

SOSC 3110: Innovation and Technology in Hong Kong

Fall 2017

Class Meeting Times: Thursdays | 3:00 pm – 5:50 pm | Room 6602

Instructor: Dr. Naubahar Sharif

Division of Social Science, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Room 2353, Phone: 2358 7826, E-mail: sosn@ust.hk

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm | Thursdays 2:00 pm – 2:45 pm
Or by appointment, and whenever I am in my office

TA: Zeng Donglin (E-mail: dzengaa@ust.hk)

Web Page: <http://canvas.ust.hk>

Description and Objectives:

The course examines Hong Kong's technology policy with special focus on government and quasi-government initiatives in research, education, and technology promotion. Students who satisfy all course requirements conscientiously will not only understand the subject matter well, they will also develop specific skill sets that all students, regardless of major, will find useful. These skill sets will support:

- Critical Thinking: the ability to grasp a problem and chart a pathway to a solution.
- Research: the ability to locate relevant information and identify that which is most reliable and useful.
- Communication: the ability to construct and present clear ideas, arguments, and opinions, both orally and in writing.

Prerequisites:

While there are no formal prerequisites for this course, preference is given to students enrolled in the H&SS minor program, and it is advised that second- or third- or fourth-year students take the course because of its research-intensive nature. Furthermore, if you have previously taken (or are currently taking) SOSC1110, SOSC1130 and/or SOSC1150, you may find this course a little easier to keep up with, especially in the beginning.

Requirements:

The course will consist of two main components: lectures (during the first half of class meetings) and discussion sections (during the second half of class meetings). Students are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections and complete all readings. Every two absences without proper justification will result in a reduction of one sub-grade from the overall course grade. There is no final exam. The bulk of the required work will involve in-class presentations on readings, class participation (including online discussions at Canvas), and a research paper towards the end of the course.

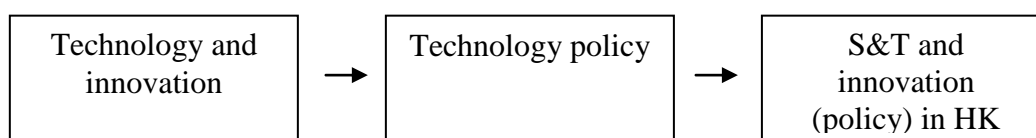
Guidelines for the Discussion Sections:

During the discussion sections, students are required to make presentations on selected readings and participate actively in class discussion. For the sake of facilitating discussion, students will also be asked, outside of class, to contribute regularly to the online forum at Canvas. (See the section on "Grade Distribution" for additional details about each of these requirements.)

Readings:

There is no single textbook for this class. Instead students will read selected articles and chapters each week. All readings are available on the course's Canvas website. Readings should be completed during the week in which they are assigned (see below). The average reading load will be at least 20–25 pages per week. You are also encouraged to read local newspapers and follow current-day news stories on innovation and technology developments in Hong Kong.

Course Progression:



In the first section we ask and try to answer two very simple questions: Why do we care about technology (and innovation)? And, how does innovation come about? This necessarily leads us into questions about innovation models (the inputs, outputs, and exchanges between actors).

In the second section we examine how technology can be directed, especially at the institutional and regional levels. What measures do companies and governments take to control technology and, more importantly, how do they direct its development? We will examine existing technology policy models as well as a number of case studies.

In the last section, we apply all that we have learned to the Hong Kong context. What is Hong Kong's technology policy? How has it changed over the last two or three decades? What are its prospects for the future?

Grade Distribution:

Students will be evaluated based on a mix of individual (25%) and group (75%) For the majority of their course grade (75%), students will be required to complete activities in groups (group size to be determined depending on total class enrollment).

Presentations on readings (<i>group</i>):	20%
Canvas online discussion (<i>individual</i>):	5%
In-class Participation (<i>individual</i>):	5%
“Opinion” piece (<i>individual</i>):	15%
Research Paper (<i>group</i>):	55%

Breakdown of Research Paper evaluation: -

- 10%—First draft to be submitted in class, Week 9
- 40%—Final paper to be submitted in final class on Thursday 30 November (end of Week 13)
- 5%—In-class presentation of research paper in either Week 12 or 13

Presentation of readings (20%): Each group of students will be required to make one presentation on the readings at hand and connect them to the previous lectures and/or readings that we have already completed in class. Students who are scheduled to present a reading in a particular week will be required to post questions and/or comments about the reading on the discussion board two days before the actual presentation—that is, no later than Tuesday 12 noon, of that week. Please note that, for this assignment, it is not enough to merely summarize the readings; students will need to critique the readings, for example by raising questions that the readings fail to address/answer adequately or identifying points that they miss. The critical/analytic component is the more important component. Each presentation is expected to take up no more than 35 minutes of class time, and will be followed by Q & A and open class discussion. Students are also expected to submit their supporting presentation materials, if there are any, in hard and soft copy formats (for example, PowerPoint slides). Soft copies of student presentations will be placed on the course's Canvas website for other students to view.

