THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
School-Sponsored Course Proposal Form

Notes: (1) General information about school-sponsored courses (SSCs) can be found here. The proposed SSC must be an existing common core course which has been offered at least once as such.

(2) The completed proposal form should be accompanied by supporting documents, which should include, but not limited to, course outlines, assessment samples, student evaluation, and documentation of quality assurance activities adopted for ensuring the continued attainment of the SSC objectives. Please submit the completed proposal form and supporting documents to Undergraduate Core Education, Academic Registry. Enquiries can be directed to UCE (2358 5089 or uceo@ust.hk).

Part A: Particulars of the Proposed School-Sponsored Course

Course Code: HUMA1000A   Credits: 3   Proposed Effective Year & Term as an SSC: Fall 2019

Course Title: Cultures and Values: Language, Communication and Society

Latest Offering as a Common Core Course: 2017-18 Spring

Common Core Area: *(Please check the area(s) and the associated area ILO(s) that this course will contribute to)*

☐ **Humanities**

☒ H1 Comprehend and narrate human phenomena from the perspectives of humanities disciplines.

☒ H2 Appreciate and articulate diverse human values, feelings, reason and creativity in various forms of expression.

☐ **Social Analysis**

☐ SA1 Analyze key societal and behavioral issues by applying relevant social scientific approaches in different contexts.

☐ SA2 Communicate a concern about key societal issues as responsible citizens.

☐ **Science and Technology**

☐ ST1 Comprehend and apply the basic principles of science and methods of scientific inquiry.

☐ ST2 Evaluate the social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and technological development.

Part B: Instructor *(Please indicate the Course Coordinator if this course is taught by more than one Instructor)*			
Name	Department	Position	Course Coordinator
PAN, Ping	Division of Humanities	Lecturer II	☒

Part C: Alignment with the SSC Selection Criteria

▪ *Every SSC is expected to meet all three selection criteria specified below. It is understood that each SSC may demonstrate different levels of attainment in each of these selection criteria.*

▪ *Please explain, with reference to previous course teaching experience and evidence provided in this proposal form, how this course has aligned with the respective SSC selection criteria in its course design, content, pedagogy and delivery, and assessment. [Examples of practices for illustrating the selection criteria can be found here as reference.]*

SSC Selection Criterion 1:   **Exemplifying the attainment of the Common Core goals**

Every SSC is highly encouraged to attain all of the following three goals of the Common Core. It is understood, however, that the degree of attainment in each of these goals may vary from one SSC to another.

(1) *Please check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate the goal(s) this course has served to achieve:*

☐ **Broadening horizons**: to allow students to gain intellectual breadth and an appreciation of intellectual achievements across and beyond the main academic disciplines of their studies

☐ **A passion for learning**: to spark students' passion for learning and enhance their higher order intellectual abilities: analysis and evaluation; judgment and critical thinking; defining and solving problems

☐ **A lifelong pursuit of excellence**: to provide a foundation for students' life-long development through personal growth, preparation for future careers and opportunities to make contributions to the community

(2) *Please explain, with reference to previous course teaching experience and evidence, how this course has aligned with this selection criterion.*

Supporting documents: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/r30vuoxlmwie4ns/AAA0EquQni1J28MghCYDvCOla?dl=0

Broadening horizons

The course, by design, aims to build up students' communicative capacity through humanities knowledge and to enrich students' understanding of different values and perspectives. A wide spectrum of social and contemporary issues is discussed with reference to concepts, theories, and discussions from various disciplines. Values explored in this course correspond closely with the mission and vision of the University, covering an extensive scope from care of others and the environment, respect of diversity and justice, to appreciation of complexity of humanity, development and sustainability, and communicative sensitivity, among others. For instance, three sections of HUMA1000 were offered in Spring 2018, with their respective three key values as below:

1) HUMA 1000A: Language, Communication and Society
2) HUMA 1000B: Righteousness, Destiny and Well-being
3) HUMA 1000C: Economic Development, Legal Justice, and Social Diversity

The course objectives are successfully achieved by its specific design and delivery, featuring three core strands of learning that co-function coherently, namely, lectures, writing workshops and online peer discussion. Specifically, the humanities perspective and values are discussed in the lectures, the follow-up online peer exchanges and further reflected in the argumentative essay. Students' communication skills are sharpened through essay writing that is guided steadily in the writing workshops, and strengthened also through peer discussion. Meanwhile, students can further exchange ideas on the lecture contents and essays via the online discussion platform. Through the integrated course structure, students can gain intellectual breadth across and beyond the main academic disciplines of their studies and learn how to convince people with academic writing.

