

As of August 27, 2024

SOCI 4010: Graduation Thesis (I)

Department of Sociology
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

AY2024-25 Term 1

Fridays 08:30-11:15
Wu Ho Man Yuen Bldg 302

Contact Information

Instructor: Professor LEE Jaemin
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Course Description

Graduation Thesis is a required course for the four-year curriculum and is intended for final-year students. This is a two-term course (SOCI 4010 & 4020), and students are expected to conduct research in small groups under the supervision of our faculty members. As a capstone course, the objective is to help students integrate their sociology knowledge and research skills. At the end of the second term, students should complete an individual or a group research paper in a form similar to an academic journal article.

Organization

Students can choose to work on an individual or a group research paper with a theme advised by the instructor. Group projects (2 to 4 students) are encouraged, as time and resources can be tight and limited to complete a research study in two semesters, while students can also opt for an individual thesis. Students can suggest their sociological thesis topics, which need not be related to the instructor's research areas and teaching interests. Regarding methodology, the choice of quantitative versus qualitative approach hinges on students' choices, research questions, and feasibility. The end goal of the first semester is to write a research proposal that clearly shows the significance of the chosen topic, identifies research questions and novel contributions, and illustrates the feasibility of chosen research design methods.

Assessment and Grading (Term 1)

The grade for the course will be calculated as a weighted sum of the following components:

Attendance and participation	10%
Preliminary literature review	15%
Proposal presentation	25%
Written proposal	50%

- Attendance and participation (10%)
 - Attendance includes both classroom and consultation meetings. I will highly compensate diligent students.
 - This is a seminar course where you must actively participate in the discussion with your instructor or peers in class meetings and thus contribute.
- Preliminary literature review (15%)
 - In the first term, you should have a good understanding of the field of study and research directions. The literature review is the first thing required to complete. The goal of the literature review is to identify research gaps, which would then be connected to the research question(s), and to illuminate the selection of a theoretical framework.
 - You will present your literature review and potential research ideas in our sharing session (scheduled on **October 18 and 25**). Prepare concise presentation slides that contain a preliminary literature review to discuss in the sharing session and submit them via Blackboard before your sharing session class starts.
 - Presentation (20 minutes) + Q&A (10 minutes), depending on the finalized number of project groups.
- Proposal presentation (25%)
 - Students will present their proposals in one of the last two weeks of Term 1.
 - Presentation (20 minutes) + Q&A (10 minutes), depending on the finalized number of project groups.
 - Specific instructions and assessment criteria will be provided later.
- Written proposal (50%)
 - Students are expected to put effort into the proposal because a well-conceived proposal would constitute certain parts of the final thesis and facilitate the ensuing phase of data collection and analysis.
 - The proposal should contain an introduction to the research question(s), a literature review to identify research gaps, a preliminary theoretical framework, and methodology appended with a data collection instrument (e.g., interview/observation guide of qualitative method or survey questionnaire of quantitative method).
 - Due: **11:59 pm, December 20**.
 - Specific instructions and assessment criteria will be provided later.

Grading

Grade Descriptors

- A Excellent: Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Good: Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Fair: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Pass: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
- F Failure: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.
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Class Schedule

We are not meeting every week. Please carefully mark your calendar to ensure you're not missing any or coming to an empty classroom!

Class	Date	Topic
1	Sep-06	Course Introduction
2	Sep-20	Lecture: What is a good sociological study? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by everyone• Finish organizing groups (Email tutor by September 20)
3	Sep-27 Oct-04	Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required group meeting with tutor• Brainstorming research topics• Identifying relevant fields
4	Oct-18	Sharing session (1) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by everyone• Present literature review and potential research ideas
5	Oct-25	Sharing session (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by everyone• Present literature review and potential research ideas
6	Nov-08 Nov-15	Consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required group meeting with instructor• Seek suggestions and feedback for the research proposal
7	Nov-22	Proposal Presentation (1) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by everyone
8	Nov-29	Proposal Presentation (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by everyone

Academic Honesty

Please keep in mind [the university's policy on academic honesty](#). Plagiarism will not be tolerated in the term paper and assignments. The ideas and language should be your own, and any outside sources must be clearly and properly cited. There are severe consequences if you commit any acts of academic dishonesty. In addition to the [department's policy and guidelines for citations](#), please refer to the [university-level disciplinary guidelines and procedures](#). The Faculty of Social Science has also compiled a [handout](#) to alert students of the importance of academic honesty and the consequences of violating the University's Rules. To this end, the newspaper commentary assignment should be submitted to [VeriGuide](#).