

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CREDIT UNIT STATEMENT

Bachelor of Social Sciences - Geography (major and minor)

The Geography programme adopts a wide variety of teaching and assessment methods across its course offerings. Courses in the programme can be categorised into five types, each characterised by a distinctive learning mode. All courses are 6-credits except the Honours Dissertation which is a 12-credit course. The department uses 120 hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and other forms of learning activities) as the norm for a 6-credit course. The contact hours and output requirements for different types of courses vary according to the learning modes employed. However, the minimum contact hours for the introductory and thematic courses will be at least 24 hours of lectures and 6 hours of tutorials/seminars/field work. Assessment methods include written work (e.g. critical reviews, individual and group reports, essays, project/field reports, dissertations), presentation (poster, web, group), practical assignments (e.g. laboratory reports and exercises) and written examination (multiple-choice, short answer, essay). Normally, the written work for the introductory and thematic courses will have a requirement of not more than 2,500 and 3,000 words respectively. The five types of Geography courses are summarised as follows:

1. *Introductory courses (6 credits)*

These courses can be taken in Year 1 and/or Year 2. They provide students with an introduction to some important aspects and features of Geography as a discipline. These include, for example, the reciprocal relationships and linkages between the physical and human dimensions of the natural and social worlds, as well as the significance of the spatial and temporal scale of the physical and human processes underlying cultural, economic and social transformations. Teaching consists of lectures (2 hours per week) and coursework. Assessment is by end-of-semester examination and assignments (40-60% exam, 40-60% coursework).

2. *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 (0-60% exam, 40-100% coursework).

3. *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 (40%) and practical assignments (60%).

4. *Research courses (6 and 12 credits, 120 and 240 hours of learning activities respectively)*

These courses aim at providing students with an opportunity to pursue their own research interests under the supervision of a teacher. Contact hours are minimal (6-12 and 12-18 hours respectively for 6- and 12-credit courses) as students are actively engaged in individual research. Assessment is by means of a written report (3,500 words) and oral presentation for a 6-credit course or a dissertation (10,000 words) and oral presentation

for a 12-credit course.

5. *Overseas field trip course (6 credits)*

Fieldwork is an integral part of a geographer's training and all students majoring in Geography MUST register for this 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.