

Marx

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Office Hours: R 2-4
SCH 242

PHIL 453/553
MW 10:00-1150
112 WIL

Course Description:

This course will serve as an introduction to Marx's thought. We will pay particular attention to Marx's treatment of the relation between theory and praxis consistent throughout his corpus. Readings will provide occasion to discuss the structure and contemporary relevance of basic concepts such as alienation, capital, class struggle, ideology, and emancipation.

Required Texts:

1. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, second edition, ed. Robert Tucker (W.W. Norton & Co.)

The [Marx/Engels Collected Works](#) is available online. Texts that are not included in the Reader, will be available through this website. Follow the link on the syllabus.

Some Secondary Sources:

1. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*
2. McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*
3. Wood, *Karl Marx*
4. Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*
5. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology*
6. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History*
7. Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination*
8. Osborne, *How to Read Marx*
9. Harvey, *A Companion to Marx's Capital*, 2 vols.
10. Méztáros, *Marx's Theory of Alienation*
11. Luckás, *History and Class Consciousness*
12. MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*
13. Abensour, *Democracy Against the State*
14. Nelson, ed., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*
15. Breckman, Marx, *The Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Theory*
16. Balibar, *The Philosophy of Marx*
17. Althusser, *For Marx and Reading Capital*

A substantive [bibliography](#) by topic from University of Sussex can be found online. This syllabus has been constructed in consultation with Andrew Chitty's (Sussex).

Course Structure and Requirements:

Attendance:

You are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly. More than 3 absences will result in a failing final grade, unless proof of illness or emergency is provided.

Participation:

The lecture will presuppose familiarity with the assigned readings for the class session. Having read the assigned text and coming prepared to participate in class discussion are requirements.

Commentaries:

On weeks, 2, 4, and 6, you will hand in a 2-page commentary on one concept of your choice discussed in the weeks prior to the commentary (in week 2, engaging texts read in weeks 1 and 2; in week 4, engaging texts discussed in weeks 3 and 4, so on). You must merely *explain* the concept that you have chosen (e.g., alienation, history, materialism, so on). You should *not* respond to the argument critically or constructively – the commentary should be merely *exegetical*.

Prospectus:

You will submit a one-page prospectus stating the topic of your paper and the argument that you intend to pursue. Graduate students must include an annotated bibliography with at least 3 secondary sources that you intend to use.

Final Paper:

Undergraduate Students: This 2,000 wd. paper should develop further—both exegetically and critically—one of your commentaries.

Graduate Students: This 3,000 wd. paper should develop a thesis about a section or problem in Marx. You must situate your thesis within relevant secondary literature. Engaging secondary sources is a *requirement*.

Guidelines for papers:

- clarity: the paper should have a clearly defined topic and thesis.
- accuracy: the paper should present an author's position in a fair way.
- assessment: the paper should evaluate the author's position, and bring to bear on the text or issue your own view; you must defend your view.

All of your work must be typewritten (12 pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced). You will be expected to cite philosophical texts that you are quoting, paraphrasing, or using as reference appropriately, including secondary literature and online resources.

All papers are due by 2pm at the Philosophy Department. Undergraduate students must also submit the paper electronically via SafeAssign. No late papers will be accepted, unless accompanied by proof of illness or emergency.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional unacknowledged use of someone else's work as one's own in all forms of academic endeavor (such as essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, and so on). Plagiarized material may be derived from books, journals, Internet postings, student or faculty papers, and so on including the purchase or "outsourcing" of written assignments for a course. *Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course.* For more information, see <http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>.

Grading Standard:

- A+ = superb. No mistakes, well-written, well-researched, and pursues an original thesis.
- A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.
- B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.
- C = OK. Some errors, but basic grasp of the material.
- D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
- F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or complete lack of effort.

Grading Rubric:

Class participation	10%
Commentaries (3)	30% (10% each)
Prospectus	10%
Final paper	50%

Accommodation for a Disability:

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon.

Classroom Etiquette:

Students must turn off cellular telephones for the duration of the class. Facebook, Twitter, texting, etc. are not permitted. You must request permission to record any session. Please be advised that recordings are for personal use and should not be disseminated – e.g.: posted online, etc.

Schedule of Classes and Readings:

The schedule of readings is subject to change during the quarter. All changes will be announced in advance via email.

Wk. 1

- M 3/31 **Introduction to the Course**
Marx and the Return of a Critique of Political Economy with reference to
 “For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything,” pp. 12-15
- W 4/2 **Early views on Civil Society and the State**
 Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, pp. 16-25
 Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*: Introduction,
 pp. 53-65

Wk. 2

- 4/7 Pt. 1 of On the Jewish Question, pp. 26-52
- 4/9 **Early key notions: species-being, estrangement, capital**
Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, pp. 67-105
 Recommended: *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, pp. 106-135
- 4/11 **Commentary #1 due**

Wk. 3

- 4/14 [Notes on James Mills](#)
- 4/16 **Materialism, social relations, history**
 Theses on Feuerbach, pp. 143-145
[w/ Engels, The Holy Family, ch. 6, sec. 3d ‘Critical battle against French materialism’](#)

Wk. 4

- 4/21 *The German Ideology*, pt. 1, pp. 146-200
 From Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, pp. 3-6
 Recommended: Alienation and Social Classes, pp. 133-135
 Society and Economy in History, pp. 136-142
- 4/23 **Value, social form, fetishism**
Capital, vol. 1, pt. 1-3, pp. 302-360 (excluding pt. 1, §2)
Grundrisse, B and C, pp. 246-250
- 4/24 **Commentary #2 Due**

- Wk. 5**
4/28 *Capital*, vol. 1, chap. 1, §2 The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof
Recommended: Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, “Reification and Consciousness of the Proletariat”
Recommended: [Capital, vol. 3, ch. 48 ‘The trinity formula’](#)
- 4/30 Letter Engels to Mehring on ‘False Consciousness’
Recommended: Althusser, [“Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”](#)
Jaeggi, “Rethinking Ideology”
- Wk. 6**
5/5 **Capital, subsumption, colonialism**
Introduction to the *Grundrisse*, pp. 222-246
Capital, vol. 1, Postface to 2nd edition, pp. 294-302
- 5/7 Wage-Labor and Capital, pp. 203-217
Capital, vol. 1, chaps. XIII-XXVI, pp. 384-431
- 5/9 **Commentary #3 Due**
- Wk. 7**
5/12 *Grundrisse*, §§D-G, pp. 250-290
Capital, vol. 1, pt. VIII, pp. 431-438
Recommended: Harvey, “Accumulation by Dispossession,”
chap 4 of *The New Imperialism*
- 5/14 [Direct Production Process](#), sections on Formal and Real Subsumption (1864 Economic Manuscripts)
Recommended: *Capital*, vol. 3, pp. 439-442
Grundrisse, sections H and I, pp. 291-293
- Wk. 8**
5/19 The British Rule in India, pp. 653-664
Recommended: Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, chap. 1, esp. pp. 67-111
- 5/21 **Crisis, the proletariat, revolution**
selections from *Theories of Surplus Value*, pp. 443-465
- Wk. 9**
5/26 **Memorial Day – No Class**
- 5/28 *The Communist Manifesto*, pp. 469-500
- Wk. 10**
6/2 *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, pp. 594-617
6/4 *The Civil War in France*, pp. 618-652