As students comment:
"The course is good because it explains values which seem simple at first glance in detail. This course also gives me the chance to write long essays which I enjoy." (Spring 2018)
"Values close to daily life. Opens up new thinking and area of knowledge." (Spring 2016)
"Learn about something that seems normal but actually very different" and "It allows us to see things from different perspectives." (Spring 2018)
"Rich course materials give students a foundation on the study of humanities. Examples are interesting and arouse students' interests." (Spring 2016)

A passion for learning

Students' passion for learning is sparked by creating an engaging environment in the course. Students are expected to complete assigned readings before lectures which prepare them for meaningful learning experience in participating learning activities in the lectures. The online discussion forum is designed to provide a platform for students to exchange ideas outside classroom. As stated in the rubric available to students, students will learn to "appreciate the viewpoints of the peers, contribute to the understanding of the discussion topics among the group and respond to peers timely". What's more, a blended-learning mode is incorporated into the writing workshops, including both the online video lectures and assignments, and the face-to-face classroom sessions, through which students are guided by the specially designed materials in developing, writing, and refining their argumentative essay. In the classroom workshops in particular, an array of tasks is devised such that students are encouraged to work together with their group mates from the onset, to understand what constitutes logical reasoning and persuasion, to solve problems and complete tasks, and more importantly, to read each other's writing pieces and provide peer feedback along with the process.

As students comment:
"This course clearly guides the students the key values of three aspects - language, communication, and society. The professor always prepares a lot to create a good atmosphere during class." (Spring 2018)
"It is good for students to discuss some topics and sometimes get feedback or responses immediately. Instructor always encourage students to express their opinions in lessons. Summaries and responses are then given to corresponding speakers. Students can also listen and learn more knowledge or points of views outside notes…" (Spring 2018)
"The reading materials provided for the lecture were very good. They made me think very deeply about the topics covered in the readings, which were topics that I had never read about before. I was not aware of how detailed and interesting the world of linguistics was before this course." (Spring 2016)
"The instructor is very good, motivates us to learn…" and "is very passionate to engage with us, want us to think more on the content after lecture." (Spring 2018)

In addition, this course assesses various levels of cognitive complexity (referring to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy), from "Understand" to "Evaluate" and "Create". Students' absorption of the lecture materials is assessed by the in-class multiple-choice quizzes. Also, students need to apply what they have learned in the course to establish arguments in both the essay and online discussion; and they have to present and defend their stance by making judgments with supportive evidence and evaluate the validity of ideas. Last but not least, the 1000-word essay, as an 'over-arching' assessment,

requires students' higher-level ability to integrate (humanities) knowledge with (writing) skills.

A lifelong pursuit of excellence

University can be the final gas station for students to fill up themselves before stepping into the path of life-long learning. We hope that students can develop two fundamental abilities of good life-long learners after taking this course, namely, communication skills and reflective ability. For communication skills, this course pays special focus on teaching students to organize their ideas and communicate them effectively in academic writing. Through interacting with the lecturing faculty and peers both in-class and online, students are prompted to reflect on their beliefs and values, the process of which helps them to form judgments based on facts, yet in a wider and more comprehensive perspective. Written rubrics are employed in this course for online discussion and essay, which not only provide a transparent and fair platform for assessments, but also educate students to evaluate their works in an appropriate and objective manner.

