

CAPILANO UNIVERSITY COURSE OUTLINE			
TERM:	Fall 2015	COURSE NO:	SOC 352
INSTRUCTOR:		COURSE NAME:	MARXISM AND SOCIAL THEORY
OFFICE:	LOCAL:	SECTION NO(S):	CREDITS: 3
E-MAIL:			
OFFICE HOURS:			

COURSE FORMAT:

Three hours of class time, plus an additional hour delivered through on-line or other activities for a 15 week semester, which includes two weeks for final exams.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

45 credits of 100-level or higher coursework including SOC 101.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the early 1990s communist regimes in Russia, Central Asia, and Europe collapsed. China today declares itself as a socialist society “with special Chinese characteristics” - but the main characteristic seems to be “capitalism.” While Karl Marx’s ideas seem to have been swept away by history, this course will argue that Marx is better seen as a critic of capitalism rather than a theorist of communism. His analysis of subjects such as class struggle, the magical lure of commodities, and the spread of globalization have something important to say to us today. Indeed, many contemporary thinkers have taken Marx’s ideas and reworked them in ways that provide an original and critical view of our society.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- critique some of the fundamental concepts in Marx’s political, historical, economic, and social analysis;
- connect Marx’s theories to their historical context;
- identify Marx’s ideas as they have been taken up and adapted by later sociological thinkers;
- critically read and analyze various writers in the field;
- write critically and analytically on aspects of Marx and Marxism;
- connect the ideas of Marx, and later writers in the Marxist tradition, to concrete contemporary social issues

COURSE WEBSITE:

moodle.capilanou.ca

REQUIRED TEXTS:

McLellan, David (ed). Karl Marx: Selected Writings, 2nd edition. Oxford: OUP, 2000. [readings noted as “Marx.” below]

Wolff, Jonathan. Why Read Marx Today? Oxford: OUP, 2002. [readings noted as “Wolff.” below]

Course readings on Moodle.

COURSE CONTENT:

Date	Topic	Readings
	Why Read Marx Today?	Wolff: Introduction (pp. vii-12)
	Marx the Humanist	Wolff: chapter 1, "Early Writings" (pp. 13-47) Marx: Theses on Feuerbach (171-174)
	What is Emancipation?	Marx: On the Jewish Question (46-70)
	Alienation	Marx: Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (pp. 83-121)
	Dialectical Thinking • <i>web assmt #1</i>	
	Marx the Historian and Revolutionary	Wolff: chapter 2, "Class, History, and Capital"
	Stages of History	Marx: The German Ideology (175-208)
	Ideology	
	A Spectre is Haunting Europe	Marx: The Communist Manifesto (245-272)
	Class Struggle and Nightmares • <i>web assmt #2</i>	Marx: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (329-355)
	Marx the Economist	Marx: Preface to Critique of Political Economy (424-428)
	Value	Marx: Capital vol 1 (452-480)
READING BREAK – no classes		
	Commodities	
	Exchange, Surplus Value	Marx: Capital vol 1 (481-525)
	Exploitation	
MIDTERM EXAM		
	Feminism	Hartmann: The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism
	Feminism 2	
	Politics and Hegemony	Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks
	Hegemony 2 • <i>web assmt #3</i>	Bocock, The Concept of Hegemony
	Cultural Studies	Williams, Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory
	Cultural Studies 2 TERM PAPER DUE	reading TBA
	Political Economy and the Current Crisis	Harvey, From Fordism to Flexible Accumulation
	Flexible Accumulation	
	Neoliberalism	Harvey, Neoliberalism on Trial
	Conclusion: Why Read Marx Today?	
FINAL EXAM will be during the exam period		

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

There will be **two exams**: a midterm and a final exam.

Each student must write a **term paper**. The paper will be an application of some aspect of Marxist social theory to a contemporary topic. For example, topics might include: Marxist and neo-Marxist class analysis and contemporary Canadian society; “commodity fetishism” and modern consumerism; Marxist theories of the state and the recent US presidential elections; Marxism and the anti-globalization movement; Marxist theory and environmentalism; etc. A full handout with more topic possibilities for both papers and further information will be provided by the second week of classes.

The **participation** mark will be based on:

- group work done in-class
- “minute papers”: very short papers (as short as a sentence) written in-class and marked as either “complete” or “incomplete.” These papers might ask you to summarize one of the main points of that day’s class, or of the readings for the class, or to think of a question that is related to the day’s topic that wasn’t answered in the lecture or discussion.

There will be three **fourth-hour online assignments** that will build on the readings and classroom material. Refer to the course website for more information. These will each be worth 5% of your overall grade, 15% in all.

EVALUATION PROFILE:

Midterm Exam:	25%
Term paper:	30%
Fourth-hour online assignments:	15%
Final Exam :	25%
Participation:	5%

GRADE PROFILE:

A+ = 90 - 100%	B+ = 77 - 79%	C+ = 67 - 69%	D = 50 - 59%
A = 85 - 89	B = 73 - 76	C = 63 - 66	F = 0 - 49
A- = 80 - 84	B- = 70 - 72	C- = 60 - 62	

OPERATIONAL DETAILS:

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Cheating and Plagiarism, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

Attendance:

Class attendance is **essential**. Classes will involve lectures, videos, debates and discussions, small-group assignments, handouts, and other material. All of this is “examinable,” so if you miss a class for any reason, please arrange to get notes from a classmate.

- Late Assignments: Late papers will be accepted, but with a 5% penalty for each day the paper is late. Late papers will be accepted WITHOUT penalty ONLY with a doctor or counselor's note. These notes must indicate the date or dates that you were unable to do school work because of illness or personal crisis. (Please be aware that there is a medical clinic on campus in Birch 249.) If, for example, you were sick for five days, and your medical note confirms this, you can hand in a research paper five days late. Handing in the paper later than this will result in the penalty described above.
- Missed Exams: Make-up tests are given at the discretion of the instructor. They are generally given only in medical emergencies or severe personal crisis. Students should be prepared to provide proof of inability to write the test on the scheduled date (e.g. letter from doctor). Medical notes must specify which day or days you were ill. Missing an exam for any other reason will be accommodated only in special circumstances, and only with prior arrangement with the instructor.
- English Usage: It is the responsibility of students to proof-read all written work for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Marks will be deducted for incorrect grammar and spelling in written assignments.
- Incomplete Grades: Given at the discretion of the instructor. Generally given only in medical emergencies or severe personal crises.
- Electronic Devices: No personal electronic devices (phones, pagers, calculators, electronic dictionaries, etc...) may be used during an examination without prior approval from the instructor. During an exam, turn off all cell phones and pagers and remove them from the desk.
- Emergency Procedures: Please read the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.