
SO CI 3207, Summer 2025 Economic Sociology

Department of Sociology,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Instructor: Prof. Jin Sun

Time/Location: 9:00 am-12:00 pm (TBC), 21 July – 8 August; Place (TBC)

Office hour: Sino 414 (or by email appointment)

Email: jinsun@cuhk.edu.hk

TA: To be confirmed (Ruotong Su; ruotongsu@link.cuhk.edu.hk)

Course Description:

This course introduces undergraduate students to the knowledge world of economic sociology, in which it will offer a guided entry into the ideas of the socio-economic, political-economic and legal-economic scholars. The concepts they developed to analyze capitalism, society and global political economy are fundamental to address global and international concerns, including ESG (environmental, social & governance), SDGs (sustainable development goals), international economic, trade and monetary institutions (e.g., World Bank, WTO, IMF), and global financial capitalism.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Understand Global Capitalism:** Grasp Chinese modernization in transnational world order, recognizing the key actors, institutions, and processes that shape global capitalism and economic order in the world society. (LO1)
2. **Apply ESG/SDGs:** Apply the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in case studies, understanding their role in shaping economic and social practice in global capitalism. (LO2) And,
3. **Reflect on Personal and Social Responsibility:** Reflect on personal and social limits and responsibilities in the context of global financial capitalism, considering implications and the role of individual action in achieving the SDGs. (LO3)

Assessment:

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Group Presentation: 30%

Group Essay: 50%

Attendance and Participation: 20%

☐ Absence from any session in S3-12: 1% deducted for each absence. (Absence for emergency or with a medical certificate is permitted).

☐ Participation to class discussions is required (10%). Each study group would be invited to contribute to *class discussion* about peer group presentation.

☐ Participation in office hours is strongly encouraged (10%).

Each group will be invited to discuss their project in office hours one week before the mid-term and final presentations.

Group Presentation: 30%.

☐ A study group with 2 to 3 members shall present a case study of the latest innovative practice of a leading company/organization addressing Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)/Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Please indicate *the group study topic* in the [Google spreadsheet](#) in S1.

☐ Assessment:

- proposal presentation (3-5 min, Session 2): 5%
- mid-term presentation (30 min presentation, 15 min discussions, S4-S12): 10%
- final presentation (15 min presentation; slides submitted in S13): 15%

Group Essay: 50%.

☐ Assessment:

- Group mid-term essay (3,000 words; submitted before 23:59 pm, S6): 10%
- Group final essay (10,000 words; submitted before 23:59 pm, S14): 40%

Late submission penalty on the group final essay (date of submission):

10% (1/2-2 days)

30% (3-5 days)

50% (>5 days)

Grade Description:

- **A:** Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- **A-:** Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- **B+/B/B-:** Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, with high performance on some compensating for less satisfactory performance on others.
- **C+/C/C-:** Satisfactory performance on most learning outcomes, with possible minor weaknesses.
- **D+/D:** Barely satisfactory performance on several learning outcomes.
- **F:** Unsatisfactory performance on several learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

[Note: B- or lower for any free rider in the group project]

Policy for Using AI:

In accordance with the CUHK 'Guidelines on the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessments', students must adhere to the following policy:

- Students must seek explicit approval from the course instructor to collaborate with AI tools on assignments.
- AI tools may be used as writing assistants or for general inquiry but must not be used to fabricate content. The first draft must be based on original work such as data collection, interviews, or other written work.
- Students must include explicit acknowledgement in their assignment output if AI is used, detailing the co-generation process with AI.
- Students are responsible for the accuracy of the content submitted and must exercise caution when using AI tools, being aware of their limitations.
- Violations of this policy will be treated as acts of academic dishonesty and handled accordingly.

Additional Resources:

- [APA Citation Style for ChatGPT](#)
- [CUHK AI Tool Guidelines](#)

Statement on Academic Honesty

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/>.

For the group final essay, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. All students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized 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.

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

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide (<https://academic2.veriguide.org/portalcuhk/>).