Canvas online discussion (5%): This requirement includes engaging regularly (that is, every week) and intelligently in the online discussion board on the course's Canvas website. Students who are scheduled to present a reading in a particular week will be required to post questions and/or comments about the reading on the discussion board two days before the actual presentation itself—that is, no later than Tuesday 12 noon, of that week. Other students will respond, individually, to these questions/comments or to other observations made by their fellow classmates. All responses should be posted on the discussion board before Wednesday of that week at 8:00 pm, so that everyone can read them before the discussion sections. The aim of this online forum is to stimulate thinking and facilitate class participation in the discussion sections. Your responses need not be very long; one or two critical points, clearly conceived and elaborated, will suffice. Evaluation of your performance will depend on *both* the extent *and* the quality of your participation in the online discussion.

Class participation (5%) includes active and productive participation in lectures as well as discussion sections. Class participation will also include attending and commenting on classmates' presentations of their projects at the end of the course. To fulfill this requirement, students are required not merely to attend class regularly, but more importantly to contribute meaningful questions and comments to class discussions. Do not hesitate to speak up during class, as almost every question or comment a student raises represents something on the minds of many other students and can thereby open up very useful modes of learning for everybody in class. The instructor will strive mightily to encourage lively and fruitful discussions. The instructor and/or TA will also keep a record of every student's participation in class and assign class participation grades based on that record.

"Opinion" piece (15%): Individually, each student will be required to submit a 1,500-word opinion piece. Aside from the length, the requirements for this piece are that: (a) it must be related to an issue/idea/event related to innovation and technology in Hong Kong, (b) it must be timely (i.e. it must be connected to something that has occurred or been in the news during the semester of our study (or at most in the second half of this year), and (c) it must reflect your opinion (that is, it must not be a regurgitation of a piece of news or event, nor should it reflect the opinion of others). **Due date:** No later than Thursday 16 November 2017 (Week 11) *or earlier* (you may submit this assignment any time during the semester, but in any event no later than Week 11).

Research Paper (55%): Each GROUP of students will be required to submit ONE research paper (and jointly present it in class) of about FIFTEEN (15) pages in length at the end of the semester. I will be more than happy to help you complete your research project to ensure that you receive a good grade for your performance.

Students should choose a component of Hong Kong's innovation and technology (S&T) or innovation system for investigation in the research paper and utilize the concepts and theories introduced at the beginning of the course to analyze its status and role. A list of innovation system components that can be analyzed for the paper will be provided to students in Week 2.

Papers must be typed and double-spaced, using Times New Roman in size 12 font, with 1" margins on all four sides of an A4-sized sheet. Papers should NOT be fewer than THIRTEEN (13) pages long, and should not normally exceed TWENTY (20) pages in length (excluding appendices). Students will be required to present their completed papers to the class at the end of the semester (the presentation will comprise 5% of the course grade).

Students will be required to determine a topic statement in one to two sentences for the research paper by Week 3, formulate a one-page outline of the paper by Week 6, complete a first draft by Week 9, and make a presentation in class during the last one/two week(s) of classes. The final draft of the paper must be submitted in the final session of the semester, on Thursday 30 November, at 3:00 pm. (at the start of class). I will provide critical feedback at each stage, in particular on the first draft, so that students may improve the paper before submitting the final draft. The guidelines for the 'first draft' are that it should be completed to a very high standard, as though it is a final draft. That is the best strategy for submitting a high-quality paper by the end of the course.

Submission of Assignments and Seeking Help:

Generally speaking, *late submission* of assignments will NOT be accepted except for hospitalization or similarly serious external circumstances (evidence of which may be required). Students are strongly encouraged to submit papers early and, at the very least, promptly. Submitting a *first* draft early will aid considerably in submitting the assignment on time (and also improving its quality). Students who are experiencing trouble of any kind in writing their papers should seek help from me. Similarly, students anticipating difficulty in submitting the paper on time must discuss the situation WELL IN ADVANCE.

A personal invitation: I am here to help you. I want you to be interested in the class material and to do well and I will react positively to any enthusiasm you show. In that spirit, if there is anything related to the class you need assistance with, or about which you would like to raise questions or discuss or offer suggestions for, I strongly encourage you to do so in class, or to see me. I have ample office hours, and if you are unable to see me during my regular office hours please make an appointment via e-mail or phone. Additionally, I will always be available before and after class and I will endeavor to respond to all e-mails I receive as promptly as I can.

In general, I do not handle grade disputes by e-mail. Students who believe that their grades are not reflective of their performance or what they deserve should meet with me in person.

