

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

CONS8120 Built Heritage and Its Significance (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the theories and practices of built heritage conservation. Students learn about the histories of the conservation movement in the local and global contexts and become familiar with terminologies and key concepts, such as conservation, restoration, historicity, authenticity, integrity, world heritage, shared heritage, intangible heritage, adaptive reuse, etc. Attention is paid to cross-cultural comparisons of different types and scales of built heritage and their associated social, cultural and economic values, with a particular focus on Hong Kong, Greater China and East and Southeast Asia. Case studies are used to illustrate the processes of understanding tangible and intangible values of heritage buildings, sites and landscapes, the relationship between natural and cultural heritage, as well as the growing importance of community engagement and heritage stewardship. Students are required to prepare a Statement of Significance as part of a conservation plan using a values-based assessment approach.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8103 Charters and Legislation of Conservation (6 credits)

This course introduces the guiding principles and legal framework for heritage conservation. Through lectures and case studies, students become familiar with the doctrines and terminologies of international charters and regional legislation and examine and assess their relevance and application in the contexts of Hong Kong, Greater China and East and Southeast Asia. Students learn how policies and legislation may support, assist and constrain the conservation of heritage and to critique the laws and their enforcement. The course also introduces the professional responsibilities and duties embedded in legal and policy frameworks and discusses ethical standards and codes of conduct related to cultural heritage management.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8124 Conservation and Assessment Techniques (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the techniques of documentation and assessment in heritage conservation. Students gain knowledge and experience in documenting a number of built heritage sites of different scales, typologies, and construction technologies. Through multiple visits, they learn how to produce records and communicate accurate observations in a precise format and repeatable method. The course also introduces the basic principles of material science and construction techniques, enabling students to determine the conditions of built heritage and make recommendations for their conservation. Students learn to produce a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) report as part of course requirements. (Note: this course includes multiple site visits).

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8117 Methods of Heritage Research and Interpretation (6 credits)

This course provides an introduction to the principles and methods of heritage research and interpretation. The course is organized around a series of intensive workshops over the semester. Each workshop is dedicated to the learning of a specific methodology, including cultural mapping, heritage interpretation, and the use of archival sources and materials. Through individual and group assignments and presentations, students acquire the necessary skills to carry out their studio projects and conservation thesis later on in the programme. (Note: This course includes multiple site visits).

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8216 Critical Issues in Heritage Conservation (6 credits)

This course explores contemporary issues in the field of heritage and conservation. Through reading discussion, students engage in debates about emergent global challenges to heritage conservation, such as climate change, pandemics, accelerating urbanization and tourism development, and consider the different ways in which heritage may contribute to achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Students are encouraged to reflect critically on the concepts of sustainable development, heritage stewardship, the roles of science and technologies in conservation, and the incorporation of rights-based approaches and integration of traditional knowledge into conservation processes. The course offers students the opportunity to identify and develop a topic in preparation for their Conservation Thesis.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8222 Heritage Economics and Sustainable Development (6 credits)

This course introduces basic economic and social theories that are relevant to heritage conservation, including property rights, cultural and social capital, the governance of common-pool resources, and urban development processes that are relevant in assessing the interrelated values of built heritage assets. It examines how conservation, as an increasingly important component of economic and cultural policy in different parts of the world, may be harnessed to achieve sustainable development and resource management. Students acquire techniques to assess the economic viability and the costs and benefits of different types of conservation initiatives.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8223 Materials and Technologies in Conservation (6 credits)

This course allows students to gain insights into the scientific and construction principles used in conservation and restoration techniques. Students acquire fundamental knowledge of the processes of material deterioration and structural performance of historic buildings. They learn how to assess their conditions, diagnose defects and common problems, and to make suitable recommendations for their conservation. Through visits to local heritage sites and factories, the course also introduces different types of historical construction techniques and traditional building crafts. As part of the requirements of this course, student produce their own restoration and maintenance specifications for a chosen heritage site. (Note: This course includes multiple site visits).

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8215 Conservation Thesis (Capstone experience) (12 credits)

This capstone course enables students to demonstrate competency in a chosen area of specialization through independent research. The thesis may take the form of an original piece of research, an original design work, or a laboratory experiment with theoretical or practical applications within the framework of conservation. Topics are chosen according to their relevance to students' interests and capabilities and their contribution to an intellectual debate in the field. Each student works under the supervision of a teaching faculty and meets with his/her supervisor at least once a week throughout the course for consultation and guidance. To complete the course, students are required to present their findings to a panel of reviewers that include professional experts and members of community stakeholders in a formal presentation, which allows students to demonstrate their capacity to advocate for conservation whilst providing a transparent platform for collegial debates that enable ongoing progress of the profession. Completed theses will be made available to the public as a repository of knowledge on heritage conservation in Hong Kong, Greater China, and East and Southeast Asia (Note: This course includes a practical training component relevant to the students' chosen thesis projects).

Prerequisites: CONS8220 *or* CONS8221

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8109 Cultural Landscapes (6 credits)

This course introduces the concept of cultural landscapes and its relevance to heritage conservation. The course examines cultural landscapes as defined in multiple disciplines such as cultural geography, environmental history, and landscape archaeology, as well as its practical implications within international heritage frameworks. Students learn to identify and assess different types of cultural landscapes and explore new ways of mapping landscape sites within the contexts of Hong Kong, Greater China and East and Southeast Asia. The course also enables students to address concerns for the protection of the natural environment and conceive strategies for achieving sustainable development through the conservation of cultural landscapes.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment

CONS8224 Digital Heritage: Theory and Application (6 credits)

This course introduces the common tools for the digitization of heritage assets. Students become familiar with the requirements, processes and comparable advantages of different 2D and 3D digitization techniques for built heritage such as surveying, laser scanning, and photogrammetry. Through readings and in-class discussions, the course also enables students to reflect critically on the recent ‘digital turn’ in heritage studies and the ethical implications of ‘heritage digitization’ and ‘digital heritagization’.

Assessment: 100% continuous coursework assessment
