. In planning their presentation, students will decide how they may interpret the popular cultural practice and convey their message to the audience. This activity requires both critical reading and thinking skills, and interpretative abilities.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	
5.	<p>Individual written assignment Students will be introduced to the conventions and techniques in writing critique on popular cultural practices. Students will demonstrate their understanding and their own interpretation of local and global popular cultural practices.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	

6.	<p>Extensive reading, especially using on-line resources to consolidate other aspects of learning in the course</p> <p>Students will be introduced to various online resources and be required to contribute to knowledge building by suggesting online resources. Students contribute, share and evaluate authentic materials they sourced to an online platform for sharing and discussion in class and online.</p>	√	√	√	√	√		
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4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
<p>Individual written assignment</p> <p>Students will be introduced to the conventions and techniques in writing critique on popular cultural practices. Students will comply with the writing conventions used in real life. Students will demonstrate their understanding and their own interpretation of local and global popular cultural practices. Students will post their critiques online regularly for peer feedback.</p>	√	√	√	√	√	40%	<p>Students are required to demonstrate the application of the theoretical approaches and their analysis of these practices through individual assignments. In the process of individualizing the scope of investigation, students' analytical, critical and creative learning can be enhanced. Extensive reading will be encouraged in order to complete the assignment. The regular submission of individual written assignment allows formative assessment and feedback to individual student.</p>
<p>Group project and presentation</p> <p>Students will be required to choose one popular cultural practice for cross-cultural or cross-disciplinary comparison, analysis and evaluation. Students will generate new insights from the reading and understanding of popular cultural practices in local and international settings. In planning their presentation,</p>	√	√	√	√	√	40%	<p>In the process of devising project topic, content and presentation, students' analytical, critical and creative learning can be enhanced. There is also a stronger awareness of the similarities and differences in popular cultural practices across cultures. Teamwork can also enhance</p>

<p>students will decide how they may interpret the popular cultural practice and convey their message to the audience. This activity requires both critical reading and thinking skills, and interpretative abilities.</p>								<p>communicative and collaborative learning.</p>
<p>Participation and Critical reflections Students will be encouraged to participate actively in class and online after-class discussion. The feedback provided to coursemates enhances collaborative and constructive learning, while the participation in online provides alternative mode for academic participation. Students will contribute authentic multimodal texts to the online platform to generate discussion. At the end of the course, students have to submit a short reflective essay on what they gained from taking the course.</p>	√	√	√	√	√		20%	<p>Students are encouraged to engage actively in the workshops, small group discussion, online discussion forum and group presentation sessions. Their active participation can enhance interactive and collaborative teaching and learning, which are all essential elements of cultivating higher order thinking.</p>
<p>Examination: 0%</p>								

* The weightings should add up to 100%.

100%

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Individual Assignment		Demonstrates a deep understanding of selected topic of popular culture. Able to critically apply theoretical understanding to the chosen topic. Able to critically analyse and evaluate the issues of the topic and present these in a coherent and thought-provoking manner to generate new insights. Relates the issues in the topic both globally and locally. Uses complex language appropriately in arguing the case.	Presents a good understanding of the chosen topic. Able to apply theoretical understanding to the chosen topic. Raises some of the issues relevant to the topic in an interesting and insightful manner to generate some insights. Focuses mostly on either the global or local perspective. Has good command of English in the presentation of the topic	Demonstrates only a limited understanding of the topic. Able to apply theoretical understanding to the chosen topic only in a limited manner. Presents a standard analysis of the topic and does not beyond a description of the main issues and thus generate limited insights into the topic. Relates the topic only to the local context. The written presentation of the text is weak.	Does not present evidence of understanding the topic very well. Does not apply theoretical understanding. Omits many of the key issues in writing about the topic. Illustrates the topic within a very limited local perspective. Has a limited command of English when presenting the topic. It is difficult for the reader to follow the cohesion of the text.	
2. Group presentation of project	Comprehensibility (use of vocabulary, accuracy, and fluency)	Entire message understood. All speakers notably good.	Entire message understood. Most speakers notably good. Some weaknesses in one area of comprehensibility.	Message sometimes hard to understand. Speakers not notably good in most areas.	Message hard to understand. Lots of breakdowns and/or hesitations in pronunciation, accuracy or vocabulary.	
	Interaction (listens and handles questions from audience. Able to	Students are active listeners and provide thoughtful and accurate follow up	Students are able to understand most of the questions and deal with them	Students do not demonstrate an ability to handle questions well. After some time	Students confused when asked questions. Are not able to give adequate replies to the questions.	

