SYLLABUS

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Office Hours: Monday 9 a.m.-11 a.m.; Tuesday 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. and by appointment on Skype (Skype username: amontero9601)

Course Description

This research seminar examines the contemporary institutions, processes, and challenges of modern capitalism in advanced and developing countries around the world. The course begins with a review of the work of several key thinkers on modern capitalism: Marx, Weber, Schumpeter, Hayek, Polanyi, Offe, and Tilly. It then proceeds to an analysis of salient topics in the evolution and reform of contemporary capitalism with a focus on financial markets and globalization. Student work in this course focuses on the research and composition of a 20-25-page original work on a topic relevant to the questions covered in the seminar. Intense course participation, including classroom discussion and periodic debates, is required. Majors may use their seminar papers as the basis for developing comps projects.

What is Expected of Students

Students will be expected to read, think, criticize, and form arguments. That will require keeping up on reading assignments and attending class regularly. Students must be fully prepared at all times to discuss the readings and concepts from previous lectures. The best students will be critical but balanced in their assessments, and will develop coherent arguments that they can defend in their writing and their in-class discussion.

Reading Materials

All the reading materials for this course are available on Moodle. This includes clippings from periodicals such as The New York Times, the Financial Times, the Economist, and audio and video materials. Students wishing to deepen their quantitative skills will have access to a second Moodle page with podcasts and other materials providing instruction on multiple statistical techniques.

Grading

As a true research seminar the assessment of students’ performance will focus on the composition and completion of a 20-25 page research paper due at the end of the course. The first draft of this paper will be graded. Additionally, each student will be called upon during the course of the semester to participate in numerous debates and to present on the readings in structured critiques that will initiate all seminar discussions on the literature. The grade breakdown follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debates</th>
<th>15%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Draft</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Research Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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The Debates

This seminar will use a series of adversarial debates (2x2 or 4x4) to address the literature on capitalism and globalization. Students will be instructed in how to organize these debates and how to participate with an emphasis on rejoinder and argument development.

The Seminar Paper

The culmination of student work in this seminar will be the composition of a seminar paper of 20-25 pages of text (typed, double-spaced, 12cpi, one-inch margins, paginated) and a research bibliography of a minimum of three pages, single-spaced. All drafts of the work prior to the final as well as the final must be handed in by 5 p.m. on the Courses directory on the due date (see below). All files, except for data files, must be in PDF format.

The composition of the seminar paper will be broken down into the following steps:

1. By Monday, September 30, students will have decided upon a research topic in consultation with me. Each student will prepare a preliminary abstract of the project.

2. By Friday, October 11, students will hand in a copy of a preliminary research bibliography of no fewer than 3 pages, single-spaced. A handout will define the proper citation and bibliographic reference format for the paper. Weak bibliographies and/or bibliographies that do not follow the required format will generate negative points assessable on the rough draft score.

3. By Friday, October 25, students will hand in a first draft of the argumentative section of their paper (the first seven-eight pages) with an updated abstract and bibliography.

4. On November 13, 18, and 20, each student will orally present their research for no less than 15 minutes a piece in the research seminar. All colleagues will offer their input. If possible, we will schedule a couple of early presentations to free up the schedule at the end of the course.

5. On Monday, November 25, the final draft of the seminar paper will be due at 5:00 p.m. Consultation with me during each of these steps is crucial. We will also discuss the format and direction of paper topics and issues as part of the normal discussion of the research seminar. One of the most important lessons of the seminar is that good research depends upon the input and support of colleagues. Each student will be expected to contribute their share to this effort.
Class Participation

Typically, I will begin each class session by offering a general overview of the issues to be discussed. I will also present you with a set of reading and discussion questions to structure our deliberations. After the overview portion, the seminar will proceed to student-led discussion. I will conclude each class session with a brief review of the authors and readings for the next meeting. Whenever possible, each class will have a break of about 10 minutes.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale in this course:
- 98-100 A+
- 94-97 A
- 91-93 A-
- 88-90 B+
- 83-87 B
- 79-82 B-
- 76-78 C+
- 72-75 C
- 68-71 C-
- 67/below D/F

Academic Misconduct

Given the fact that academe relies upon the ethical conduct of scholars, students are held to the same standards in their own work. Any act of academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see the useful handout on “Avoiding Academic Misconduct.”

Special Needs

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process. Carleton faculty are strongly encouraged to wait for official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students.

NOTE: Readings must be completed for the dates assigned below.

Introduction (September 16, Monday)


Film: BBC “Masters of Money – Keynes”

Session 1: Theoretical Perspectives on the Development and Contradictions of Capitalism

Creative Destruction and the Satanic Mill: The Logic of Capitalist Evolution (September 18, Wednesday)


Film: BBC “Masters of Money – Marx”

Making the Political Order: The Capitalist State (September 23, Monday)


Film: BBC “Masters of Money – Hayek”

The Transnationalization of Capital(ism) (September 25, Wednesday)


RESEARCH TOPIC DEADLINE (September 30, Monday)

Crises, Contagion, and Global Finance Capitalism (September 30, Monday)


Wither Labor? Political Erosion and the Ascendance of Creative Workers (October 2, Wednesday)


Film: “PBS Frontline: Two American Families”

Session 2: The Remaking of Capitalism (Once Again): The Financial Crisis of 2007-?

Background Study of the Crisis (October 7, Monday)


Required Videos:

“Inside Job” (Dir. Charles Ferguson)

Too Big To Fail and Other Structural Problems (October 9, Wednesday)


RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE (October 11, Friday)

Is There a New Need for “Crisis Economics” or “Crisis Politics?” (October 14, Monday)


Debate #1: Role of the Capitalist State in Crisis Economics (October 16, Wednesday)

Required Video:

“Too Big To Fail” (HBO Films)

MIDTERM BREAK (October 21, Monday)

Debate #2: Reform and Regulation of Capitalism or Its Overthrow (October 23, Wednesday)

FIRST DRAFT OF SEMINAR PAPER DUE (October 25, Friday)

Debate #3: Market Solutions to Capitalist Crises (October 28, Monday)


Liberal Growth Models and their Crises (October 30, Wednesday)


New Growth and Development Models (November 4, Monday)


NO CLASS (Nov. 6, Wednesday) – Work on papers

  Debate #4: Is the liberal economic model the best one for growth in the 21st century? (November 11, Monday)

Session 4: Student Oral Presentations of Research

  November 13 (Wednesday), 18 (Monday), and 20 (Wednesday)

FINAL DRAFT OF SEMINAR PAPER DUE (November 25, Monday)