As students comment:
"The contents taught are very interesting and thought-provoking" (Spring 2018) and "inspire students to think in a deeper way" (Fall 2017)
"I love how the course allows me to explore various topics to a great extent and I also learned how to perfect my essay writing on the way." (Spring 2018)
"I think the good part about this course is that it is comprehensive and covered a wide-range of topics. I really like how every week, there were assigned readings provided because it really helped me understand the concepts and lessons more comprehensively. Besides this, the teacher clearly knows the topic really well, and she gives very comprehensive and clear explanations. Overall, the course was very interesting and I learned a lot from it." (Spring 2018)

SSC Selection Criterion 2:	Supporting the attainment of the desired attributes for HKUST graduates, ABC LIVE

Of the seven graduate attributes, A, B and C would be achieved mainly through major programs or the general common core courses. While the Common Core collectively should serve to attain all the remaining four attributes (i.e. LIVE), individual SSCs are expected to address at least one of the following four attributes.

(1) *Please check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate the attribute(s) this course has served to achieve:*

☐ **(L) Leadership and teamwork:** A capacity for leadership and teamwork, including the ability to motivate others, to be responsible and reliable, and to give and take direction and constructive criticism

☐ **(I) International outlook:** An international outlook, and an appreciation of cultural diversity

☐ **(V) Vision and an orientation to the future:** Adaptability and flexibility, a passion for learning, the ability to develop clear, forward-looking goals, and the self-direction and discipline to achieve these goals

☐ **(E) Ethical standards and compassion:** Respect for others and high standards of personal integrity. Compassion and a readiness to contribute to the community

(2)   Please explain, with reference to previous course teaching experience and evidence, how this course has aligned with this selection criterion.

(L) Leadership and teamwork
Through the three strands of learning, students are provided with abundant opportunities to exchange ideas, discuss questions, and collaborate with their peers both in class and through the online platform. For instance, teamwork forms the basis of the blended writing workshops, which encompass tasks that motivate students to form buddies with those who opt for the same essay prompt and to produce a mind map that consolidates ideas of all their group members. Such cooperation is prevalent in all stages of the workshops and students are asked to comment on the peers' outputs progressively, from their initial response to the prompt to the main body paragraph writing.

The online peer exchanges that take place on Canvas act as another important medium for students to share their views, reflective thoughts, and personal life experience with their group members. Stimulated by the open-ended questions, students explore the controversial issues pertinent to the three key values covered in the course and display to their peers their own stance, when meanwhile learning to listen to the voice of others, and to understand the underlying considerations behind different perspectives before giving appropriate responses. The mechanism of the group discussion relies heavily on the interactions among the team members, and very often the more active participants would take the initiative to lead the discussion and even inspire others to add further observations.

As students comment:
"It's very interesting and relevant ...and explores many linguistic related issues in an everyday context and provides many examples to illustrate them appropriately to students. The Canvas discussion topics are very interesting, and personally enriching or me. I get to learn a lot more about my fellow peers, as well as share my opinions." (Spring 2016)
"The online discussion board allows all the students to exchange our ideas." (Spring 2018).

"Encourages students to discuss personal views and to expand their knowledge. Challenges one's personal views." (Spring 2018).

(I) International outlook

Titled as *Cultures and Values*, the course looks into ways in which people have constructed systems of beliefs and values in order to build their societies and to make sense of the world realities and their lives. It has, thus, built into its curriculum an international and global horizon, and has, thereby, drawn interest from a pronounced proportion of students that are of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Content wise, through a lingua-cultural lens, the course delves into the closely interlinked notions of language, communication and society as three key human values as manifested in our daily life, and in the context of globalization and increasing border-crossing and intercultural exchanges. A range of issues that are rooted in language and culture, and that are also highly relevant to students' daily and future life are probed from multi-disciplinary angles, including topics such as language and thought; identities, self and 'othering'; cultural diversity in verbal and nonverbal communication; popular culture and global cultural flow; globalization and language planning and policy in different cultural contexts. Through discussions of such, the course attaches great importance to boosting students' understanding of the complexity of human communication and to cultivating an appreciation and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, communicative sensitivity, and social equality in today's increasingly shrinking world. A global perspective is also evidenced in students' essay writing and online discussions where students would draw on examples of both local context and other cultures and relate them to their intercultural experiences, such as culture-specific expressions and language use like Konglish, code-mixing and code-switching, conceptualization of colour terms, politeness norms, among many others.

