

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS IN CHINA DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
(MACHDS)**

*(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)*

*These regulations apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Arts in China Development Studies in the academic year 2021-22 and thereafter.*

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

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**Admission requirements**

MCDS 1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Arts in China Development Studies, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
- (b) shall hold a Bachelor's degree of this University or a qualification of equivalent standard from this University or another university or comparable institution accepted for this purpose;
- (c) for a candidate who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification from a university or comparable institution outside Hong Kong of which the language of teaching and/or examination is not English, shall satisfy the University English language requirement applicable to higher degrees as prescribed under General Regulation G2(b); and
- (d) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MCDS 2. An application for exemption from the above requirements shall be considered on a case by case basis.

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**Qualifying examination**

MCDS 3.

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test candidates' formal academic ability or the candidates' ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
  - (b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.
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**Award of degree**

MCDS 4. To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in China Development Studies, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
  - (b) shall complete the curriculum and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.
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## **Period of study**

MCDS 5. The curriculum shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study. Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or four academic years of part-time study, unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

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## **Completion of curriculum**

MCDS 6. To complete the curriculum, candidates (either full-time or part-time)

- (a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
  - (b) shall complete a total of 60 credits of courses, i.e.  
For non-dissertation option – 18 credits of compulsory courses + 36 credits of elective courses + 6 credits of capstone experience course (i.e. “Research methods and directed project in China development studies”);  
For dissertation option – 18 credits of compulsory courses + 24 credits of elective courses + 18 credits of capstone experience courses (i.e. “Research methods and directed project in China development studies” and “Dissertation in China development studies”)
  - (c) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work; and
  - (d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of assessment (including coursework and oral examination).
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## **Dissertation**

MCDS 7. Subject to the provisions of Regulation MCDS 6(b), this regulation is applicable only to the students who choose the “dissertation option”

- (a) for the full-time study, the title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than April 30 of that academic year;
  - (b) for the part-time study, the title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than April 30 in the candidates’ final year of study; and
  - (c) both full-time and part-time candidates shall submit a statement declaring that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.
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## **Course selection**

MCDS 8.

- (a) For candidates under the one-year full-time mode of study:
    - (i) those who follow the non-dissertation option are required to take at least 24 and not more than 36 credits of courses in the first semester, and the remaining 24 to 36 credits of courses in the second semester; or
    - (ii) those who follow the dissertation option are required to take at least 30 and not more than 36 credits in the first semester, and the remaining 24 or 30 credits of courses (including the dissertation) in the second semester.
  - (b) For candidates under the two-year part-time mode of study:
    - (i) those who follow the non-dissertation option are required to take at least 30 and not more than 36 credits of courses in the first year of study, and the remaining 30 or 24 credits of courses in the second year of study; or
    - (ii) those who follow the dissertation option are required to take at least 30 and not more than 36 credits of courses in the first year of study, and the remaining 24 or 30 credits of courses (including the dissertation) in the second year of study.
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## Assessment

MCDS 9. Candidates shall be assessed for each of the courses for which they have registered, and assessment may be conducted in any combination of continuous assessment of coursework, written examinations and/or any other assessable activities. Only passed courses will earn credits.

MCDS 10. Candidates shall not be permitted to repeat a course for which they have received a passing grade for the purpose of upgrading.

MCDS 11. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at their first attempt in not more than two courses, not including the dissertation, in an academic year may be permitted to make up for the failed course(s) in the following manner:

- (a) undergoing re-assessment/re-examination in the failed course to be held on a specified date not less than two months and not more than twelve months after publication of the results; or
- (b) re-submitting failed coursework, without having to repeat the same course of instruction; or
- (c) repeating the failed course by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessments; or
- (d) for elective courses, taking another course in lieu and satisfying the assessment requirements.

MCDS 12. Candidates who have presented an unsatisfactory dissertation in an academic year may be permitted to revise and re-submit the dissertation within a specified period of not less than two months and not more than twelve months after publication of the results.

