**THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**UGEC 2192 Understanding Ecotourism**

**(China Engagement Office - Summer School for Mainland Students)**

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| **Course** | **UGEC 2192 Understanding Ecotourism  (生态旅游探索)** |
| **Class Date** | 22 July – 7 August 2025 |
| **Class Time** | 09:00 – 11:00 |
| **Class Location** | (TBC) |
| **Instructor** | Prof. CHAN Chung Shing, Johnson  Assistant Professor, Department of Geography and Resource Management, The Chinese University of Hong Kong |
| **Email** | [ccs\_johnson@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:ccs_johnson@cuhk.edu.hk) |
| **Medium of Instruction** | English |
| **Course Description** | |
| Course Overview  This course will introduce ecotourism, an essential component of the tourism industry that is becoming relevant to most societies. It will develop and focus on a natural resource-based perspective incorporating resource and environmental management principles.  The first part of the course will cover the general introductory concepts and provide students with a theoretical and historical background of the discipline. This will be followed by an in-depth study of specific environmental settings and resource issues that will complement our understanding of ecotourism. Hong Kong is the main focus of the discussion, though examples or cases from Mainland China and worldwide are provided throughout the course. Critical issues in ecotourism, such as its multi-dimensional impacts, governance, planning, and resource and visitor management, will also be covered. Lastly, students will be exposed to the relationship between the phenomenon of ecotourism and the concept of sustainable tourism. Some of the lectures will address SDGs; for example, Goals 12, 16, and 17 embrace the knowledge and evolution of environmentalism and the nature-human relationship; Goals 14 and 15 connect with the concept of protected areas and environmental conservation; Goals 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12 and 13 cover multi-dimensional tourism impacts and, more importantly, climate change issue. The concept of sustainable development will frame and conclude the entire course since the concept has played an indispensable role in tourism development nowadays.  Course objectives  The course objectives are:   * To provide a broad intellectual perspective of ecotourism and to instill an understanding of it as an academic discipline; * To offer students an understanding of the holistic approach to environment and resource management issues related to tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable tourism at the local, regional, and global levels; * To develop basic knowledge of ecotourism development and its potential and * To train students to come up with timely responses to critical issues on conservation and natural resource management | |
| **Course Content** | |
| Course Syllabus   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Session** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Hours** | | 1 | 22 July (Tue) | Ecotourism: An introduction  *(What is tourism, ecotourism, and sustainable development?)* ***(SDG 12)*** | 2 | | 2 | 23 July (Wed) | The ideology of ecotourism and environmental conservation  *(How does ecotourism connect with environmentalism and sustainability?)* ***(SDGs 16, 17)*** | 2 | | 3 | 24 July (Thu) | Who are ecotourists?  *(What is an ecotourist? Does the ecotourism market sustainable?)* ***(SDG 12)*** | 2 | | 4 | 25 July (Fri) | Where are ecotourism environments?  *(What and where may ecotourism take place? How do we protect these resources for ecotourism and sustainable tourism development?)* ***(SDGs 14, 15)*** | 2 | | 5 | 28 July (Mon) | Ecotourism in Hong Kong: Potential and limitations (Guest sharing)  *(What is the status of ecotourism development in Hong Kong?)* ***(SDGs 8, 11, 14, 15)*** | 2 | | 6 | 29 July (Tue) | Geological landscape in Hong Kong as tourism resources (Guest sharing)  *(What is the Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark? How does the Geopark provide an opportunity for ecotourism in Hong Kong?)* ***(SDGs 11, 14, 15)*** | 2 | | 7 | 30 July (Wed) | Field trip 1: The Hong Kong Wetland Park (08:45–13:45) (TBC) | 5 | | 8 | 31 July (Thu) | Field trip 2: The Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (09:00–13:00) (TBC) | 4 | | 9 | 1 Aug (Fri) | Self-study (no lecture) |  | | 10 | 4 Aug (Mon) | Impacts of ecotourism  *(What are the multi-dimensional impacts of tourism and ecotourism? How do these impacts affect the sustainability of ecotourism destinations?)* ***(SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12)*** | 2 | | 11 | 5 Aug (Tue) | Ecotourism planning and management (and group sharing on field trip experiences)  *(How can we plan and manage ecotourism effectively to achieve sustainable tourism development?)* ***(SDGs 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17)*** | 2 | | 12 | 6 Aug (Wed) | Conclusion: Ecotourism and sustainable tourism  *(How does climate change affect ecotourism and sustainable tourism development? What would be the possible future of tourism?)* ***(SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13)*** | 2 | | 13 | 7 Aug (Thu) | Self-study (no lecture) |  | |  | 8 Aug (Fri) | Final exam (Time: 10:30-12:00) |  | |  |  |  | 27 | | |
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| **Learning Outcomes** | |
| This course will provide a broad intellectual perspective for students and enable them to develop a holistic understanding of environmental and resource management issues related to ecotourism. Students will acquire basic knowledge of ecotourism development and its potential and can make judgments in response to critical conservation and natural resource management issues.  Specifically, after completing this course, students will be able to:   * Understand the basic concepts of ecotourism and its relation with the overall tourism industry; * Acquire knowledge in operating and managing ecotourism activities; * Develop an understanding of the skills and approaches necessary for interpreting relevant policy and planning of natural and human-made resources for (eco)tourism and * Enhance problem-solving capability using an integrative approach and critical thinking as introduced in the course.   Learning format and activities:   * Lecture series: This part provides the basic concepts, knowledge, and theoretical basis for analyzing specific issues and case studies. * Field trips: This part exposes students to experience exploring the potential of managing and operating ecotourism activities in different environmental settings. * Video sessions with class exercises and/or discussions: Students will watch selected videos and learn to identify critical issues and interpret real situations. * The medium of instruction is English; most of the course materials and all assignments are in English. | |
| **Recommended Reading(s)/Reference(s)** | |
| * Fennell, D. A. (2014). *Ecotourism*. Florence, KY, USA: Routledge. (Ch. 2) * United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2012). *Protected Planet Report 2012*. Retrieved from <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/system/dataset_file_fields/files/000/000/001/original/PPR2012_en.pdf?1395065803> * Jim, C. Y. (2000). Environmental changes associated with mass urban tourism and nature tourism development in Hong Kong. *The Environmentalist, 20*, 233-247. * Stronza, A., & Gordillo, J. (2008). Community views of ecotourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 35*(2), 448-468. * Newsome, D., Moore, S. A., & Dowling, R. K. (2013). *Natural area tourism: Ecology, impacts and management*. Bristol; Buffalo, NY: Channel View Publications. (Ch. 4 to 6) * Gössling, S., Hall, C. M., & Weaver, D. B. (Eds.) (2009). Sustainable tourism futures: Perspectives on systems, restructuring and innovations. New York: Routledge. (Ch. 2 and 16) | |
| **Course Assessment** | |
| Local field trip – One group-based field trip report (40%)  Final exam – Short questions and long questions (60%) | |

