



**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
AY2025/2026 Term 1**

**Course Code** IDIS110  
**Course Title** Social Science Practicum

**Date, Time and Venue**  
G01 Time and Venue to be confirmed

**Instructor** George WONG  
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**Teaching Assistants (TAs)**  
G01 To be confirmed

**PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S):**  
There is no pre-requisite for this course.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Please check with your respective Schools on your eligibility and what credits you can clear this as for this module if you considering taking it as an elective. But if you are seeing this syllabus in your bidding system, there is a very good chance you are eligible to bid for it.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**



**Welcome to IDIS110, Social Science Practicum!**

My name is George, and I will be your instructor for this semester. This course is a unique opportunity for students to explore what applying their social sciences knowledge and skills can look like in a real-world setting. It is designed for students to apply their social science education in tackling a real-world problem and contribute to social impact in Singapore.

The goal is to allow students to appreciate and navigate the practical realities of social sciences with industry partners, helping you develop practical experiences as budding social sciences practitioners on the ground. As part of the course curriculum, students will also learn practical theories, skills and acquire proficiency in tools that can help them manage industry expectations.

This semester's theme is titled **Exploring Placemaking with Local Communities**. We will be learning how place-based social engagements and investments can have massive positive outcomes and impact for local communities and stakeholders. This is highly relevant for Singapore's context as a city-state, where our "smallness" and proximity becomes a potential catalyst for good.

We are privileged to be working with **PlayPan**, an award-winning social movement that champions for thought leaders and changemakers to play and do good together. PlayPan's is also well known for making social impact through placemaking, and now calls the Glass Dome at Far East Square, home.

Students will work in groups to address problems designed by the instructors and PlayPan to provide insightful, creative and practical solutions to advance the organisation's goals and social engagements. The content output developed during the Social Science Practicum will contribute to publication content for PlayPan as a form of service learning impact. More details will be provided.

## COURSE GOALS

A unique feature of this course is its **Pass/Fail design**. This is implemented to allow students experiment with different ways of completing their assignments without fear of being penalised. Creativity needs to be tampered by learning experiences in practice, and this course aims to do just that.

What this means is that **the motivation to learn must come from you**, the student. Each and every of us will have different expectations and journeys in this class, and the goal is not to compare our contributions across each other, but with yourself. My goal as the instructor to help you discover and develop into better version of yourself through a practical experience, so focus on that as your personal impact ☺

Another unique feature of this course is in combining your social sciences knowledge, skills and aptitude with strategic approaches to help sharpen your practice effectively. To do that, you will be introduced to eight major approaches that have become central to impact design:

1. Collaborative Thinking
2. Cognitive and Emotional Empathy
3. Community Growth Mindset
4. System Thinking
5. Design Thinking
6. Divergent Thinking
7. Social Innovation
8. Communicative Strategies

We will explore how these approaches are rooted in both our work in the social sciences as well as within the impact space, allowing you to connect your work as soon-to-be social science practitioners with your professional and personal aspirations in whatever fields you hope to be a part of. In each week's class, we will go through some of these approaches and how they can be effective for your practicum project in various ways.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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

- Appreciate the Social Sciences as a praxis-driven endeavour
- Apply Social Sciences knowledge and skills to frame real-world problems into actionable data for interdisciplinary analysis
- Design processes to effectively bring out the value of Social Sciences in action
- Collaborate with stakeholders to connect lived experiences and engagements with grounded and well-thought out solutions or insights in furthering positive impact

## **COURSE READINGS/SCHEDULE**

*NOTE: This syllabus may change slightly over the course of the term; when in doubt, please refer to the online version of this document (posted on eLearn) for the most updated version.*

Week 1 – Introduction and Meet the Partners

Week 2 – Placemaking: What's In A Word?