MCDS 13. Candidates who

- (a) have failed to satisfy the examiners at the first attempt in three or more courses, not including the dissertation, in an academic year; or
  - (b) have failed to satisfy the examiners in any course(s) or the dissertation at the second attempt; or
  - (c) are not permitted to present themselves for re-assessment/re-examination in any failed course(s) or to repeat the failed course(s) or take another course in lieu; or
  - (d) are not permitted to revise and re-submit the dissertation which they have presented and failed to satisfy the examiners; or
  - (e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration
- may be required to discontinue their studies.

MCDS 14. Candidates who are unable because of their illness to be present at the written examination of any course may apply for permission to present themselves for a supplementary examination of the same course, which shall be held at a time to be determined by the Board of examiners. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within two weeks of the first day of the candidate's absence from any examination. Candidates who fail to satisfy the examiners in the supplementary examination shall be considered as failure at the first attempt.

MCDS 15. There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

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## **Grading system**

MCDS 16. Individual courses shall be graded according to the following grading system:

<i>Grade</i>		<i>Standard</i>	<i>Grade Point</i>
A+	}	Excellent	4.3
A			4.0
A-			3.7
B+	}	Good	3.3
B			3.0
B-			2.7
C+	}	Satisfactory	2.3
C			2.0
C-			1.7
D+	}	Pass	1.3
D			1.0
F		Fail	0

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### **Classification of awards**

MCDS 17. On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diploma.

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## **SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CHINA DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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### **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum provides an opportunity to local and international students for systematic training and independent research on development issues in contemporary China.

Candidates are required to complete a total of 60 credits either

- (a) a total of 3 compulsory courses (6 credits each), 6 elective courses (6 credits each) and the capstone experience course "GEOG7136 Research methods and directed project in China development studies" (6 credits) for the "non-dissertation" option; or
- (b) a total of 3 compulsory courses (6 credits each), 4 elective courses (6 credits each) and the two capstone experience courses "GEOG7136 Research methods and directed project in China development studies" (6 credits) and "GEOG7122 Dissertation in China development studies" (12 credits) for the "dissertation" option.

An adequate number of elective courses will be offered to students in each academic year. Each course entails one session of two lecture hours per week over one semester.

### ***Compulsory Courses***

Candidates shall complete all of the following three courses:

GEOG7101. The Chinese economies: location, transformation, and integration (6 credits)

GEOG7120. Urban China: cultural basis and contemporary issues (6 credits)

GEOG7128. Geography of international trade and FDI in China (6 credits)

### ***Elective Courses***

Candidates shall complete either six (non-dissertation option) or four (dissertation option) of the following courses:

GEOG7116. China field trip (6 credits)

GEOG7117. Public policies and regional development (6 credits)

GEOG7124. Globalization and spatial economic transformation in China (6 credits)

GEOG7126. Cultural tourism in Hong Kong, Macau and South China (6 credits)

GEOG7129. Climate change, environmental resources and human carrying capacity in China (6 credits)

GEOG7137. Land and housing in China (6 credits)

GEOG7140. China: Environment and Sustainable Development (6 credits)

GEOG7141. Politics of contemporary China (6 credits)

### ***Capstone Experience Courses***

Candidates opt for either dissertation or non-dissertation option shall complete the following compulsory course:

GEOG7136. Research methods and directed project in China development studies (6 credits)

Candidates opt for dissertation option shall also be required to complete the following compulsory course:

GEOG7122. Dissertation in China development studies (12 credits)

The schedule for the teaching of courses conforms to the dates of semesters of the Faculty of Social Sciences. Courses will be examined by a combination of coursework assessment and a written examination, normally held at the end of the semester, or by coursework assessment alone.