As students comment:
"Comprehensive curriculum with topics ranging from linguistics, language and society and language acquisition etc.; provides students with new perspectives to learn and understand languages." (Spring 2016)
"I think the content of this course is very interesting because language is everywhere. We speak everyday; we type everyday. This is a very good topic to investigate." (Spring 2018)

(V) Vision and an orientation to the future

As expounded above, to enrich students' values and perspectives and to build their communicative capacity through writing and humanities knowledge have served as the essential objectives for the course. These endeavors are in alignment with the mission and vision of the University that emphasize the whole-person development with high level intellectual and personal skills and a global mindset. Through guided argumentative writing, students are equipped with the necessary skills to form opinions out of complex human situations, and to present ideas to persuade and influence others. The humanistic concerns that are fostered in the course also prepare students to be compassionate citizens who respect differences and justice; who understands the complexity of humanity, and who questions potential bias and fallacy in popular perceptions, values, and stereotypes and who make independent judgements with rigor and sensitivity.

As students comment:
"As a business major, I loved having the opportunity to take this course and to write an essay. This course taught me very interesting things and stimulated my thinking. I feel compelled to share my new knowledge from this course with my parents and to continue to find materials on the topics to learn more about." (Spring 2018)
"Very nice introduction to the important notions and values related to the society we are in now… it will have built a good foundation for other courses and for understanding myself throughout the university life." (Fall 2017)

(E) Ethical standards and compassion

The course deems humanistic concerns and value education as its priority, and to achieve so, all three components of learning operate cohesively to drive students to question assertions related to cultures and values, and to show appreciation of divergent standpoints and preferences so as to give constructive feedback as response. This orientation is reflected in the materials delivered, and the assessments as well as class activities. To illustrate, the video materials on culture and world diversity, and the intercultural movies on identity, gender and personal loss, direct students' attention to the challenges, perplexities and even hardships that people encounter under different historical and cultural circumstances. These inputs raise students' awareness to embrace an ethically responsible attitude in tackling situations of dilemma, and to demonstrate a stronger sense of empathy and sympathy when faced with unfamiliar communities and practices.

As students comment:
"Instructor gives different points of view that can help me think more about things I thought I understood already, and the tutorial gives chances for me and other students to discuss and exchange our own opinions on the same topic." (Fall 2017)
"It's a very unique course and it informs me about people and how we interact." (Spring 2018)
"It makes you think about different cultural values in a different perspective, taking in both views." (Spring 2018)

SSC Selection Criterion 3:	**Transcending disciplinary areas**

Please explain, with reference to previous course teaching experience and evidence, how this course has aligned with this selection criterion.

Rather than for enhancement of knowledge in a specific branch of humanities, the course draws on approaches and insights from multiple disciplines in humanities and social science. Students are exposed with concepts, debates, and heated issues from psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, anthropology, history and education, and are encouraged to apply them to the daily and professional life situations. The course is transdisciplinary in the sense that it not only assimilates wisdoms from various academic arenas but also presents social issues in an open-ended manner, welcoming creative thinking from students of different backgrounds and pursuits.

As one student comments:
"The course touches upon very interesting topics about language, culture, identity and values, all of which I was interested in from the beginning. The course presents these various topics using contemporary examples students can both understand and relate to. Perhaps the best part of the course is that it presents all viewpoints and information in a very open-minded way, embracing and celebrating diversity in cultural backgrounds and identities…Professor is evidently very well-versed in her field…" (Spring 2016)

Part D: Recommendation of the Course Offering School

School/IPO *(Please specify)*	Position & Name	Signature	Date
SHSS	Dean / Kellee Tsai		2/10/2018

Remarks by UCE Team

Information highlighted in yellow are specific to this course section HUMA 1000A. The other information are exactly the same for all 3 SSC proposals for HUMA 1000A, B & C.