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 submission. 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.

Teaching Schedule

S1: Introduction to Economic Sociology (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Smelser, N. J., & Swedberg, R. (Eds.). (2010). *The handbook of economic sociology*. Princeton university press. Chapter 1. Introducing Economic Sociology, by Neil J. Smelser and Richard Swedberg

Task: please identify your group members and choose your group study/class discussion topics in the [Google spreadsheet](#).

Distinguished alumni on ESG/SDGs/economy & society

CU Alumni: Martin (05 SC, EE; EV); Ben (93 MBA; cleaning, recycling); Harold (87 NA, BBA, 01 EMBA; recycling); Peggy (02 NA, Env Eng; ESG); Vriko (16 SC, Science). CU Alumni Magazine. June 2024 (Special Issue on ESG). [Pp. 7-19](#).

CU Sociology alumni: 王淑英、李勁華、張德勝: 三代人. 商務印書館 (香港)

Case 1: Exploring FinTech's possibilities to achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Sun, Jin. 2025. *Sustainable Financialization: Leveraging FinTech, Social Innovation and Inclusive Partnership for Sustainable Development Goals*. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 1, 15-18.

S2: Introduction to ESG/SDGs/Financial Capitalism in World Society (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 3. *The New Institutionalisms in Economics and Sociology*, by Victor Nee

Task: please present your group project proposal (3-5 minutes)

The three basic elements that should be articulated in each proposal are: (1) Description of the case study subject (i.e., company, organization, institution, etc.): Briefly describe the case study subject in terms of its business/organization and key business activities. (2) Rationale/Case Materials: Why is this subject and this body of records of interest to the study? What unique issue(s) might this case study address or highlight? What reference materials are available for this case study? (3) Timeline: Briefly identify key tasks, goals and/or expected outcomes associated with the case study and a rough timeline for carrying out, developing and/or implementing them.

UN: Do you know all 17 SDGs? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XTBYMfZyrM>.

Case 2: Ant Forest in China and GForest in the Philippines. Sun (2025), Chapter 2.

S3: Chinese Modernization in Transnational World Order (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 2. *Comparative and Historical Approaches to Economic Sociology*, by Frank Dobbin

Halliday, Terence C., and Gregory Shaffer. 2015. "Transnational Legal Orders." In *Transnational Legal Orders*, edited by Terence C. Halliday and Gregory Shaffer, 3–72. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zhou, X. (2022). *The Logic of Governance in China: An Organizational Approach*.

Cambridge University Press. Introduction

钱穆. 2001. 中国历代政治得失. 三联书店

金耀基. 2023. 從傳統到現代：中國現代化與中國現代文明的建構. 中華書局(香港)

习近平. 2024. 关于《中共中央关于进一步全面深化改革、推进中国式现代化的决定》的说明. [《求是》2024/16](#)

Case 3: Transnational SDG Efforts in partnership with InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), Genshin Impact, and McDonald's. Sun (2025), Chapter 3.

S4: The Global Economy in a Macrosociological Perspective (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 9. The Political and Economic Sociology of International Economic Arrangements, by Neil Fligstein

Halliday, Terence C., and Bruce G. Carruthers. 2007. "The Recursivity of Law: Global Norm Making and National Lawmaking in the Globalization of Corporate Insolvency Regimes." *American Journal of Sociology* 112(4):1135–1202.

Block-Lieb, Susan, and Terence C. Halliday. 2017. *Global Lawmakers: International Organizations in the Crafting of World Markets*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kentikelenis, Alexander E., and Sarah Babb. 2019. "The Making of Neoliberal Globalization: Norm Substitution and The Politics of Clandestine Institutional Change." *American Journal of Sociology* 124(6): 1720-1762.

Krisch, Nico. 2014. The Decay of Consent: International Law in an Age of Global Public Goods. *American Journal of International Law* 108(1): 1-40.

Case 4: developing countries and international trade: WorldFirst, Antom. Sun (2025), Chapter 4.

