

# HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

## COURSE OUTLINE

1. **COURSE TITLE**

Language and the Humanities

2. **COURSE CODE**

HUMN3007

3. **No. OF UNITS**

3 Units

4. **OFFERING DEPARTMENT**

Department of Humanities and Creative Writing

5. **PREREQUISITES**

N.A

**COREQUISITES**

N.A

6. **MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION**

English

7. **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

The goal of this interdisciplinary course is to explore the role of language in defining our fundamental human nature as symbol-constructing, symbol-using beings. Furthermore, the course examines how fundamental issues within the Humanities intersect with the nature of language as both a system and an activity to produce the complex human world we experience as simply "the way things are."

8. **COURSE CONTENT**

The course is designed to progress from the question of what is distinctively human about the use of language as a communication system to the nature of the routine language events through which we constantly perform the realities we have created. The course will look at different issues relating to the function, value, and workings of languages in our world, such as how language is used as an assessment of intelligence, how meanings are communicated in different contexts, and finally how human beings attempt to construct their identities through the manipulation of languages. Readings related to language studies, literary texts, texts from the popular culture, as well as clinical cases relating to human language studies will form the core texts of this course.

An outline of the course content:

- I. Human and animal – what is distinctively 'human' about linguistic communication?
- II. Language and humanity – how does language define our humanity?
- III. Ways of communication – the complexities of features and qualities of language
- IV. Language and detection – revelation and hiding
- V. Language and identity construction

9. **COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (CILOs)**

CILO	By the end of the course, students should be able to:
CILO 1	explain the role of language in defining the nature of human beings
CILO 2	discuss the various ways how language functions in our human experience
CILO 3	compare some of the critical theories in the study of language within the Humanities
CILO 4	present arguments critically and fluently both in spoken and written form
CILO 5	<del>appreciate</del> evaluate the impact of culture, gender, class, etc. on the daily use of language

10. **TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES (TLAs)**

CILO alignment	Type of TLA
1	Students will: be reviewing and critically analyzing academic articles from a multitude of disciplines which explain the role of language in defining the nature of human beings
2	be reviewing and critically analyzing academic material that discuss the various ways different kinds of language function in our human experience
3	be reviewing and interpreting some of the critical theories in the study of language within the Humanities
4	demonstrate their ability to present arguments critically and fluently both in spoken and written form through in-class oral presentations
5	complement academic reading material to facilitate students' appreciation of the impact of culture, gender, class etc. on the daily use of language through in-class TEACHING & LEARNING activities

11. **ASSESSMENT METHODS (AMs)**

Type of Assessment Methods	Weighting	CILOs to be addressed	Description of Assessment Tasks
Term Paper	25%	1-3 & 5	The term paper is an extended writing exercise to test students' ability to demonstrate their achievement in learning CILOs 1-3 and 5. Students can have their own topic choice and will therefore select relevant theories and concepts for illustration. The writing itself can also test students' ability to present arguments critically and fluently in written form.
Oral	20%	1-5	The oral presentation is a group exercise to test

Presentation			students' ability to perform their learning in relation to CILO 1-3 and 5. As this is an oral presentation, students have to demonstrate their achievement in relation to CILO 4 as well.
In-class Exercises	15%	1-3 & 5	The in-class exercises can be of various types. Some are in-class discussion to test students' basic comprehension of materials included in the lecture and tutorials; while some are more creative and analytical exercises to test students' understanding of the function of language and its roles in our society, i.e. relating to CILO 1-3 and 5.
Examination	40%	1-3 & 5	The examination is a two-hour written exercise, to test the students' learning in relation to CILOs 1-3. As the examination consists of essay type questions, students' ability to present their ideas and arguments in coherent written form is also tested.

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