

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	CHC405
Subject Title	Infrastructure, Politics, and Society in China and Asia
Credit Value	3
Level	4
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Objectives	<p>From courier stations to 5G mobile networks, infrastructures have long shaped power relations, daily social lives, and the environment in China and beyond. Recognizing infrastructures as complicated systems involving multi-scale relations, this subject facilitates students to analyse the multifaceted world-shaping impacts of infrastructures through introducing various analytical perspectives and concrete case studies. Specifically, the first half of the subject familiarizes students with a range of concepts and theories that helps unpack the political, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions of infrastructures. The second half guides student to employ these analytical perspectives and analyse concrete cases of infrastructures in China and Asia. After taking this subject, students will be able to analyse the formation and impacts of infrastructures through interdisciplinary and transnational approaches and better respond to contemporary issues regarding infrastructures in Global Asia.</p>
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) understand the important role of infrastructures in shaping politics, society, and the environment; b) employ multifaceted analytical perspectives to examine the construction, maintenance, and consequences of infrastructures; c) apprehend and reflect on the real-world impacts, dilemma, and conflicts regarding infrastructures through case studies; d) analyse historical processes and contemporary issues through comparative and transnational perspectives.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Infrastructural Turn and Its Implications 2) Perspectives 1: Infrastructure and Technology

<i>(Note 2)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Perspectives 2: Seeing Like a State 4) Perspectives 3: People as Infrastructure 5) Perspectives 4: The Poetics of Infrastructure 6) Perspectives 5: Ecological Consequences and Environmental Justice 7) Cases 1: Transportation, Communication, Circulation 8) Cases 2: Resource and Energy Extraction 9) Cases 3: Surveillance and Resistance 10) Imperialism and the Expansion of Infrastructures in Asia 11) Infrastructures and the Making of Global Asia
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Teaching/Learning Methodology <i>(Note 3)</i>	<p>This subject consists of lectures and tutorials. Lectures will introduce different analytical perspectives and concrete cases regarding the construction, maintenance, and impacts of infrastructures. In the tutorials, students are expected to discuss the weekly reading materials in depth. A mid-term literature review essay will be used to assess students’ grasp of the concepts, theories, and analytical perspectives introduced in this subject. A creative field research presentation and a field research essay will be used to evaluate students’ ability to employ multifaceted analytical perspectives to examine real-world cases of infrastructures and develop critical reflections.</p>
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Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 4)</i>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2" style="width: 30%;">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2" style="width: 10%;">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="width: 5%;">a</th> <th style="width: 5%;">b</th> <th style="width: 5%;">c</th> <th style="width: 5%;">d</th> <th style="width: 5%;"></th> <th style="width: 5%;"></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. tutorial participation</td> <td>20%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. mid-term literature review essay</td> <td>20%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. creative field research presentation</td> <td>20%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. final field research essay</td> <td>40%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100 %</td> <td colspan="6"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:</p> <p>Tutorial participation reflects how students have grasped the analytical perspectives and case studies, so it will be graded to assess intended learning outcomes a, b, c, and d.</p>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d			1. tutorial participation	20%	✓	✓	✓	✓			2. mid-term literature review essay	20%	✓	✓		✓			3. creative field research presentation	20%	✓	✓	✓	✓			4. final field research essay	40%	✓	✓	✓	✓			Total	100 %						
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4. final field research essay	40%	✓	✓	✓	✓																																																		
Total	100 %																																																						

	<p>During the mid-term, each student needs to select at least three assigned readings for this subject and write a literature review essay, which is designed to assess learning outcomes a, b, and d.</p> <p>The final project of this subject has two components. First, each student is required to select a type of infrastructure that they would encounter in daily lives and conduct field research on that infrastructure. They need to give a creative presentation (e.g., poster, video clip) on their field research observations, which will be used to assess learning outcomes a, b, c, and d. Second, they need to employ at least two analytical perspectives introduced in this subject to analyze their selected infrastructures and write an essay, which will be used to assess all the intended learning outcomes.</p>	
Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:	
	▪ lectures	26 Hrs.
	▪ tutorials	13 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ reading	39 Hrs.
	▪ writing	39 Hrs.
	▪ field research and preparation for presentation	13 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	130 Hrs.
Reading List and References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blok, Anders, Moe Nakazora and Brit Ross Winthereik. "Infrastructuring Environments." <i>Science as Culture</i>. Vol.25, No.1 (2016): 1-22. 2. Byrnes, Corey. "The Infrastructure of Coral." <i>Verge: Studies in Global Asias</i>. Vol.6, No.2 (2020): 29-34. 3. Callahan, William A. "Visibility, Visuality, and Mass (Self)Surveillance." In Idem. <i>Sensible Politics: Visualizing International Relations</i>. 271-300. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. 4. Ding, Xiangli. "'The Yellow River Comes from Our Hands: Silt, Hydroelectricity, and the Sanmenxia Dam, 1929-1973.'" <i>Environment and History</i>. Vol.27, No.4 (2021): 665-694. 5. Greenspan, Anna. "QR Codes and the Sentient City." <i>Studia Neophilologica</i>. Vol.93 (2021): 206-218. 6. Harvey, Penny, Casper Bruun Jensen and Atsuro Morita eds. <i>Infrastructures and Social Complexity: A Companion</i>. London: Routledge, 2017. 7. Headrick, Daniel R. <i>The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. 8. Hughes, Thomas. "The Evolution of Large Technological Systems." In Wiebe E. Bijker et al. eds. <i>The Social</i> 	

	<p><i>Construction of Technological Systems</i>. 45-76. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987.</p> <p>9. Ingold, Tim. <i>The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill</i>. London: Routledge, 2000.</p> <p>10. Kim, Nanny. “River Control, Merchant Philanthropy, and Environmental Change in Nineteenth-Century China.” <i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>. Vol.52, No.4/5 (2009): 660-694.</p> <p>11. Larkin, Brian. “The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure.” <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i>. 42 (2013): 328-343.</p> <p>12. Perdue, Peter C. <i>China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia</i>. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010.</p> <p>13. Scott, James C. <i>Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.</p> <p>14. Simone, AbdouMaliq. “People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg.” <i>Public Culture</i>. Vol.16, No.3 (2004): 407-429.</p> <p>15. Tagliacozzo, Eric. <i>In Asian Waters: Oceanic Worlds from Yemen to Yokohama</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022.</p> <p>16. Will, Plerre-Étienne and R. Bin Wong. <i>Nourish the People: The State Civilian Granary System in China, 1650-1850</i>. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.</p> <p>17. Xiang, Biao. “Predatory Princes and Princely Peddlers: The State and International Labour Migration Intermediaries in China.” <i>Pacific Affairs</i>. Vol.85, No.1 (2012): 47-68</p> <p>*The list above is purely for reference. Prescribed readings will be announced in the first meeting of the subject.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon subject completion. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, overcrowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method is intended to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

(Form AR 140) 8.2020