Schedule and Readings:

PART I: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY: BASIC CONCEPTS

Week 1: Thursday 7 September **Introduction, Innovation and Technology in Society**

Ferguson, Robert G. 2002. *People in the Machine: An Exploration of Technology and Society*. [Introduction (pp. 3–6)]

Ferguson, Robert G. 2002. *People in the Machine: An Exploration of Technology and Society*. [Ch. 4 (pp. 37–39), Ch. 6 (pp. 50–58), Ch. 7 (pp. 63–72) Ch. 8 (pp. 74–78)]

Week 2: Thursday 14 September **Innovation and Innovation Systems**

Fagerberg, Jan. 2005. *Innovation: A Guide to the Literature*. In *Oxford Handbook of Innovations*, edited by J. Fagerberg, D. Mowery and R. Nelson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Ch.1/pp. 1–26]

Edquist, Charles. 2005. *Systems of Innovation: Perspectives and Challenges*. In *Oxford Handbook of Innovation*, edited by J. Fagerberg, D. Mowery and R. Nelson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [pp. 181–208]

PART II: TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Week 3: Thursday 21 September **Overview of Technology Policy**

Lundvall, Bengt-Åke, and Susana Borrás. 2005. *Science, Technology and Innovation Policy*. In *Oxford Handbook of Innovations*, edited by J. Fagerberg, D. Mowery and R. Nelson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [pp. 599–631]

World Economic Forum. 2017. *The Global Competitiveness Report 2017–2018*. [pp.TBA]

Homework ALERT! Students are required to submit their research paper topics (in one or two sentences)

Week 4: Thursday 28 September **Necessity of S&T, and Innovation Policies**

Ben S. Bernanke. 2011. *Promoting Research and Development: The Government's Role*. Ex-Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System at the conference "New Building Blocks for Jobs and Economic Growth", Georgetown University, 16 May 2011. (Available from: <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/files/bernanke20110516a.pdf>)

OECD. 2007. *Innovation and Growth: Rationale for an Innovation Strategy*. OECD. (Available from: <http://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/39374789.pdf>)

PART III: INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IN HONG KONG

Week 5: Thursday 5 October**

** PUBLIC HOLIDAY: No class this week **

Week 6: Thursday 12 October **Hong Kong in the Context of its East Asian Neighbors**

Gordon McConnachie, Allan K. L. Lung, Sharon Gal Or. 2013. *Towards a Step-by-Step Approach to Developing a Knowledge-Based Economy in Hong Kong*. *Public Administration and Policy: An Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall. [pp.81-102]

Homework ALERT! Students are required to submit their research paper outline (one-page)

Week 7: Thursday 19 October **Antecedents to Current S&T and Innovation Policy**

Thun, Eric. 2010. Manufacturing for a Post-Manufacturing City. In *Innovation Policy and the Limits of Laissez-Faire: Hong Kong's Policy in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Douglas B. Fuller. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. [pp. 198-220]

HKSAR. 1998. Commission on Innovation and Technology First Report. Hong Kong.

HKSAR. 1999. Commission on Innovation and Technology Second Report. Hong Kong.

Week 8: Thursday 26 October **

** NO CLASS: Rather, students are required to work on the first drafts of their research papers (first drafts due next week). Each group must make an appointment—at any time during this week (Week 8)—and meet with the instructor in their groups to discuss their progress on their research project first-draft write-ups. **

Week 9: Thursday 2 November **Alternative Views to S&T and Innovation Policy**

Our Hong Kong Foundation. 2016. *Yes, Hong Kong CAN!* Hong Kong. [Sections: 1 (Introduction), 3, 6-10] (Available from: https://www.ourhkfoundation.org.hk/sites/default/files/media/pdf/Yes_Hong_Kong_CAN_eng.pdf)

Homework ALERT! Students are required to complete and submit the first draft of their research paper (worth 10% of course grade).

Week 10: Thursday 9 November

Hong Kong's Innovation System

Our Hong Kong Foundation. 2016. *The Ecosystem of Innovation and Technology in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong. [Sections: 1 (Introduction), 2 (Human Resources: Innovation & Creativity), 4 (Government)] (Available from: https://www.ourhkfoundation.org.hk/sites/default/files/media/pdf/ScTech_full_report_eng.pdf)

Week 11: Thursday 16 November

S&T and Innovation in Hong Kong: Prospects

Segal, Adam. 2010. Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta: Science and Technology Cooperation. In *Innovation Policy and the Limits of Laissez-Faire: Hong Kong's Policy in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Douglas B. Fuller. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Homework ALERT! Students are required to complete and submit their 1,500-word 'opinion piece' (worth 15% of course grade).

Week 12: Thursday 23 November

Student Research Paper Presentations

Week 13: Thursday 30 November

Student Research Paper Presentations and Course Wrap-Up

Homework ALERT! Students are required to complete and submit the final completed research paper (worth 40% of course grade).