SOC 475 Marxist Sociological Thought
CRN 26275
MWF 3:00-3:50
IMC STUDIO D

Instructor: Paul Prew
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Course Links

- Syllabus
- List of Weekly Readings (Including Recommended Readings) Week 6 Readings are Recommended
- Lecture Notes
- Notes to help with the reading
- Answers to your bi-weekly questions
  - Week 3 - Alienation
  - Week 4 + 5 - Commodities
  - Week 6 + 7 - Some More Commodities, Value and Other Issues
- Assignments:
  - Final Exam: Wednesday, March 19 at 3:15
  - Application Papers and Reaction Questions NOTE: Week 9 and 10 Assignments are Optional. I will count the 3 best grades out of the 4 assignments.
- Hints for Doing Close Reading
- Opportunities for Extra Credit
- Citation Examples
  - Plagiarism for Students Help for students to ensure that you are quoting properly.

Syllabus

Course Description
The intent of this course is to provide the student with the foundation of Karl Marx’s thought. No other social thinker has a more comprehensive theoretical body of work, and Karl Marx is certainly the most revered and reviled, accepted and criticized theorist in history. In order to understand contemporary views of this often used and seldom understood social theorist, it is necessary to develop an understanding of his philosophical, methodological and political-economic foundations. Once we have developed this foundation, we will begin to address some of Marx’s core analyses such as alienation, exploitation, value and commodity relations. Finally, we will look at some more contemporary uses of Marxist thought including a look at the world-economy from the World-System perspective and the Monthly Review school of thought.

Course Requirements

A few things are crucial for successful completion of this course. First, students are expected to have completed all of the relevant readings prior to coming to class. Students must complete the readings in order to participate regularly in class discussions. Class participation will be weighted heavily as part of the graded portion of the class. Your participation and performance will be evaluated by the professor. Since you must be present to participate in class, attendance will be part of your participation grade. After the first week, more than two absences will count against participation. Students will be required to complete four short application papers, applying the course materials to world events and issues. Students will also be asked to turn in questions about the week’s readings four times during the term. Late papers will lose ½ letter grade for each class day late. Lastly, there will be two exams. To give students the opportunity to supplement a weakness in their grade, students may watch an approved movie and review it for extra credit. A list of possible movie selections and requirements for the film review will be provided during the quarter.

The grading for the course breaks down as follows:

30% Class Participation
40% Application Papers
10% Reaction Questions
10% Exam 1
10% Final Exam: Wednesday, March 19 at 3:15

Required Texts

YOU WILL FIND REQUIRED TEXTS AT MOTHER KALI’S BOOKSTORE AT 720 E 13TH STREET


YOU WILL FIND THE FOLLOWING REQUIRED READINGS ON RESERVE AT THE LIBRARY


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**Weekly Readings**

**Week 1**

Lecture Topic: Course Themes

Readings:

- January 6: No Readings
- January 8:
- January 10:

Suggested Readings:

Week 2

Lecture Topic: Marx's Materialist Conception of History

Readings:

- January 13:
    - *The German Ideology*: Materialist Conception of History
- January 15:
    - *The German Ideology*: Consciousness
- January 17:
    - *The German Ideology*: Forces and Relations of Production
    - *The Grundrisse*: The Method of Political Economy

Suggested Readings:


Week 3

Lecture Topic: Species Being - Sociality, Cooperation and Creative Labor / Alienation

Readings:

- January 20:
  - Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday: No Class
- January 22:
    - *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*: Alienation under Capitalism, Discussion of Communism, and the Nature of Needs in Society
- January 24:
    - *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*: Hegel and Consciousness
Suggested Readings:


Here is a summary of alienation as it relates to Marx's view of human nature.

Week 4

Lecture Topic: Value (Exchange and Use), Commodity Fetishism

Readings:

- January 27:
    - *Capital Volume I*: Value

- January 29:
    - *Capital Volume I*: The Fetishism of Commodities and The General Formula for Capital

- January 31:
    - "Part One: Examination"

Suggested Readings:


Week 5

Lecture Topic: Commodity Fetishism

Readings:

- February 3:
    - "Part Two: Diagnosis - Needs"

- February 5:
Week 6

Lecture Topic: Labor, Exploitation and Profit; Transformation problem

Readings: NOTE - Readings are recommended for this Week

- February 10:
    - Wage Labor and Capital
- February 12:
    - Capital Volume I: The Production of Relative Surplus Value
- February 14:
    - Capital Volume I: The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation

Suggested Readings:


Week 7

Lecture Topic: Division of Town and Country, Environmental issues

Readings:

- February 17:
    - Capital Volume I: Factory and Agriculture
- February 19:

February 21:

Suggested Readings:


Week 8

Lecture Topic: Primitive Accumulation / History of Colonialism and Imperialism

Readings:

- February 24:
  - *Capital Volume I: The So-Called Primitive Accumulation*
    - "European Expansion Since 1763"
- February 26:
    - "European Expansion Since 1763"
- February 28:
    - "European Expansion Since 1763"

Suggested Readings:

  - "Imperialist Expansion: Accident and Design"
- "Iraq: Voices From The Street" can be found on this website. There are also other videos that you may be interested in.
• **State of Oregon: Economic and Revenue Forecast** The figures in class regarding Oregon corporate and personal income tax were taken from the "December 2002 Economic and Revenue Forecast", page 47.

Week 9

Lecture Topic: World System / Incorporation

Readings:

• March 3:
    ▪ "The Commodification of Everything"

• March 5:
    ▪ "The Politics of Accumulation"

• March 7:
    ▪ "Truth as Opiate"

Suggested Readings:

  o "On Progress and Transitions"

Week 10

Lecture Topic: Logic of Imperialism

Readings:

• March 10:
    ▪ "Imperialism Without Colonies"

• March 12:
    ▪ "Imperialism: A Historical Survey"
    ▪ "Economic Myths and Imperialism"

• March 14:
Suggested Readings:

  - "The Multinational Corporation and Development - A Contradiction?"
  - "The Impact of US Foreign Policy on Underdeveloped Countries"
  - "Capital Technology and Development"


Final Exam: Wednesday, March 19 at 3:15