

# The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

## UG Course Syllabus

### Honors Thesis

SHSS 4992

6 Credits

Co-requisite: LANG4070

### Name and Email:

- Instructors: Professor Flora FU ([hmltfu@ust.hk](mailto:hmltfu@ust.hk)) and Professor Agnes KU ([soagnes@ust.hk](mailto:soagnes@ust.hk))
- Coordinator: Mr. Jeffrey CHUNG ([jeffreychung@ust.hk](mailto:jeffreychung@ust.hk))

**Office Hours:** By email appointments

### Course Description

This is a semi-structured course that aims to help students accomplish the Honors Thesis. It comprises of one-on-one supervision and progress assessment leading to the final work within the time frame of two semesters.

### Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Formulate, design and conduct a research project relating to Global China.
2. Apply and/or extend the knowledge and research methods they have learned from the GCS program.
3. Analyze the data based on the research.
4. Explain the value of the work.

### Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided below, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

## Assessments:

### Requirements\*:

- A. Each student is required to meet with the supervisor at least ***three times*** per semester. Students should take the initiative to make appointments with their supervisors.
- B. Research Ethics Review Approval (if required)
- C. Progress Presentation (10 minutes; required)
- D. Final Presentation (up to 10 minutes; required)

The course coordinator will report the students' Presentation performance ("Pass" or "Fail") to their supervisors, which might affect their final grade awarded.

### Assessments\*:

- A. Interim Report (approximately 1,500 words; rated qualitatively by the Supervisor)\*\*
- B. Final Work: 100% (graded by the Supervisor)

The expected length of the research paper is approximately 8,000 to 10,000 words, typically including the following<sup>1</sup>:

- Research purpose
- Literature review
- Analysis and contributions
- Bibliography (not included in the word count)

Please refer to the "*GCS Thesis Writing Guidelines*" for the research process, format of writing and the use of language.

\*Late submission of the interim report and the final work, or missing the presentations, would result in deduction of a maximum of one sub-grade on the final grade.

\*\*Interim Report: evaluated qualitatively from "Outstanding", "Excellent", "Very Good", "Good", "Satisfactory", "Poor" to "Fail" and may be factored into the grade for the final work.

---

<sup>1</sup> Subject to pre-approval, students may design a different type of project on a topic of interest relating to Global China. Examples of alternative capstone projects include: writing a policy report; producing a video ethnography, social documentary or a photographic exhibit. Any different type of project on a topic of interest also requires some research (broadly defined) and must include the production of textual materials as a core component of the work, whether in writing or in the form of visual presentation. Unless otherwise approved, an expected length of 4,000-5,000 applies to a project involving writing as a core component.

<b>Assessment Task</b>	<b>Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)</b>	<b>Due date</b>
Progress Presentation	(Pass or Fail)	Study Break in Fall
Interim Report	(Rated qualitatively)	13/12/2024 ***
Final Presentation	(Pass or Fail)	Study Break in Spring
Final Work	100%	26/05/2025 ***

\*\*\* Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

In addition to the scheduled sessions, individual consultation session can be arranged throughout the semester by appointment.

Research Ethics Applications (if required):

- Prior to the start of the empirical research.

#### Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

<b>Assessed Task</b>	<b>Mapped ILOs</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Progress Presentation	ILO1, ILO2.	The presentation assesses students' ability to formulate and design a research project relating to Global China (ILO1), and to apply and/or extend the knowledge and research methods they have learned from the GCS program (ILO2).
Interim Report	ILO1, ILO2.	This writing task assesses students' ability to formulate and design a research project relating to Global China (ILO1), and to apply and/or extend the knowledge and research methods they have learned from the GCS program (ILO2).
Final Presentation	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4.	The presentation assesses students' ability to conduct a research project relating to Global China (ILO1), apply and/or extend the knowledge and research methods they have learned from the GCS program (ILO2), analyze the data based on the research (ILO3) and explain the value of the work (ILO4).

Final Work	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4.	This writing task assesses students' ability to conduct a research project relating to Global China (ILO1), apply and/or extend the knowledge and research methods they have learned from the GCS program (ILO2), analyze the data based on the research (ILO3) and explain the value of the work (ILO4).
------------	-------------------------	---

**Grading Rubrics and Final Grade Descriptors:**

The interim report and final report are assessed by the following criteria:

1. Research significance
2. Research design
3. Quality of analysis
4. Structure, organization, and clarity
5. Style, language, and referencing
6. Relevance to "Global China"\*

**Outstanding: A+ (90% or above)**

An outstanding report demonstrates very clear identification of the research problem, excellent explanation of research significance and relevance to "Global China", appropriate research methods, comprehensive and accurate analysis of research data, logical organization and clear presentation of arguments, and appropriate use of academic tone, language, and referencing. The overall quality of the report is exceptional.

**Excellent: A (85%-89%) or A- (80%-84%)**

An excellent report demonstrates the attainment of almost all the stated criteria.

**Very Good: B+ (75%-79%)**

A very good report demonstrates the attainment of most of the criteria.

**Good: B (70%-74%) or B- (65%-69%)**

A good report demonstrates the attainment of some of the stated criteria.

**Satisfactory: C+ (60%-64%), C (55%-59%) or C- (50%-54%)**

A satisfactory report demonstrates the attainment of only a few of the stated criteria.

**Poor: D (40%-49%)**

A marginal report demonstrates minimal attainment of the stated criteria.

**Fail: F / Below 40%**

An inadequate report demonstrates very limited attainment of the stated criteria.

*\*Note: "Global China" connotes a framework, perspective, or way of thinking that challenges students to think about China globally or comparatively. It orients students to issues such as global/local, Chinese/Western and China/the world in the Chinese context broadly defined (Mainland China, Hong Kong or other Chinese societies). The project must either focus on an issue relevant to the Global China theme or at least try to tease out the implications of the study from the Global China perspective in the discussion.*

**Course AI Policy**

We take academic dishonesty or plagiarism very seriously and shall adhere strictly to the university policy in case of plagiarism. For instance, direct copying-and-pasting from AI search results into your Final Work is strictly prohibited.

In addition, you must give proper credit for any use of generative AI in your Final Work. If you have used AI tool(s) to aid you so, please insert an "AI Usage Statement" at the end of your Final Work to:

- indicate what AI tool(s) you have used;
- describe briefly for what purpose(s) or in what manner(s) you have used the AI tool(s) for;
- declare that you are aware of the University's policy concerning plagiarism and that your Final Work adheres to such policy.

An example of "AI Usage Statement":

"This Final Work is completed with the aid of the generative AI tool ChatGPT. ChatGPT was used in a context-specific manner for brainstorming ideas, searching literature sources and editing texts. I, the author of this Final Work, declare that I am aware of the University's policy concerning plagiarism and that my Final Work adheres to such policy."

**Communication and Feedback**

The qualitative rating and grading for the Interim Report and Final Report respectively will be communicated via CANVAS/email within two weeks of submission, contained in a Feedback Form in which feedbacks and remarks from the Supervisors on the assignments are also included. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult their respective Supervisor after the feedback is received.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.