

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

## **SOCI 2219 Youth and Society: Issues in the Contemporary World**

### **Course Outline**

Second Term, 2024/25  
Tuesday 2:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.  
Venue: ELB LT2

*Lecturer:* Prof. Nicole Wai Ting CHEUNG  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores some of the major issues concerning the role of the youth and the challenges confronting them in modern society. The nature of the conventional wisdom of the “youth problem” is critically examined, with the help of concepts and theories in sociology and related fields. By the end of the course, students are expected to gain more understanding of the nature youth issues, and to look beyond common sense or public perception on current social issues related to the youth. More importantly, youth problems can compromise the sustainable development of youth. A broader and deeper understanding of various facets of problematization can inform how youth should be empowered to attain sustainable development amidst social change and stability.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- 1 To capture the nature of youth issues and challenges in the contemporary world.
- 2 To demonstrate the ability to analyze complex youth issues through evaluating major arguments and evidence in the sociological studies of youth.
- 3 To critically evaluate how the public perception of youth issues are molded by social relations and institutions, patterns of social diversity and inequality, and processes that underpin social change and stability.
- 4 To reflect on your life experiences as members of a younger population and their challenges of sustainable development in modern society.
- 5 To explore contemporary youth policy taking into consideration the dynamic local, national and global context.

## COURSE ASSESSMENT

- 1 Group Exploration Report 40%
- 2 Tutorial Class (Attendance, Presentation and Participation) 20%
- 3 In-class Test 40%

### Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. Our Department also has a detailed guideline on academic citations <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/soc/citation.pdf>.

Students are required to submit an **Academic Honesty Declaration Statement signed by all members of the group exploration report** that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For assignment that is principally text-based and submitted via the VeriGuide system, the Academic Honesty Declaration Statement in the form of a receipt will be issued by VeriGuide upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

## COURSE CONTENTS

\* = Required reading

### 1 Conceptualizing Youth

#### Week 1, January 7

- 1.1 Sociology of youth
- 1.2 The invention of adolescence in modern society
- 1.3 The conceptions of youth

\*Threadgold, Steven. 2020. "Figures of youth: On the very object of youth studies." *Journal of Youth Studies* 23: 686-701.

### 2 Education Experience and Inequality

#### Week 2, January 14

- 2.1 Primary and secondary effects of class variations in educational outcomes
- 2.2 Cultural reproduction versus rational choice of educational outcomes
- 2.3 Can the vocational track to higher education decrease social inequality?

\*Van De Werfhorst, Herman G., and Saskia Hofstede. 2007. "Cultural capital or relative risk aversion? Two mechanisms for educational inequality compared." *British Journal of Sociology* 58: 391-415.

\*Yastrebov, Gordey, Yuliya Kosyakova, and Dmitry Kurakin. 2018. "Slipping past the test: Heterogeneous effects of social background in the context of inconsistent selection mechanisms in higher education." *Sociology of Education* 91(3): 224-241.

### 3 School-to-Work Transition, Social Mobility and Youth Entrepreneurship

#### **Week 3, January 21**

- 3.1 What are youth transitions?
- 3.2 Changing nature of transitions between youth and adulthood
- 3.3 Social change and labor market transitions

\*Yates, Ellen. 2023. "Work, employment and the material conditions of young people in developed economies: A Marxist political economy of youth perspective." *Journal of Youth Studies* 26(4): 491-506.

**\*\* Week 4, January 28 Chinese New Year holidays, no class.**

### 4 Youth Gangs and Subculture

#### **Week 5, February 4**

- 4.1 Stereotypes of youth gangs
- 4.2 Peer group influence and gang membership
- 4.3 Types of youth gang subculture: Are all gangs violent?

\*Vowell, Paul R., and David C. May. 2000. "Another look at classic strain theory: Poverty status, perceived blocked opportunity, and gang membership as predictors of adolescent violent behavior." *Sociological Inquiry* 70(1):42-60.

