

**SOC 2260 Popular Culture and Society (3,3,0) (E/C)**

**Prerequisite:** CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

Popular culture refers to a wide range of cultural practices and genres that are consumed by us in our daily lives. While we usually perceive it as a source of entertainment, consumption, and fun, it is in fact much more than that. Popular culture is a powerful force that helps shape social class, nationalism, gender, race, and other socio-cultural constructs of society. It constitutes a major industry and a significant contributor to the GDP. It is the base of youth subcultures, symbolic resistance, and alternative discourses. It is a major factor that shapes contemporary urban formation. And it is a major link through which the local and the global impact on each other. This course introduces students to these sociological and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of popular culture. By revealing the powerful social functions and impacts of popular culture, these approaches will equip and encourage students to critically assess their own daily consumption of popular culture.

**SOC 2610 Modernization and Social Change (3,2,1) (tbc)**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing and CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

This course introduces contemporary theories concerned with social change, structural differentiation and development. The course examines the economic, political and social processes involved in societal change and considers *inter alia* the significance of capitalist and socialist modes of production. It explores the tension between treating development as a matter of economic growth and the need to see development as involved with environmental issues and an improvement in the quality of life. Students are at different points in the semester invited to consider the relationship between social position, political power and policy making. Detailed studies are made of two selected Southeast Asian societies (mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand).

**SOC 2620 Work and Society (3,3,0) (E/C)**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing and SOC 1110 or CHSS 1110 Invitation to Sociology

This course provides an introduction to sociological studies of work. It will examine how work is culturally understood and socially organized as a human activity, with special focus on employment as a social relationship. It seeks to sensitize students to the changing significance of work as a central human activity, the political-economic conditions of social forms of work and the implications of varying institutional arrangements of work, with special emphasis on conditions of work and workers in Hong Kong and mainland China.

**SOC 2630 Social Stratification and Mobility (3,2,1) (tbc)**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing and CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

This course introduces classical and contemporary approaches to the study of social stratification and mobility. It examines how life-chances are available to differently situated social groups as a result of economic, cultural and political processes. It discusses, on one hand, both how institutional arrangements structure the rights and privileges of different groups, and on the other, how social practices alter these structures as active moments of the stratifying processes. The course seeks to sensitize students to the normative concerns underlying stratification and mobility studies, and makes accessible to them techniques developed to assess the empirical claims of different theories.

**SOC 2640 Political Sociology (3,3,0) (E/C)**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing and CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

The core of this course is to introduce students to the complicated relationships between politics and society by referring to the Western and Chinese classics for an understanding the emergence of politics, government, and state in the ancient Chinese and Western society. The course then studies the role of national constitutions in the formation of modern society, with special reference to political institutions, political organization and

political process. Finally, the course concerns itself with the role of politics in social change by focusing upon modernization, social engineering and future development.

**SOC 2650 Global Social Transformations (3,3,0) (E)**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing and CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

This course will examine major debates on global social, economic and political transformations. It has three major parts. The first part will study major theorizations of globalization, exploring different social thinkers' visions of socioeconomic arrangements and personal existence under the condition of globality. Relevant social thinkers might include Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck, David Harvey, Manuel Castells, Mike Featherstone, and other possibilities. The second part will focus on the global integration of economic activities. It will examine whether economic globalization has actually occurred and, if so, the novel arrangements associated with economic production and coordination. It will also examine the social implications of global economic integration, analysing its impact on alleviating poverty and income inequality on a global scale, as well as challenges and hardships it imposes on people from different parts of the world. The third part will target on global economic integration and the state. In particular, it will examine whether globalization has led to the eclipse of the development and welfare state, whether it has weakened the draw of nationalist sentiments, and whether the new consciousness of "global citizenship" has indeed emerged. The last point will be explored in part through case studies of various "global" social movements.

**SOC 2660 Critical Urban Studies (3,3,0) (E/C)**

**Prerequisite:** CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology or SOC 1150 Hong Kong Society

As a result of continuous urbanization, especially in the developing countries, the majority of the world's population today does not only live in cities, but in large metropolitan city-regions of more than one million inhabitants. This concentration of population in the 400 metropolitan city-regions in the world causes dramatic changes in the form and function of cities: in the ways the urban political economy is organized; in the cultural composition of the population; and in the very nature of urbanism as a way of life. These changes have stimulated new ways to understand the city and the urbanization process. This introductory course on urban studies showcases how urban scholars analyse and interpret the restructuring of the metropolitan city-regions. Instead of simply describing the various functions of the city-regions, we will take a more critical perspective in analysing the major problems in our modern city-regions. After taking this course, students should be able to re-discover the hidden and marginalized voices in our fast-growing city-regions today. Specific attention will be given to the city-regions in Hong Kong, China and Taiwan.

**SOC 2680 Sociology of Health and Illness (3,2,1) (tbc)**

**Prerequisite:** CHSS 1110 or SOC 1110 Invitation to Sociology

Medical teaching has traditionally relied heavily upon a biological model of illness, whereas this course places the promotion of health and the prevention and management of disease in a social context, with emphasis upon Chinese communities. It is concerned with understanding individuals as persons, with their own beliefs, social networks and social roles. The course demonstrates how clinical and social aspects of the medical task are closely interrelated and influence patient care and clinical and medical outcomes. The course aims to develop a critical approach to medical care and to give students the ability to assess competing explanations of sickness and well-being. It equips students with conceptual tools that can be applied in a variety of clinical and health service contexts.

**SOC 2690 Understanding Chinese Society in (3,2,1) (tbc) Hong Kong and the Mainland**

**Prerequisite:** Year II standing

The course addresses the manner in which traditional and modern values are interwoven in the fabric of Chinese society. It explores patterns of social organization including issues relating to family,