HUMA1000A Cultures and Values: Language, Communication, and Society
SPRING 2024 Course Outline (Subject to changes)

Lecturing faculty:
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Course Description:
When we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the “human essence,” the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man. - Noam Chomsky

Languages are considered complex repositories of cultures, where meanings are created and articulated, verbally and non-verbally, about the artefacts, norms, beliefs, and values of cultures¹. Language use, an integral part of human communication, mirrors the inextricably entangled psychological, social, and cultural facets of human cognition and interaction. Building upon a fundamental exploration of the nature of human language, this course will delve into the closely interlinked notions of language, communication and society as manifested in our daily life, in the context of globalization and increasing border-crossing and intercultural exchanges. Through a lingua-cultural lens, we will probe a range of issues rooted in language and culture: language and thought; identities, self and ‘othering’; cultural diversity in verbal and nonverbal communication; language, gender and sexuality; popular culture and global cultural flow; language and power; globalization and language planning and policy in different cultural contexts. Through discussions of such, the course aims to cultivate an appreciation and respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, communicative sensitivity, and social equality.

Course highlights:
• 3-credit HUMA common core course with no exam but one essay, Canvas online peer discussion, and two lecture quizzes.
• Learn how to convince others in writing.
• Learn more about three specific values: language, communication and society.

The objectives of the course are two-fold:

¹ See, for instance, Sorrells, K., 2020.
(1) For communicative capacity building through humanities knowledge and
(2) For enrichment of values and perspectives corresponding to the mission and vision of UST.

The course encompasses three *interrelated* strands of learning:
a) Lectures on specific humanities perspective and values;
b) Writing workshops to sharpen communication skills for the essay; and
c) Canvas online discussion for exchange and comments among peers on lectures and essays.

### Assessment:

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<th>Lecture quiz</th>
<th>Canvas online discussion</th>
<th>Writing workshops: Online activities</th>
<th>Writing workshops: Classroom sessions</th>
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<td>Lecture quiz</td>
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<td>Multiple choice questions</td>
<td>Peer exchange forum on questions and issues pertinent to lectures &amp; weekly readings; Three deadlines over the process of the discussion; topics given by each would be closed afterwards – see “Grade Scheme for Canvas Discussion” for details.</td>
<td>View online content and complete all quizzes on Canvas;</td>
<td>Attend all five writing workshops on time. <strong>Attendance:</strong> Absence will be penalized if without justifications. Poor attendance will affect your final grade for the course.</td>
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Punctuality: You will be marked absent if late for more than 15 minutes.
- Complete all homework assignments on Canvas, including the draft essay.

4 Essay (including revision efforts)
- Write a persuasive essay of 1000 words;
- Which is revised at least once;
- Which shows evidence of response to feedback on your first draft. 50%

What students are expected to do:

Assigned readings for lectures: There are assigned readings for the lectures on the three values. Students should read them in order to follow the lectures. The lecture quizzes will test their comprehension of these readings and the lecture contents.

Participating in lectures and the quizzes: Lectures will introduce to students the basic concepts and theories regarding the three values: Language, Communication and Society. Students are expected to do the assigned readings, follow the lectures closely, and participate in activities during the lectures. They will need to connect what they learn in the lectures with what they do in the online discussion forum, the writing workshops, and the essay writing. This connection is graded. There are two quizzes to assess how much they have acquired from the assigned readings and the lectures.

The Writing Workshops: The Writing Workshops will be presented in two strands: online activities and classroom workshops. The online strand consists of four blocks of material, each of which contains tasks to check that you have understood the content. These blocks have been designed to prepare you for the five classroom writing workshops, held in alternate weeks. If you do not complete the online part of each workshop, you will not be prepared for the classroom part of the workshop and you will not gain the maximum benefit from the online discussions you have with your teacher.

So long as you work through the online activities of the workshop before you take part in the classroom workshop with your teacher at the scheduled workshop time, you can do the online work whenever and wherever you like. A detailed schedule of the classroom workshops is available on Canvas. The writing workshop part of HUMA1000 has been completely redesigned by a team from the Center for Language Education, the Division of Humanities and CEI, the University’s specialist center for teaching and learning. Both strands of the workshops have been designed to help you write a good academic persuasive essay in response to one of the essay prompts given by the member of
HUMA faculty in charge of your lectures. You will need to make use of what you have learned from lectures and assigned readings in the writing workshops. Full details of the course structure and assessment will be given in the course orientation.