**Grade descriptors**

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| **Grade** | **Descriptions** |
| A | Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. |
| B | Substantial performance on some of the learning outcomes or high performance on a few of them, which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in a generally satisfactory performance. |
| C | Average performance on some of the learning outcomes, possibly with more weaknesses in a few of the learning outcomes. |
| D | Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. |
| F | Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes or failure to meet specified assessment requirements. |

**Details of Course Website:**

This course uses the CU eLearning system (Blackboard Learn) as the main platform to disseminate course-related materials. Students can access the course website by logging in to the CU eLearning system (<http://elearn.cuhk.edu.hk/>).

**Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessments**

In assessing the level of achievement of learning outcomes and students’ performance, students are expected to produce their own work independently without any collaboration or the use of AI tools. That says, students are prohibited from using any AI tools in their assignments and assessments that count towards students’ final grades of the course or for evaluating their attainment of the desired learning outcomes. Please refer to the University’s guidelines for students: <https://www.aqs.cuhk.edu.hk/documents/A-guide-for-students_use-of-AI-tools.pdf> for the overall policy. Any breach of the regulations will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University’s *Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty.* In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/.](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/)

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_htm_files_(2013-14)/declaration_en.doc) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

* In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable for disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
* For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students’ uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.
* Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
* Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. When some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgments and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g., to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one’s own work, but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments, examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g., Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

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