

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

Bachelor of Social Sciences (Government & Laws) – FOSS/POLI courses

The Bachelor of Social Sciences (Government and Laws) curriculum consists of five different types of courses which are taught using distinctive learning modes. The majority of courses are 6-credit courses, but we also have 12-credit internship and thesis writing courses. As for the workload of courses, the norm is that a 6-credit course provides 150 hours of student learning activity, which include 39 contact hours (2 hours of lecture and 1 hour of tutorial per week for 13 weeks) and other forms of student learning activity. Given that different types of courses cover different subject matters and adopt different learning modes, the exact number of contact hours and output requirements for different types of course vary. The hours of work for a 6-credit and a 12-credit internship are 150 and 240, respectively. The contact hours for a 12-credit thesis writing course which requires close supervision by teachers are approximately 30.

In total, the number of hours of student learning activity is ranging from 1,920 to 2,880 for PPA major and in principle about 3,900, subject to substantial variations due to individual circumstances, for the Law Professional Core.

1. Introductory courses (6 credits)

These are standard 6-credit introductory courses. Teaching normally takes the form of one 2-hour lecture and one 1-hour tutorial each week throughout a regular 13-week semester. Assessment tasks will normally include tutorial performance, writing of essays (around 1,000-3,000 words), individual or group projects, and 2-hour written examinations (50-60% coursework, 40-50% exam).

2. Advanced courses (6 credits)

These are standard 6-credit advanced courses. Teaching normally takes the form of one 2-hour lecture and one 1-hour tutorial each week throughout a regular 13-week semester. Assessment tasks will normally include tutorial performance, writing of essays (around 1,000-3,000 words), individual or group projects, and 2-hour written examinations (50-60% coursework, 40-50% exam).

3. Research courses (6 credits)

These courses offer opportunities to students to learn to do research as an intern in ongoing empirical research project, or conduct an independent and empirical investigation on a specific issue in political science, under a teacher's supervision in the Department. Students are required to meet individually with the supervisor (around 2 hours per week), read relevant theoretical and empirical articles, participate in (ongoing) empirical research project, and write a research report. The students are expected to spend at least 6 hours per week on the research project. Assessment takes the form of a research report which will be around 5,000 words (100% coursework).

4. Internship (6 and 12 credits)

The internships enable students to work and learn in the professional world and local communities. They enable students to apply what they have learned from regular classes at the University and to identify and analyse problems in a local community or work place. Students participating in these courses can reflect upon how concepts learned in class can help in solving social problems, analysing social and policy issues, and promoting social innovation in Hong Kong and beyond. Assessment is normally based upon performance in work placement (150 hours of work for a 6-credit course and 240 hours of work for a 12-credit course), reflective journal and literature review (totaling about 1,000 words for a 6-credit course and 2,500 words for a 12-credit course), integrated essay (2,000 words for a 6-credit course and 4,000 words for a 12-credit course) and/or presentation (100% coursework). Total learning activities: 180 hours and 300 hours for a 6-credit course and a 12-credit course, respectively (100% coursework).

5. Thesis writing (12 credits)

The research courses aim at providing students with an opportunity to pursue their own research interests under the supervision of a teacher. The teacher and the students will work together to develop a research plan that stipulates the scope and substance of the research. While the students are expected to take the initiative to conduct the research, the teacher will actively supervise the research and monitor the students' progress. Students are advised to meet their supervisors on a regular basis for about 30 contact hours. The total student learning hours is 240. Assessment takes the form of a dissertation at around 10,000 words (100% coursework).

Bachelor of Social Sciences (Government & Laws) – LLAW courses

The LLAW courses consist of six different types of courses which are taught in distinctive learning modes. In principle we use 150 hours of student learning activities (including 36 contact hours) as the norm for a 6-credit course, except for the experiential courses which normally involve 120-150 hours of student learning activities. However, we recognise that many students in practice need to spend more hours on LLAW courses than that recommended by the norm. We thus recommend students to avoid attaching excessive weight to the norm. Each student should plan their studies on the basis of a realistic estimation of the amount of time they require for studying LLAW courses relative to other courses. The six categories of law courses are summarised as follows:

1. Introductory courses (6 credits, 150 hours of student learning activities)

These are mostly first and second year courses emphasizing foundational legal concepts; basic institutional framework; essential legal skills such as case reading, legal research and writing and communication skills, and statutory interpretation. They also include courses on cross-disciplinary knowledge, as well as linguistic/technical skills. Introductory courses are taught mainly in lecture/tutorial or large seminar format and assessments are in the form of periodical assignments, short research papers with a total output of approx. 5,000 to 6,000 words and/or in-hall examinations (with coursework ranging between 20%-80% and examinations 80%-20%).

2. Foundation/survey courses (6 credits, 150 hours of student learning activities)

These courses are the core building blocks of legal education and the foundation for legal practice. Each course in this category provides a comprehensive survey of a specific area of law. These courses are mainly taught in lecture/tutorial format and assessments are mainly in the form of in-hall examinations combined with varying elements of coursework such as research papers and term papers with a total output of approximately 5,000 to 6,000 words (coursework 20%-80%, examinations 80%-20%).

3. Seminar courses (6 credits, 150 hours of student learning activities)

These courses offer specialized/advanced legal or cross-disciplinary knowledge. They are mainly taught in seminar format with heavy reliance on extensive reading before the seminars and active participation in class discussion. These courses aim to further enhance students' knowledge of legal concepts as well as analytical and evaluative skills. Assessment for this category of courses is by way of a combination of class presentation, take-home examination, in-hall examination (with coursework ranging between 20%-80% and examinations 80%-20%) and/or research papers, with a total output of approx. 5,000 to 6,000 words.

4. Research courses (6 credits, 150 hours of student learning activities)

These courses aim to provide students with theoretical insights and cross-disciplinary knowledge, as well as an opportunity to pursue advanced and independent research. These courses try to help students develop original and critical thinking through independent research. Research courses are assessed by a single research paper of at least 6,000 words or a combination of a research paper and a class presentation.

5. Experiential courses (6 credits, 120 to 150 hours of student learning activities)

Experiential courses include internships and placements in Hong Kong and Mainland China, and the clinical legal course. These courses aim to familiarize students with the social environment in which law operates and the practical dimension of legal studies. They aim to offer opportunities for students to apply and test their legal knowledge and critical and analytical legal skills they have learned in other courses. Students in this category of courses are assessed by a report of approx. 5,000 words with intensive feedback from academic staff and/or practitioners.

6. Compulsory moot competition and mediation training (6 credits, 150 hours of student learning activities)

Compulsory moot competition and mediation training aim to train students to integrate legal knowledge with various types of legal skills including conducting legal research, writing of submissions and memorandums, mediation and advocacy skills. Students in this course are assessed by their written submission and a mediation report of approximately 2,500 words each and performance in mediation and advocacy.