

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Course Syllabus
Fall 2026-27

Critical Writing for China Studies

LANG5070

3 credit

Pre-requisites: N/A

Co-requisites: N/A

Name of Course Coordinator: Nicholas Sampson

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Office Hours of Course Coordinators: Available by appointment only

Course Description

The course develops students' ability to critically read and write and analyze issues in global China studies. Students are trained to respond critically to professional academic texts, supporting their views with appropriate academic evidence and arguments. The course will develop students' skills in managing appropriate styles and rhetorical features to ensure effective communication in different professional and academic contexts.

Course Content Overview

Weeks 1-3	Critical reading	Principles and approaches Inferential reading and summary techniques Annotating a book review Critical questions and language use Reading for writing: preparing a commentary
Weeks 4-10	Academic speaking and academic writing	Preparing scholarly response in writing Using evaluative language in writing Flow, engagement, delivering in speaking Audience awareness in speaking Zoom presentation and oral critique Summarizing and comparing evidence in writing Writing up the critique Critical questions in discussion Certainty levels and strategies in response in speaking Handling questions in speaking Seminar discussion
Weeks 11-13	Review of English for Academic purposes	Library skills Presenting research background and design in writing Writing with AI: human agency and control Planning for self-reflection Critique of research consultation

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

1. Understand and describe features of a range of academic research genres
2. Analyze and develop critical and analytical interpretations of data, sources and arguments in texts
3. Produce written arguments with integrated sources and appropriate linguistic and rhetorical conventions
4. Communicate their own research questions and findings to peers and scholars of global China studies

Assessment and Grading

Academic speaking	35%	Seminar discussion: 30 minutes of analysis and critique	ILO1, ILO2, ILO4
Academic writing	30%	Draft (mandatory) : Compare and justify (two articles/sources) 500 + 200 words (for week 13 consultation) Final critique: Evaluation of research (annotated bibliography of three articles) 1000 + 300 words	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4
Self-reflection	15%	Reflect on the academic writing process: i) justification for research area and selection of articles/sources; ii) oral and written critique process and the seminar discussion; iii) comparison of articles for the annotated bibliography	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3,
4 Blended Learning tasks	20%	BL1: Annotating a book review (5%; week 2) BL2: Reading for writing – prepare a commentary (5%; week 3) BL3: Zoom presentation – an oral critique (5%; week 6) BL4: Library workshop (5%; week 11)	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO4

Specific due dates are posted on Canvas. Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Course AI Policy

The course integrates the use of (Gen)AI for learning and assignment preparation purposes, to encourage students to explore various roles (Gen)AI may serve in assisting language learning. This course advocates ethical and critical use of AI when preparing for course assignments.

As the course evaluates human performances instead of AI products, students will train for the below actions and become responsible-constructive users of AI:

1. Restrictive use of AI tools for assessment:
(Generative) AI may be used to simulate communication and to find sources of information, but **must NOT be used to compose the assignments / cited in the text / cited as an author of the text**.
2. Some assignments **require students to use (Gen)AI to revise up to 30%** of their written work. The revised parts must be **indicated (via highlighting) in the submitted works**. **Areas revised by (Gen)AI** must be highlighted as part of the <Declaration of GenAI Usage>.
3. **Detection tools will be used** to monitor AI-similarity rate, **for reference only**. However, any work showing AI similarity close to/over 50% will be rejected for re-submission, with penalty mark-deduction.
4. Assessment tasks are designed to encourage students **to develop original ideas and purposeful use of language**, not to rely on AI for mere task completion.

Required Texts and Materials

Course materials and additional resources are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.