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

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### ***Compulsory Courses***

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#### **GEOG7101. The Chinese economies: location, transformation, and integration (6 credits)**

This course provides an overview of the location, transformation, and integration of regional economies in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau. Major theoretical perspectives are introduced to explain the growth dynamics of the Chinese economies, the shifting spatial distribution of economic activities and their outward direct investment flows across the globe.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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#### **GEOG7120. Urban China: cultural basis and contemporary issues (6 credits)**

China is experiencing rapid urbanisation and profound urban change, which can be viewed as reflecting the transformation of the society as a whole. In this course we will disentangle the different facets of urbanisation in order to understand the processes, outcomes and related problems. We analyse the cultural basis of contemporary Chinese cities by looking into the pre-socialist and socialist legacies, the dynamic institutional setup, and the influences of international urbanism and consumption culture. This is a course in human geography that understands cities as economic, social and cultural spatial systems within a broader context. The purpose of the course is to help students understand these systems, including their origins and transformations, and what they mean for China and for the rest of the world. It offers a detailed empirical view of China's urbanization and a rigorous

conceptual understanding of city development through close readings of key works in the field of Chinese urban geography and urban studies.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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**GEOG7128. Geography of international trade and FDI in China (6 credits)**

This course introduces students with the changing paradigms in theorization of international trade and FDI (foreign direct investment) as well as its profound implications to this globalizing world and China. The impact of foreign trade and investment on China's regional economic development is also discussed.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

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*Elective Courses*

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**GEOG7116. China field trip (6 credits)**

This programme-based field trip is designed to provide opportunities for students to examine first hand development issues and problems in China. Students are encouraged to incorporate what they have learned from the field trip into their dissertations or directed projects.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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**GEOG7117. Public policies and regional development (6 credits)**

This is a seminar-type course about the concepts, theories, and practices of regional development. Course contents include the changing interpretations of the meanings of regional development; key policy issues in the practice of regional development such as central-local relations, transnational capital, global production networks, old industrial region revitalization, metropolitan development, industrial clusters, innovation and learning regions; and different approaches to regional development in selected world regions including North America, Western Europe, East Asia and China. The objective is to assist students to develop critical thinking in the evaluation of different perspectives and competing interpretations about the nature and dynamics of public policy and regional development in different historical and geographic contexts.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

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**GEOG7124. Globalization and spatial economic transformation in China (6 credits)**

This course emphasizes on the combination of theory and practical knowledge and skill, aiming to help students develop perspectives for analyzing the interplay between China's spatial development and globalization. The objectives are to enhance students' comprehensive ability of critical thinking and problem solving skills, as well as their ability of identifying, examining, and judging business opportunity and challenges as well as problems in the face of globalization era. First, we will examine how China has been increasingly integrated with the world economy and become globalizing. Second, by investigating into important issues such as China's outward investments in Africa and Latin America, we ask how the rise of China as global economic power is reshaping the landscape of the world economy. Important globalization theories and theories of China's post-Mao development will be introduced and examined critically throughout the semester. We will re-think the role China plays in connecting with the world and the impact of globalization on China's ever changing spatial economic development. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to share their first-hand experience on the transformation of the Chinese economy.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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### **GEOG7126. Cultural tourism in Hong Kong, Macau and South China (6 credits)**

Cultural tourism offers a promising alternative to conventional tourism development, which also contributes to the preservation of the heritage and customs of the place. This course arouses students' interests in exploring the rapid development of cultural tourism in Hong Kong, Macau and the South China region. This course has three main objectives. First, it aims to introduce the development and characteristics of cultural tourism in Hong Kong, Macau and South China regions. Second, the course aims to let students understand the unique mixed cultural and urban features in the region. Third, the course prompts students to have an awareness on the sustainable management of heritages in Hong Kong, Macau and South China regions. The course examines the dynamic relationship among conservation, sustainable management, social and cultural factors, stakeholders' interests, tourism marketing and development trends, with various lectures, fieldworks and selected case study projects.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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### **GEOG7129. Climate change, environmental resources and human carrying capacity in China (6 credits)**

The course introduces the concept of human carrying capacity in China. The capacity symbolizes the balance between population size and environmental resources. In Chinese history, it is shown that the human carrying capacity was periodically shrunk by climate deterioration and human-induced environmental degradation, resulting in catastrophic social consequences such as wars, population collapses and even dynastic changes. Based upon the lessons of the past, together with recent trends in climate change and social development, the human carrying capacity in contemporary China will be systematically examined. Some controversial issues related to man-environment interaction will also be discussed.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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### **GEOG7137. Land and housing in China (6 credits)**