**Canvas online discussion:** Students will take part in online discussion forum on Canvas to exchange among their peers any feelings, ideas, and thoughts, in response to questions about the lectures and assigned readings as posted by the faculty. Questions are open-ended and there is no model answer to look for. The purposes are to exchange ideas, listen to others, and learn from each other.

**Term essay:** Each student will choose an essay topic from those prescribed and write a persuasive essay of around 1000 words in academic English. Students need to show in their essays that they have made use of what they have learned from the lectures and assigned readings. The first draft must be submitted on time by a prescribed deadline to ensure that students can receive timely feedback from their language instructor and be assessed on their efforts in the process of writing the essay. The final version of the essay must show evidence of revision in response to feedback from the language instructor. Essays must be submitted through the Canvas course site, which will be checked automatically through Turnititin both online and among peers. Please note that there is a policy on late submission. Further rubrics and guidelines about the class assessments and activities can be found in the course site on Canvas.

**Policy on use of GenAI:**
For our course assignments, including Workshop Homework, Final Essay and Canvas Online Discussion, we would adopt the policy of *restrict ways of using generative AI tools for assessment*: Generative AI may be used to find and evaluate sources of information, but must not be used to compose the essay or cited in the text or as an author of the text.

Please be reminded that the academic integrity policies and regulations remain unchanged.

**Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**
This course has defined “language and culture” as the specific aspect of humanities perspective to form the contents of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). Within this framework, three basic values will be explored: Language, Communication and Society.

- ILO#1: Communicate in writing persuasively and effectively.
- ILO#2: Demonstrate a humanities perspective in communication.
ILO#3: Question assertions related to humanities, especially culture and values.
ILO#4: Show appreciation of different views and contribute to constructive feedback.
ILO#5: Apply existing empirical and logical skills to make independent judgments about personal values and priorities.
ILO#6: Appreciate the complexity of: Language, Communication and Society

Course Schedule and Readings (*Subject to changes*)

(Note: Lecture attendance will be taken randomly **three times** in a form of in-class activity, e.g., through iPRS. There will be 1 point awarded for each and in total 3 points.)

**Week 1 – NO lecture**

**Week 2 – February 5, 2024**
Course Introduction: Overview of the course and topics to be covered, with a brief mention of the issues, activities, and expectations.

**Week 3 – February 12, 2024**
NO lecture – Lunar New Year.

**Week 4 – February 19, 2024**
Language being ‘Human’: Nature and psychology of human language.

*Required Readings:*

*Supplementary Readings:*

**Week 5 – February 26, 2024**
Language being symbolic and representational: Language and thought; language and power.

*Required Readings:*
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/29/magazine/29language-t.html?_r=0


**Supplementary Readings:**

**Week 6 – March 4, 2024**

**Language and belonging:** Language, culture, and identity.

**Required Readings:**

**In-class Viewing (Selections):**

**Supplementary Readings:**

**Week 7 – March 11, 2024**

**Verbal communication:** Cultural variations of communication styles, speech functions, and linguistic politeness.

**Required Readings:**

**Supplementary Readings:**

**Supplementary viewing:**

**Week 8 – March 18, 2024**

**Language and social justice:** Language, gender and sexuality.
Required Readings:

Supplementary Readings:

Supplementary viewing:

Week 9 – March 25, 2024
Lecture Quiz I

Week 10 – April 8, 2024
Communication in a global context: Media, popular culture, and intercultural communication.

Required Readings:

Supplementary Readings:


Week 11 – April 15, 2024
Language and society: Culture, identity and language policy - the case of Singapore.

Required Readings:

Supplementary Readings:

**Week 12 – April 22, 2024**

**Language and society:** Linguistic landscape in global cities.

**Required Readings:**

**Week 13 – April 29, 2024**

**Language and society:** Culture, identity, and language policy in Hong Kong

**Required Readings:**

**Supplementary Readings:**

**Week 14 – May 6, 2024**

**Lecture Quiz II**

**Supplementary resources if you are interested to explore further:**
