The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	ELC2S03
Subject Title	Persuasive digital storytelling: small charities big impacts
Credit Value	3
Level	2
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	NIL
Objectives	The objectives of this subject are to: 1. Introduce to students the concept and practice of service learning 2. Raise students' awareness of social issues in underserved communities and educate them on the challenges and needs of these communities 3. Enable students to use narratives, in print and in digital format, as a persuasion tool 4. Enhance students' generic competencies of innovative problem solving, communication and teamwork 5. Nurture students' sense of social awareness, responsibility and engagement
Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: a. Link their service-learning activities and experiences with the academic content of the subject b. Employ language delivered in multimodal forms to influence opinions and behaviours c. Apply the fundamentals of storytelling principles and create a digital documentary that persuasively tells the stories of service recipients d. Apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in university education to deal with complex issues in the service setting e. Work effectively in teams to solve problems encountered in planning and delivering the service f. Communicate effectively with clients and/or other stakeholders g. Demonstrate empathy for people in need and a sense of civic responsibility h. Reflect on their role and responsibilities both as a professional in their chosen discipline and as a responsible citizen

Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	The topics in the course syllabus cover three major areas:
	
	1. Concept and Practice of Service Learning:
	   a. Principles, concepts and myths of service learning
	   b. Benefits of service learning to students, the University and the community
	   c. Ethical issues in service learning
	   d. Basic concepts and theories of social problems, developments and justice
	   e. Social responsibilities of global citizens as intellectuals and professionals
	   f. Proper attitudes and behaviours in service delivery
	   g. Developing a service project proposal/plan
	   h. Effective team work and problem solving skills in service-learning projects
	   i. Reflection as a tool for learning
	
	2. Discipline-Specific Concepts, Issues and Skills
	   a. What is persuasive narration? Who needs it?
	   b. Stories sell: how stories are used in job interviews, advertisements and politicians' speeches
	   c. How the media shape perception
	   d. Fundamental principles of good storytelling
	   e. Embedding messages in stories to influence behaviours
	   f. Developing a storyboard
	   g. Ethics in telling service stories
	   h. Importance of credibility and fact-checking
	   i. Choosing a good story: how to research, pitch, and interview sources
	   j. Power of language: ethos, pathos, logos
	   k. Power of language: writing profiles and invitation letters of support
	   l. Filming and editing skills
	   m. Use of multimedia: employing visuals, audios, captions, and effects to persuade
	   n. Gift of one's voice: narrating stories
	
	3. Project-Specific Concepts, Issues and Skills
	   a. Understanding the historical, cultural, and socio-political background of the targeted clients/underprivileged communities
	   b. Health, safety and other issues relevant to the service project
	   c. Moral and ethical concerns specific to the project and beneficiaries

Teaching/Learning Methodology	This subject is offered two times a year and comprises lectures, seminars, consultations and a service component. When the subject is run in semester 1, the service takes place in the winter semester break. When the subject is offered in semester 2, the service will take place in semester 3. Teaching and learning activities will be spread across the two semesters. The duration of service period depends on the exact service location. Students serving clients in HK will deliver the service on weekday evenings or at weekends in the proceeding semester after receiving 26-hour input

from subject lecturers. After the filming students will have three weeks to edit their documentaries.   Students serving clients outside HK will need to attend an intensive off-shore service trip lasting between 8 and 14 days during the semester break or summer semester.

The service component is the focus of the subject. Students are required to render a 40-hour active partnership service for small-scale social enterprises in Hong Kong or in a developing country. They are required to collaborate with our partner social enterprises and co-create contents of an "advocacy package" which helps enhance the organisations' profile and receive support from target audience. This service includes two levels of work: a) production of an "advocacy package"; and b) training for social enterprise staff and/or local community members to effectively use the package materials to achieve the set goals.

The advocacy package will comprise:
- A 4-5 minute digital documentary (DD) that tells a service story of our partner social enterprises in an informative and compelling way
- A narrative text written to accompany the DD
- A proposal that advises the social enterprise how to make the best use of the DD and to whom the DD would appeal

During the 40-hour service period, students will perform the following tasks at different times:
- Assist service partners and render direct service to their aid recipients. The service nature ranges from teaching, visiting the elderly, to leading interest group activities for aid recipients, depending on our partners' service nature (about 15 service hours)
- Conduct filming and interviews with service partners and/or aid recipients for the DD (about 15 service hours)
- Train service partners how to effectively use the advocacy package to appeal support from potential donor agencies (about 10 service hours).

Lectures: All the topics in the indicative syllabus, including basic concepts and principles of service-learning, will be presented in lectures led by ELC academic staff. The lectures will also equip students with the discipline-specific knowledge and skills required for planning and delivering the service. Other than ELC academic staff, whenever possible outside speakers from NGOs and former students who have taken the subject will be invited to share their knowledge about and experience of working with the service recipients.

Seminars and consultation hours: Students will be required to complete assigned reading/ tasks and discuss/present it/them in seminars. They will discuss their advocacy package under-design with subject lecturers during consultation hours and feedback will be provided accordingly.

E-learning module: Students are required to complete the e-learning module developed by ELC. Its contents function to supplement the lecture

contents with specific reference to the following areas: a) what is service-learning; b) ethics in telling service stories; c) samplers of digital documentaries; d) reflection as a learning tool.