Week 3 – Collaborative Thinking & Cognitive and Emotional Empathy

**Week 4 – Project Development Workshop 1**

**Week 5 – System Thinking; Design Thinking; Divergent Thinking**

**Week 6 – Project Development Workshop 2**

**Week 7 – Community Growth Mindset**

**Week 8 – Recess Week**

**Week 9 – Social Innovation**

**Week 10 – Project Development Workshop 3**

**Week 11 – Communicative Strategies**

**Week 12 – Project Development Workshop 4**

**Week 13 – Showcase Finale**

## COURSE FORMAT

Classes take place weekly, and will be in one of two formats. During a regular class session, we will have seminar discussions and group activities that introduce you to the new concepts and skills of the week.

During Project Development Workshop (PDW) sessions, these are protected hours where your group can meet to advance your projects' needs. This will also be the time where I and/or the Project Partners (subject to schedule) will be available for consultation.

In certain PDW sessions, I will also invite guest speakers who will share about their experiences and journey with social impact from a place-making point of view. This is a valuable opportunity for you to learn from actual practitioners!

## ASSESSMENT MODE

The grading for this course is based on the following assessments:

- |                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| a) Class and Project Participation | : 30% |
| b) Analytical Memo (group)         | : 20% |
| c) Presentation and Poster         | : 30% |
| d) Reflection Video (Individual)   | : 20% |

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100%

### a. Class participation (30%)

Class participation consists of an individual component (15%), as well as a peer-review component (15%). Taken together, they will make up the full 30%.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the discussions and activities that take place before/in/after class. Good class participation involves actively listening to your instructor and other students during class, joining class discussions, asking questions which are thoughtful and helpful, and be an active team member during classroom group work. Merely speaking in class will not earn you full marks for class participation. To accommodate students with different styles of class participation, we have opened up a Telegram workspace for ease of participating (**Details on Telegram participation will be shared during class**).

Details will be made available in the first week. Using a smart device in class for non-class related activities however is a distraction for you and everyone else; this will negatively affect your class participation.

### b. Analytical Memo (20%)

In Week 10's session, students will write an analytical memo which draws from their findings and insights in addressing questions set by the Project Partners, as well as the content we have covered thus far. The analytical memo will be combined to form "Learning

Posters” that will be shared with the rest of the student community in SOSS. A guide will be provided at a later date, along with further instructions in class.

### **c. Presentation and Poster (30%)**

Students will work in their eventual groups to come up with a presentation deck to present to stakeholders at our Week 13 Showcase Finale.

Each group will be given 10 minutes to share their journey and answer to the problem statement they are tasked to work on. Students will also produce an insights poster (A0 sized) that comprises of their presentation insights, analytical memo data and details, as well as groups’ takeaways.

A guide will be provided at a later date.

### **d. Reflection Video (Individual) (20%)**

This reflection video exercise is a way to express your individual journeys during the Social Science Practicum. Students can choose one out of four questions to respond to, and record a 2 – 3 minutes video of their response. This can be done via any recording methods or platforms. Submission will be done via Elearn.

## **ASSIGNMENT FORMAT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

All written assignments are to be submitted in double-spaced typing, align to left, along with a total word count and a written anti-plagiarism declaration. There is a policy of zero tolerance for late submission (except in exceptional circumstances) and for non-submission of assignments.

## **SMU LIBRARIES - WHERE CAN I GET HELP FOR THIS COURSE (READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS)?**

### **a) Know your Librarians**

- Speak with your Librarians as they offer guidance and research consultations on how to find credible resources, do proper citations and many other helpful topics.

URL: <https://library.smu.edu.sg/services/services-undergraduate-students>

### **b) Self-Learn (elearn courses)**

- Learn how to create in-text citations, bibliographies or reference list in the Avoiding Plagiarism through the APA Citation course.
- Learn how to undertake academic research systematically and effectively, scope and create a research question in The Research Process course.

### **c) General Enquiries**

- Email: [library@smu.edu.sg](mailto:library@smu.edu.sg)
- Chat: [Ask Library](#)
- Digital Library: [library.smu.edu.sg](https://library.smu.edu.sg)

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's disability support team if you have questions or concerns about academic accommodations: [included@smu.edu.sg](mailto:included@smu.edu.sg).

Accessible tables in our seminar room are available for students who require them.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (EPTL)**

As part of emergency preparedness, Instructors may conduct lessons online via the WebEx platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the WebEx platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

## **COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT**

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