### 5 Love, Intimacy and Dating Compromised

#### **Weeks 6 and 7, February 11 and 18**

- 5.1 Romantic love may be abusive: What is dating abuse in youth?
- 5.2 Symbolic interactionism and relationship dynamics
- 5.3 Gender-symmetry aggressiveness in dating? Social learning of victims and third-wave feminism
- 5.4 Dating apps and online dating

\*Giordano, Peggy C., Danielle A. Soto, Wendy D. Manning, and Monica A. Longmore. 2010. "The characteristics of romantic relationships associated with teen dating violence." *Social Science Research* 39(6): 863-874.

\*Filice, Eric, Kavishka D. Abeywickrama, Diana C. Parry, and Corey W. Johnson. 2022. "Sexual violence and abuse in online dating: A scoping review." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 67: 101781.

## 6 Consumption, Youth Identity and Valorization

### **Week 8, February 25**

- 6.1 Youth consumption as a route to power and identity
- 6.2 Valorized youthfulness in consumer culture and as immaterial labor
- 6.3 The role of post-Fordist economy

\*Deutsch, Nancy, L., and Eleni Theodorou. 2010. "Aspiring, consuming, becoming: Youth identity in a culture of consumption." *Youth and Society* 42(2): 229-254.

\*Farrugia, David. 2018. "Youthfulness and immaterial labor in the new economy." *The Sociological Review* 66(3): 511-526.

**\*\*Week 9, March 4 Reading week, no class and teaching allowed.**

## 7 Invisible Delinquent Girls

### **Week 10, March 11**

- 7.1 Narrowing of gender gap in delinquency
- 7.2 Girls as victims or as delinquents
- 7.3 Normative versus constructionist approaches to girl delinquency

\*Hagan, John, John Simpson, and A.R. Gillis. 1987. "Class in the household: A power-control theory of gender and delinquency." *American Journal of Sociology* 92(4): 788-816.

## 8 Sexual Minorities

### **Week 11, March 18**

- 8.1 LGBTQ in adolescence
- 8.2 Bourdieu's habitus of LGBTQ youth
- 8.3 Foucaultian institutional framing of LGBTQ youth

\*Hope, Max A., and Joseph J. Hall. 2018. "'Other spaces' for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning (LGBTQ) students: Positioning LGBTQ-affirming schools as sites of resistance within inclusive education." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 39(8): 1195-1209.

\*Perger, Nina. 2024. "Feeling the weight of the water: Young nonbinary individuals and their strategies for manoeuvring through a binary world." *Journal of Gender Studies* 33(5): 673-685.

## 9 Digital Media Challenges

### **Week 12, March 25**

- 9.1 Internet use and addiction
- 9.2 How is cyberviolence characterized in the age of digital media?
- 9.3 Are sexualized and violent digital contents responsible for adolescent sexist beliefs and

violence?

- \*Maes, Chelly, Lara Schreurs, Johanna M.F. Van Oosten, and Laura Vandenbosch. 2019. “#(Me) too much? The role of sexualizing online media in adolescents’ resistance towards the metoo-movement and acceptance of rape myths.” *Journal of Adolescence* 77: 59-69.
- \*Wallenius, Marjut, Raija-Leena Punamaki, and Arja Rimpela. 2007. “Digital game playing and direct and indirect aggression in early adolescence: The roles of age, social intelligence, and parent-child communication.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 36(3): 325-336.

## 10 Youth in Risk Society

### Week 13, April 1

- 10.1 Features of risk society characterizing postmodernity
- 10.2 Youth in risk society: “Youth as risk” or “Youth at risk”
- 10.3 Recreational drug use as a reflection of youth lifestyle in risk society

- \*Giddens, Anthony. 1991. “Introduction” and “The contours of high modernity”. Pp. 1-34 in *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. (E-book available from the University library.)
- \*Sznitman, Sharon R., and Danielle S. Taubman. 2016. “Drug use normalization: A systematic and critical mixed-methods review.” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 77: 700-709

### **\*\* Week 14, April 8 Study Consultation**

While students can make use of this week to do final revision of the course notes and required readings, a consultation session is arranged for students to seek advice from the lecturer regarding the course materials and the exercise of group exploration project. Please **visit in person the lecturer’s office during the class time (2:30 – 4:30 pm) on April 8 for consultation**. No need to make specific time appointment; just walk in. Please also note that this consultation will not be done via email or zoom.

### **\*\* Week 15, April 15 In-class Test (2:30 pm – 4:15 pm.; venue to be confirmed)**