S5: Global Economy and Global Governance – (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 8. The Global Economy: Organization, Governance, and Development, by Gary Gereffi

Braithwaite, J. (2024). *Simple Solutions to Dialectics of Peace, Climate, Finance, and Health*. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 1-3. [Link](#)

Braithwaite, J., Forsyth, M., & Cleland, D. (2019). Restorative environmental justice: An introduction. In E. Biffi & B. Pali (Eds.), *Environmental Justice Restoring the Future: Towards a Restorative Environmental Justice Praxis* (pp. 9–13). European Forum for Restorative Justice. [Link](#)

Case 5: Ant Farm, Ant Foundation and local social partners for rural development, community facilities, and humanitarian aid. Sun (2025), Chapter 5.

S6: The Sociology of Economic Institutions and Economic Behavior (Date)

Textbook: Chapter 11. Markets in Society, by Richard Swedberg

Steinmetz, George. 2008. "The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire Before 1914." *American Sociological Review* 73(4):589–612.

Chorev, Nitsan and Sarah Babb. 2009. "The Crisis of Neoliberalism and the Future of International Institutions: The IMF and the WTO in Comparative Perspective." *Theory and Society* 38: 459-484.

Babb, Sarah and Bruce G. Carruthers. "Conditionality: Forms, Function, and History." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 4: 13-29.

Fourcade-Gourinchas, Marion and Sarah Babb. 2002. "The Rebirth of the Liberal Creed: Paths to Neoliberalism in Four Countries." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(3): 533-79.

Case 6: FinTech for the underbanked/unbanked: MY Bank in China, Anext Bank in Singapore, and Bettr in Thailand. Sun (2025), Chapter 6.

S7: Global Banking and Financial Markets (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 13. Banking and Financial Markets, by Linda Brewster Stearns and Mark S. Mizruchi

Task: mid-term essay feedback by the instructor

Guardian, Financial Crisis: A History: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5Veyepqvfk>.

Asian Financial Crisis (Cantonese): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMPIHF2tOJQ>.

CNBC: Why is the dollar so powerful? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkkH-0khoQw>.

CNBC: What's the difference between the IMF and the World Bank? | CNBC Explains. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN3qrFA4jXc>

Mallard, Grégoire. 2019. *Gift Exchange: The Transnational History of a Political Idea*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7. [Link](#)

Pénet, P., & Flores Zendejas, J. (2021). *Sovereign debt diplomacies: rethinking sovereign debt from colonial empires to hegemony*. Oxford University Press. [Introduction](#).

Case 7: Decent Work and Economic Growth: 10 x 1000 Tech for Inclusion.

Sun (2025), Chapter 7.

10x1000 Tech for Inclusion ([Link](#))

10x1000 Tech for Inclusion in Hong Kong ([Link](#))

10x1000 Tech for Inclusion in Indonesia ([Link](#))

S8: Money and Credit (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 16. The Sociology of Money and Credit, by Bruce G. Carruthers

Irwin, Douglas A. 2017. *Clashing over Commerce: A History of U.S. Trade Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [Link \(Chinese version\)](#)

Mallard, Grégoire, and Jin Sun. 2022. "Viral Governance: How Unilateral US Sanctions Changed the Rules of Financial Capitalism." *American Journal of Sociology* 128(1): 144-188. [Link](#)

Shaffer, Gregory. 2021. *Emerging Powers and the World Trading System*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1. [Link](#)

Case 8: Ant Village, Cyber Mulan for female entrepreneurs in China and Indonesia, Wind Rider for girls' football and Blue Vest for the elderly population in China. Sun (2025), Chapter 8.

S9: The Sociology of Firms, Organizations, and Industries (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 19. Business Groups and Social Organization, by *Mark Granovetter*

Mallard, Grégoire. 2014. "Crafting the Nuclear Regime Complex (1950-1975): Dynamics of Harmonization of Opaque Treaty Rules." *European Journal of International Law* 25(2): 445-472.

