

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

Bachelor of Social Sciences

The Bachelor of Social Sciences curriculum consists of broadly thirteen different types of courses which are taught using distinctive learning modes. The majority of courses are 6-credit courses, but we also have a small number of 12-credit courses.

Although we use 150 and 300 hours of student learning activity (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activity) as the norm for a 6-credit course and a 12-credit course, the contact hours and output requirements for different types of courses vary according to the learning modes employed. Normally, the contact hours for a standard 6-credit course are ranging from 30 to 39 hours. While for a 12-credit research course, thesis or independent study in psychology which requires close supervision by teachers, the supervision hours are ranging from 12 to 30 hours. The hours of work for a 6-credit and a 12-credit internship are 150 and 240, respectively.

In total, the number of hours of student learning activity is ranging from 720 to 1,080 for a minor programme (36 credits), and 1,440 to 2,880 hours for a major programme (72 to 96 credits).

1. Introductory courses (6 credits)

These first-year courses introduce students to different social science disciplines in order to provide them with a broad social science education before students choose their programme majors at the end of their first year of studies. Teaching normally takes the form of one 2-hour lecture and one 1-hour tutorial or seminar each week throughout a regular 13-week semester. Assessments are conducted by way of essays, projects, presentations (totaling about 5,000 words) and/or a final examination (40-100% coursework, 0-60% exam).

2. Compulsory, core and elective disciplinary courses (6 credits)

The Bachelor of Social Sciences curriculum is based primarily upon courses offered by the programme majors or multidisciplinary majors and minors. Different kinds of standard 6-credit courses are offered either as core courses or as electives in the programme majors or multidisciplinary majors and minors. Teaching normally takes the form of one 2-hour lecture and one 1-hour tutorial or seminar each week throughout a regular 13-week semester. Assessments are conducted by way of essays, projects, presentations (totaling about 5,000 words) and/or a final examination (40-100% coursework, 0-60% exam).

3. Thematic courses (6 credits)

These courses focus on thematic contents and introduce subject-specific skills. They are taught by a combination of lectures (24 hours), tutorials, seminars, and fieldwork-based practicals. Assessment is generally by means of end-of-semester examination and a variety of coursework assignments with output not exceeding 3,000 words (0-60% exam, 40-100% coursework).

4. Workshop/Laboratory courses (6 credits)

These courses aim at introducing and enriching the students' discipline-specific skills. They are taught by laboratory-based practicals, supplemented by lectures and field visits.

Assessment is by end-of-semester examination and practical assignments with output not exceeding 3,000 words (40% exam, 60% coursework).

5. Advanced laboratory courses (6 credits)

In the Advanced laboratory courses, instructors apply the students' research methods training to a substantive area of Psychological research. Students read primary source research articles, present seminars to the class, and conduct research projects or write research proposals. In addition, students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Enrolment is capped at 25-30 students. Assessment is achieved through performance in class discussions, laboratory reports/proposals (1,500-2,500 words), seminar performance, quizzes and tests (100% coursework).

6. Overseas field trip courses (6 credits)

Fieldwork is an integral part of a geographer's training and all students majoring in Geography must register for the overseas field trip course and participate in a two-week duration course in an overseas country before they proceed to their final year of study. Assessment is by means of a written report (3,500 words) based on a selected field topic with linkage to the advanced courses taken (100% coursework).

7. Research methodology courses (6 credits)

The aims of these courses are to provide students with basic background in quantitative and qualitative research design and data analysis. The logic of interpretation of findings and scientific explanation, the merits and limitations of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the study. Teaching normally takes the form of a 3-hour lecture each week throughout a regular 13-week semester. Assessment is by various methods including regular homework, individual or group project with powerpoint presentation in about 1,000 words, term paper in about 4,000 words, totaling about 5,000 words, and mid-term and final test (100% coursework).

8. Research courses (6 and 12 credits)

The research courses aim to provide students with an opportunity to pursue their own research interests under the supervision of a teacher. Contact hours are minimal (6-12 hours for a 6-credit course and 12-18 hours for a 12-credit course) as students are actively engaged in individual research. Assessment takes the form of research essay/ written report of about 5,000 words and oral presentation for a 6-credit course, or a dissertation (10,000 words) and oral presentation for a 12-credit course (100% coursework).

Students may also 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 of Politics and Public Administration. 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).

9. 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).

10. Research internship (6 credits)

Students may enrol in an internship to gain experience in a psychological research laboratory. Students spend 10-12 hours per week assisting various research activities, and meet regularly with the instructor to discuss different aspects of the research that they are engaged in. Assessment takes the form of one to two written reports (1,500-2,500 words) and supervisor's assessment of the quality of research assistance (100% coursework).

11. Thesis (12 credits)

This course may be taken by students who have demonstrated strong academic performance in Psychology and Politics and Public Administration programmes. Thesis writing will last for two semesters, for a total of 12 credits. Students must design an empirical research study, collect and analyse data, and write a formal thesis at about 10,000 words. 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 receive about 24-30 contact hours of individual supervision (100% coursework).

12. Independent study in Psychology (12 credits)

The independent study may be taken by students who are not writing a thesis. Students need the permission of the Head of Department to take the course. It is restricted to students who have a clear plan for a research study. Students take the independent study over two semesters, for a total of 12 credits. Students must formulate a research question and hypotheses for an original research project based on a critical analysis of a current psychological literature, design and empirical research study, collect and analyse data, and write a research report (8,000-10,000 words). Students receive individual supervision and should meet their supervisors on a regular basis (about 24 supervision hours). Students are expected to spend much of their time on individual research and writing. This course requires about 240-360 hours of learning (100% coursework).

13. Seminar courses (6 credits)

These courses require students to read primary source research articles, present seminars to the class, and conduct research projects or write research proposals. In addition, students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Enrolment for each course is generally

about 25-30 students. Assessments are achieved through participation in class discussions, written reports/proposals (1,000-5,000 words), seminar performances, and/or a final examination (50-100% coursework, 0-50% exam).

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