The general aim of this course is to highlight and explain the roles of land governance and housing provision for the development of China. It will introduce land as a key resource and explain the fundamental changes both of land use and land management in China. In view of rapid urbanisation, special attention will be paid to the conversion of farm and rural land into built-up and urban land. Land policies profoundly influence the economic, environmental and social development of the country. This is discussed in the context of the so-called new urbanisation policies and the paradigm of sustainable development. Within the development process, the provision of quantitatively and qualitatively sufficient housing is essential for the social development and political stability of the country. Housing supply is therefore a major, although not the only, driving force of land development. The course analyses the roles of the state, the real estate industry and individuals in housing provision and governance. It views housing not just as a physical shelter, but also as a home and part of a broader neighbourhood.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **GEOG7140. China: Environment and Sustainable Development (6 credits)**

Due to its geographic characteristics and its large population, China is prone to natural resources degradation. Environmental problems have been accelerated by the rapid economic growth of recent years, high intensity of energy use, particularly in the industrial sector, and economic and pricing policies that have not taken into account the intrinsic value of resources. These factors combine to cause over-exploitation of natural resources. To critically analyze China's development, this course comprises three main parts. Following the introduction, Part I provides an overview of the state of the country's natural environment. Part II focuses on the institution, legislative and administrative framework for environment protection and nature conservation. Finally, Part III discusses the government's strategy

for the environment and sustainable development as stipulated in recent Five-Year plans and China's Agenda 21.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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### **GEOG7141. Politics of contemporary China (6 credits)**

This course examines the ideology, institutions, and processes of the contemporary Chinese political system and offers a critical assessment of the social, economic and political changes unfolding in China. The Chinese Communist revolution in 1949 has profound repercussions for China and the world community. The first three decades of the People's Republic of China were characterized by drastic socio-economic transformation and political mobilization initiated by Mao Zedong. China's post-Mao leaders have not only abandoned Mao's radicalism, but also attempted to reform the socialist economic and political systems and open up the country to the outside world. China's reform policy since 1978 has produced major achievements in a variety of areas, despite periodic disruptions and continuing difficulties in some sectors. China's recent economic development and growing role in international affairs have attracted worldwide attention. Studying China's governance will constitute a key issue on the scholarly and policy agendas of many countries for years to come.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

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### *Capstone Experience Courses*

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### **GEOG7122. Dissertation in China development studies (12 credits)**

The dissertation shall be a structured presentation of findings of guided independent research on a topic which addresses a topic of China's development issues. The topic shall be chosen by the candidate and the dissertation shall be 10,000-20,000 words. Candidates are expected to present the dissertation orally in the Contemporary China Seminars series and in written form as well. The date for submitting the dissertation would be announced at the start of the first year of study (for full-time candidates) or at the start of the final year of study (for part-time candidates).

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### **GEOG7136. Research methods and directed project in China development studies (6 credits)**

This is a course on the nature and methods of research in social, economic, and spatial developments in China. Topics to be covered will include the identification of research problems, preparation of a research proposal, formulation of research questions and research hypotheses, collection of data from various sources, critical assessment of the data collected from China, different techniques of data analysis, and presentation of research findings. The purpose is to introduce to students a workable framework for independent research and to demonstrate how statistical techniques could be utilized to solve various research problems concerning China's economic growth and spatial transformation, through the writing of a directed project.

Assessment: 100% coursework

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### *Additional Pedagogic Requirements*

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#### **Contemporary China Seminars**

Candidates will be required to attend a series of seminars to be offered by scholars, Government officers, and business elites from Hong Kong, Mainland China and overseas on the development issues in contemporary China. They may also be required to present findings from their independent



dissertation research in the seminar series. Attendance in the seminars is required.

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### **Coursework**

Candidates must satisfy the examiners in coursework assessment for each of the courses taken. The assessment of coursework will include written assignments, candidates' seminar presentations, their role as discussants in other candidates' seminars, their general contribution to seminars, and other relevant activities, including field trips.

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