Reflection: Students will be required to write reflective journals/reports both <u>before</u> and <u>after</u> the service component to demonstrate their ability to: (a) link their service learning experiences with the academic focus/discipline-specific content of the subject, (b) reflect on their service-learning experience to identify their learning gains as well as areas for future improvements, (c) reflect on their roles and social responsibilities.

To guide students in using reflection as a tool for learning, and to assess their ability in achieving the above learning objectives, reflection and review sessions will be held both <u>during</u> and <u>after</u> the service-learning project. Experts and facilitators from outside the subject-offering department (e.g. Service-Learning and Leadership Office, NGOs) may be invited to contribute to some of these sessions as appropriate.

| **Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes** | |

Students' performance in this subject will be assessed using a letter-grading system in accordance with the University's convention from grade F (failure) to A+. The relative weighting of the different assessment components is as follows:

Specific assessment methods/ tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed							
		A	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
e-learning module (individual)	Pass/ Fail			✓			✓	✓	✓
Persuasive writing in advocacy package (individual)	10%	✓	✓						
Advocacy package: proposal presentation (individual)	20%		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Performance at service (Individual)	10%				✓	✓	✓	✓	
Final advocacy package (group)	30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Reflective journals/reports (individual)	15%x2	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total	100%								

<u>Students must obtain a pass in all of the components in order to pass the subject</u>.

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

The e-Learning module contains video lectures developed by ELC. Students are required to watch the videos and complete the accompanied learning tasks before attending the lectures. Post –viewing discussions will take place in class to assess if students can critically analyse the essential elements of a digital documentary (ILOc), appreciate the importance of ethics when composing a digital documentary (ILO f and g) for their clients, and develop an awareness of what quality reflection constitutes (ILOh).

Students will be asked to develop sample invitation letters of support, and follow-up email/ letters, which contribute to part of the contents of the advocacy package. These documents will demonstrate students' ability to apply the persuasive skills acquired in the subject (ILO a and b).

Before embarking on the service, students need to present their advocacy package persuasively to subject lecturers and justify its suitability for the clients. This presentation will demonstrate students' ability to work effectively in teams to solve problems in planning for the service (ILO e), and to apply their discipline-specific as well as other knowledge and skills (ILO b and c) to deal with issues and problems in the service settings (ILO d).

When students are rendering service at the service site, ELC subject lecturers will evaluate their performance, attitude demonstrated, degree of engagement with service recipients, as well as collaboration with other students. These all serve as indicators of their ability to communicate effectively with clients and stakeholders (ILO e and f), their sense of civic responsibility, professional ethics and their empathy for people in need (ILO g), and their ability to work collaboratively to apply their knowledge and skills to deal with real problems in the service setting (ILO d).

The final advocacy package is a group assessment and should be submitted three weeks after the filming. While finalizing the package, students should collect feedback from clients and incorporate it in their final output (ILO f). Students need to work as a team and apply skills acquired at the university to address challenges in preparing the final advocacy package (ILO d and e), which should also demonstrate their ability in linking the service experience and the academic contents of the subject (ILO a, b, c).

Students need to submit two pieces of reflective writings, one after the proposal presentation and another after the service component. The first writing expects students to reflect on their group collaboration and project development experiences [ILO d and e]. The other writing assesses their ability to link service learning and the academic content of the subject (ILO a), their ability to evaluate their performance in the service project (ILO d, e, f), their empathy for the less fortunate people in the society (ILO g), and their ability to reflect on their role and responsibilities in the society (ILO h).

Student study effort expected	e-Learning Module	10 hours
	Class Contact	
	• Discipline-related lectures and seminars	26 hours
	• Project-specific consultation	5 hours
	• Pre-service training workshops	5 hours
	Other student study effort:	
	• Readings, self-study, and planning and preparation for the service project	30 hours
	• Direct rendering of service	40 hours
	• Reflection and review	15 hours
	Total student study effort	131 hours
Reading list and references	References: Anderson, L., Griffin, K., Hartley, S (2013). *Unsung Heroes Cambodia: People and Projects Making a Difference.* Cambodia: Unsung Heroes. Breuer, I. & Napthine, M. (2009). *Insight: Persuasive Language in Media Text.* Australia: Hyde Park Press. Cress, C.M., Collier, P.J. & Reitenauer, V.L. (2005). *Learning Through Serving: A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines.* Stylus Publishing. Croteau, D. & Hoynes, W. (2014). *Media/ Society: Industries, Images and Audiences.* California: Sage. NGO Education Partnership (2011). *2010 education NGO report.* Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Author. Takeda, N. (2015). *Perspective on Teaching English at an NGO in Cambodia.* TESOL Press. Recommended readings: Adams, M., Blumenfeld, W., Castañeda, C.R., Hackman, H.W., Peters, M.L., Zúñiga, X. (Ed.) (2010*). Readings for Diversity and Social Justic*e. Routledge. Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights. (2006*). Draft law on associations and NGOs: Cambodian civil society under threat.* Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Author. Johnson, A. (2005). *Privilege, Power, and Difference.* McGraw-Hill. Sen, A. (2011). *The Idea of Justice.* Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Sandel, M.J. (2010). *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do*? Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Sandel, M.J. (2012). *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux.