

Communication-intensive Course Syllabus Statement

RECO2025: Surveying Studio 1



This is a certified Communication-intensive (CI) Course which meets all of the requirements endorsed by HKU's Senate, including

- the teaching and assessment of oral, written and visual communication 'literacies'; and
- at least 40% of the course grade assigned to communication-rich assessment tasks.

What communication knowledge and skills will students learn in this course?

This Surveying Studio course is an interactive PBL course in the BSc Surveying programme that is designed to train students to be more articulate in making oral communications, visual presentations, as well as composing text-based written professional reports, to convey their professional views and judgements pertaining to land use and construction issues in a sensible and logical way, to various categories of audience including their own peers, teaching staff, and their potential supervisors and clients in the future. They will also learn the inter-personal skills of communication with their teammates through their officially scheduled meetings, their own after-class meetings, and in coordinating among themselves in terms of division of labour and peer-assisted learning activities. In addition, students will learn to compose professional reports pertaining to urban development issues in terms of format, professionalism, structure of arguments as well as presentation format of such written reports. More importantly, students will also be able to learn various graphic presentation skills including design and building software, presentation software, and development appraisal software.

How will students learn these?

Both Surveying Studio 1 and Surveying Studio 2 courses adopt **problem-based learning** as their primary pedagogy because many of the skills mentioned above (thinking, learning, teamwork, and communication) are best acquired not through passively listening and remembering, but through engaging in ill-structured or open-ended problems, and through different role-playing activities in structured weekly discussions. The role of teachers, who are actually "facilitators," is to support this learning process by stretching students' thinking through encouragement (e.g. when students lack confidence) and intervention (e.g. when students are complacent). Facilitators can offer minimal guidance as necessary (e.g. by posing questions or providing additional learning resources), but should not solve the problem for students. For more technical problems, experts in the relevant field may be invited to give a lecture to the whole class.

More specifically, students learn to enhance their oral skills through constant practice of discussions through the structured weekly studio meetings with their peer students, guided by teaching staff as facilitator. Facilitators will take up various roles in the scenarios with different hypothetical questions aiming at stimulating lateral thinking among students. Oral communication skills are also enhanced through

their student-led after class meetings among themselves to prepare for the next week's meeting. Visual literacy skills are learned through faculty-based teaching resources such as Lynda.com etc. and the collaborative work among students to complete the studio tasks which usually require both text and graphic information. In addition, oral and visual literacy skills are learned through students' presentation of their findings at the end of the semester as well as their ability to defend their arguments in the post-presentation Q&A session. For writing skills, students have full access to previous years' studio reports and assignments and facilitators may guide students to learn the best practice from senior students.

What does a good communicator look like in this course?

A good communicator in the Surveying Studio courses should possess the following attributes:

1. Articulation in making an argument or opinion verbally, graphically and in texts
2. Ability to absorb, collate, organize and summarize the views presented by other students
3. Ability to lead the discussion and to create an interactive and collaborative environment without dominating the dialogue
4. Ability to defend one's stance while showing willingness to accept other perspectives
5. Ability to argue with substantiated logic and reasoning