	give additional information)	responses to questions.	appropriately. Some disagreement or confusion in answering questions.	can give responses.	
	Group Management (organization of students' contributions)	The group is well organized. Each member has a significant and well defined role. The hand-over between students is smooth. All parts of the presentation are well thought out.	Each participant makes a significant contribution to the presentation. Group management is mostly successful with only a few minor problems.	Only some of the group's members are able to perform as a group. Some disorganization and unclear handover.	Group management attempts are unsuccessful and inappropriate.
3. Participation and Self-reflection		Has made significant contributions to in-class group work. Is able to contribute appropriate authentic materials to generate new insights. Is inquisitive and asks questions. Shows a great deal of self-development in end of course reflective essay. Demonstrates that s/he has read extensively from the reading list.	Has generally been on task during the in-class group work. Is able to contribute appropriate authentic materials to generate insights. Has not distinguished her/himself as an active participant in the class. Shows only some areas of self-development in end of course reflective essay. Refers to one or two references from class reading list.		Has not made much or any contribution to class discussion. Is able to contribute authentic materials to generate general discussion. Shows little reflection on learning and/or had not submitted self-reflective essay. Does not demonstrate that s/he has not read anything from reading list.

Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Popular Culture. Production analysis. Textual analysis. Audience analysis. Cultural practices. Localization. Globalization. Cross-cultural comparison. Social imaginary. Higher-order thinking. Critical judgement. Creative thinking. Problem-solving. Innovative association. Non-linear thinking. English. Cultural Studies. History. Anthropology. Gender Studies. Communications. Sociology. Sports and Leisure. Popular Literature. Popular Art. Popular Music. Traditional and New Media.

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Cheng, H. H-L. (2001). Consuming a dream: homes in advertisements and imagination in contemporary Hong Kong. In G. Matthews, & T.L. Lui (Eds.), <i>Consuming Hong Kong</i> . Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
2.	Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. <i>On the Horizon</i> , 9(5).
3.	Fung, A. Y. H. (2002). Women's magazines: Construction of identities and cultural consumption in Hong Kong. <i>Consumption, Markets and Culture</i> , 5(4), 321-336.
4.	Shaw, L. (2005). <i>Pop culture Latin America! Media, arts, and lifestyle</i> (Chapter 4: Sport and leisure). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Adorno, T. (2005). Culture industry reconsidered. In R.A Guins & O. Zaragoza Cruz (eds.), <i>Popular culture: A reader</i> . (pp. 103 – 108). London: Sage.
2.	Benjamin, Walter (1934/1994). The author as producer. In R. Wolin (Ed.) <i>Walter Benjamin: An aesthetic redemption</i> (pp. 154 -162). Berkeley: University of California Press.
3.	Giroux, H.A. (1994). <i>Disturbing pleasures: Learning popular culture</i> (Chapter 1: Consuming social change: The United Colors of Benetton). NY: Routledge.
4.	Hall, S. (2005). Notes on deconstructing "The popular". In R.A Guins & O. Zaragoza Cruz (eds.), <i>Popular culture: A reader</i> . (pp. 64-71). London: Sage.
5.	Berger, A.A. (1997). <i>Narratives in popular culture, media, and everyday life</i> (Chapter 8: The Macintosh '1984' television commercial: A study in television narrativity). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
6.	Grossberg, L., Wartella, E.A., & Whitney, D.C. (2006). <i>Mediamaking: Mass media in a popular culture</i> (2 nd ed, Chapter 8: Producing identities). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
7.	Keane, M., Fung, A., & Moran, A. (2007). New television, globalization, and the East Asian cultural imagination. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
8.	Marcel, D. (2008). <i>Popular culture: Introductory perspectives</i> (Chapter 5: Music). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