Sun, Jin. 2021. "International payment settlement in China including Macau and Hong Kong and unilateral sanctions-related disputes: sources, remedies and procedures." In Charlotte Beaucillon (ed.), *The Research Handbook on Unilateral and Extraterritorial Sanctions*, Edward Elgar, pp. 322-340. [Link](#)

Case 9: Zoloz e-KYC applications in East, Southeast and South Asia. Sun (2025), Chapter 9.

S10: The sociology of law and the economy (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 22. The State and the Economy, by *Fred Block and Peter Evans*
Chapter 23. A Sociological Approach to Law and the Economy, by *Lauren B. Edelman and Robin Stryker*

Sun, Jin. 2024. "Non-Compliance and Nuclear Disarmament: The Iran Nuclear Deal." In Christina Voigt and Caroline Foster (ed.), *International Courts versus Compliance Mechanisms: Comparative Advantages in Strengthening Treaty Implementation*, pp. 420-441, [Cambridge University Press. Link](#)

Mallard, Grégoire, and Jin Sun. 2024. "International Law, Security and Sanctions: A Decolonial Perspective on the Transnational Legal Order of Sanctions" *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 20. [Link](#)

Case 10: capability building in the Global South: Paytm in India and Easypaisa in Pakistan. Sun (2025), Chapter 10.

Easypaisa: An Operational Model of Mobile Money Service ([Link](#))

National Financial Inclusion Strategy in Pakistan ([Link](#))

中國移動支付出海 螞蟻金服幫巴基斯坦打造當地“支付寶”([Link](#))

S11: Education and the Economy (Date: TBC)

Textbook: Chapter 25. Education and the Economy, by *Mary C. Brinton*

CNBC, The problem of education inequality: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-JVpKku5SI>.

UNESCO, Key recommendations from UNESCO's Futures of Education report: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quGaJEfehV0>.

Tam, Tony, and Jin Jiang. 2014. "The Making of Higher Education Inequality: How Do Mechanisms and Pathways Depend on Competition?" *American Sociological Review* 79:807-816.

Hannum, E., Ishida, H., Park, H., & Tam, T. (2019). Education in East Asian societies: Postwar expansion and the evolution of inequality. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 45(1), 625-647.

Benavot, Aaron & Cha, Yunkyung & Kamens, David & Meyer, John & Wong, Suk-Ying. (1991). Knowledge for the Masses: World Models and National Curricula, 1920-1986. *American Sociological Review*. 56. 85. 10.2307/2095675.

Case 11: state capability and inclusive tourism: cross-border payment infrastructure for 28 million international travelers via Alipay+ ecosystem in Thailand.

Sun (2025), Chapter 11.

S12: Environment, Climate Change and the Paris Agreement (Date: TBC)

Textbook. Chapter 21. Firms and Environments by Gerald F. Davis

Chapter 29. Technology and the Economy by Giovanni Dosi, Luigi Orsenigo, and Mauro Sylos Labini

Chapter 30. The Economy and the Environment by Allan Schnaiberg

CNBC: What is carbon trading? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQSaoPPe2F0>.

HKEX Launches Core Climate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHxG7u8jxGo>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHFEzvP9vtg>.

Bloomberg, HKEX Chairman on Asia's Low-Carbon Economy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqRgKp-7OPk>.

Chen, Ling, and Jin Sun. 2023. [Trans-Governmental Normative Orders: Chinese Central-Local Relations in the Pilot Carbon Emissions Trading Scheme](#). *Journal of Public Administration (in Chinese)* 91(1): 144-160.

Voigt, Christina and John Knox. 2020. Introduction to Symposium on Climate Change Litigation in the Global South, *American Journal of International Law (AJIL) Unbound*, Volume 114, 35-39.

Case 12: sustainable travel and low-carbon tourism in Southeast Asia

Sun (2025), Chapter 12-14.

S13: Final Group Presentation on ESG/SDGs/Financial Capitalism (Date: TBC) ##