9.	Wasko, J. (2005). Corporate Disney in action. In R.A Guins & O. Zaragoza Cruz (eds.), <i>Popular culture: A reader</i> . (pp. 184 - 196). London: Sage.
10.	Wood, H., & Skeggs, B. (2008). Spectacular morality: 'Reality' television, individualisation and the remaking of the working class. In D. Hesmondhalgh & J. Toynbee (Eds.), <i>The media and social theory</i> (pp. 177 – 194). London: Routledge.
11.	Beavis, C. (2007) New textual worlds: young people and computer games, in N. Dolby & F. Rizvi (eds), <i>Youth moves: identities and education in global perspective</i> (pp. 53-66). NY: Routledge.
12.	Beavis, C. (2004). 'Good games': Text and community in multiplayer computer games. In I. Snyder, and, C. Beavis (Ed.), <i>Doing literacy online: Teaching, learning, and playing in an electronic world</i> (pp. 187-205). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
13.	Ellison, N.B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The Benefits of Facebook "Friends:" Social Capital and College Students' Use of Online Social Network Sites. <i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i> , 12 (4), 1143-1168.
14.	Fung, A. Y. H. (2006). Bridging cyberlife and real life: A study of online community in Hong Kong. In D. Silver, A. Massanari & S. Jones (Eds.), <i>Critical Cyberculture Studies</i> (pp. 129-139). NY: New York University Press.
15.	Schmidt, J. (2007). Blogging Practices: An Analytical Framework. <i>Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication</i> , 12(4), 1409-1427.
16.	Akass, K. and McCabe, J. (2004) <i>Reading Sex and the City</i> . London, New York: I.B. Taurus.
17.	Huang, Y. (2008) Consuming Sex and the City: Young Taiwanese Women Contesting Sexuality by, In Y. Kim (Ed), <i>Media Consumption and Everyday Life</i> (pp. 188 -202). New York: Routledge.
18.	Kelts, R. (2006). Cosplay and Otakudom: the draw of DIY (Chapter 7). <i>Japanamerica: How Japanese pop culture has invaded the U.S.</i> NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
19.	Schroeder, J. E. & Zwick, D. (2004). Mirrors of masculinity: Representation and identity in advertising images. <i>Consumption, Markets and Culture</i> . 7(1): 21-52.
20.	Whannel, G. (2002). <i>Media sport stars: masculinities and moralities</i> (Chapter 13: Identities: 'race', nation and masculinities). London: Routledge.
21.	Hannerz, U. (1990). Cosmopolitans and locals in world culture. <i>Theory, Culture & Society</i> , 7(2), 237 – 251.

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

GE PILO	Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)
PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning	Students will be expected and encouraged to conduct independent scholarly and social research, using a variety of medium, including books, journals, media sources, and ethnographic research.
PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology	Students will be expected and encouraged to conduct independent scholarly and social research in accordance with academic conventions.
PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills	Students will be encouraged and expected to critically reflect on readings and research, cultural issues, learning to develop responses to them, share their opinions with classmates, while also providing useful feedback on the work of their peers.
PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data	Students will be expected to synthesize information from various sources to produce critical evaluation of popular cultural practices
PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text	Students will be expected to produce various pieces of writing that critically evaluate and reflect on various types of public discourse on popular culture, as well as allowing students the chance to convey their own opinions and perspectives.
PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills	Students will be provided ample opportunity to practice and improve their spoken communication skills, including giving negotiating, sharing and exchanging ideas in class.
PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team	Students will be given group tasks in which they will be expected to cooperate and collaborate in order to research and put together written and spoken work.
PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues	Students will be provided with both local and global examples on various topics. Students will be expected to research on popular cultural practices that are relevant both locally and globally.
PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions	Students will be expected to reflect on and debate about ethical issues in popular cultural practices, especially in emerging online communities.
PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation	Students will be expected to demonstrate the attitude to discover connection between local and global popular cultural practices.

GE course leaders should cover the mandatory PILOs for the GE area (Area 1: Arts and Humanities; Area 2: Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations; Area 3: Science and Technology) for which they have classified their course; for quality assurance purposes, they are advised to carefully consider if it is beneficial to claim any coverage of additional PILOs. General advice would be to restrict PILOs to only the essential ones. (Please refer to the curricular mapping of GE programme: http://www.cityu.edu.hk/edge/ge/faculty/curricular_mapping.htm.)

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task
Group project and presentation