

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

CGS 2004G 550 Critique of Capitalism
Centre for Global Studies
Winter 2022
Mon 11:30-12:30, Wed 11:30-1:30 HC W6
Dr. Wendy Russell

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Office hours: by appointment on Zoom mostly on Fridays if that works

Prerequisite(s): 0.5 course from Centre for Global Studies 1000-1999, or permission of the Centre for Global Studies.

Introduction

This course explores the socio-economic form of 'capitalism' and examines the development and spread of the key features of capitalist social organization – the division of labour, private property, primitive accumulation – and examines their function in a globalized world.

Course Learning Objectives

This course provides you the opportunity to learn the skill of scholarly critique: to undertake a close reading of a work, to identify and unpack the author's assumptions, goals, and arguments.

You will undertake such a close reading of the four books assigned for the course, meaning that you will have time to explore, in detail, the arguments each book presents. You will learn to identify the key ideas being put forward in each work, and to compare and contrast the similarities and differences in how these scholars explain the same social phenomenon.

Each assignment in the course depends on this close and analytical reading of our assigned reading, and gives you the opportunity to explain these arguments, and to apply the key ideas in each work in your answers to the problems assigned for each of your response papers. These assignments will help you develop both your skills as a researcher drawing on scholarly sources and your skills of argumentation.

Course Methods

This course is lecture-based, supplemented with class discussions of how key ideas covered in the reading relate to real-world and current examples where the social aspects and effects of capitalism are revealed.

Required Readings

In addition to these books, and as announced in class and via our shared OWL world, from time to time there may be additional materials to review.

Bauman, Zygmunt, 2006. *Consuming Life*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

de Soto, Hernando, 2000. *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*. New York: Basic Books.

Gibson-Graham, J.K., 2006. *A Postcapitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

The bookstore has been unable to get this title in print (though ‘major online book retailer’ tells me it is available), but the good news is we have unlimited access to an electronic version at [this link](#).

Sundararajan, Arun, 2016. *The Sharing Economy: The End of Employment and the Rise of Crowd-Based Capitalism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

Evaluation

Response Quizzes: 5 x 15% (total 75%) (distributed via OWL one week before they are due, on assigned readings, the due dates are noted below)

Take Home Examination 25% (scheduled by the Registrar).

Response Quizzes

These are not like ‘surprise tests’ or attempts to stump you or diminish your confidence. But I couldn’t think of any other noun that really suited this. So ‘quiz’ it is, meaning ‘a set of quick questions to affirm comprehension and knowledge of key ideas’. Maybe ‘Response Tracks’, but you see what I mean that sounds odd, right?

Each response will be 250-500 words in length, submitted on OWL, and responding to the question I post for the week’s readings. I do not know right now what each question will be because most of this will flow from our exploration of course materials in lecture and discussion. And who knows, maybe something amazing will happen- Uber driver union? Municipalities developing support for mutual aid?- and we can write about that.

Due dates for these are Week 2, Week 4, Week 6, Week 8, Week 10

Final Take Home Examination

This is a 1250-1500 word essay recapping the basic processes and social entailments of capitalism, exploring its recent transformations and emerging prospects in relation to a supplementary case I will supply.

Schedule of Topics and Readings Key: ZB = Zygmunt Bauman; HS = Hernando de Soto; GG = Gibson Graham; AS = Arun Sundararajan

- Week 1** January 10 Introduction
 January 12 Writing About Capitalism: Sociology and Economics
 Readings: ZB Introduction (1-24) and AS Introduction (1-20)
- Week 2** January 17 Writing About Capitalism: Geography and Development Economics
 Readings: GG Introduction, HS Chapter 1
 January 19: The Invention of Capitalism: Primitive Accumulation,
 Proletarianization and the Gendered Division of Labour
 Readings: Kaufman on OWL
- Week 3** January 24-26 The ‘Mysteries’ of Capitalism
 Readings: HS Chapters 2, 3 and 4
- Week 4** January 31-February 2 Or is it Mystifying Capitalism?
 Readings: HS Chapters 5, 6 and 7
- Week 5** February 7-9 Post-Capitalist Thought: What if Capitalism’s Trajectory is Not
 What We Thought?
 Readings: GG Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Week 6** February 14-16 Post-Capitalist Thought: Authority and Command from the
 Ground Up
 Readings: GG Chapters 5, 6 and 7
- Reading Week February 21-25*
- Week 7** February 28-March 2 Post-Employment Capitalism: Is this the Revolution?
 Readings: AS Chapters 1, 2
- Week 8** March 7-9 Post-Employment Capitalism: Post-Revolutionary Anxieties and
 Change
 Readings: AS Chapters 5, 6
- Week 9** March 14-16 Post-Employment Capitalism: Now What?
 Readings: AS Chapters 7,8

- Week 10** March 21-23 Consumerism: Does Any Secure Social Order Still Exist?
Readings: ZB Chapters 1, 2
- Week 11** March 28-30 Consumerism: Enough is Enough?
Readings: ZB Chapters 3, 4
- Week 12** April 4-6 Capitalism in Transition
Wrap and Exam Prep



Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations 2021 - 2022

Mandatory Use of Masks in Classrooms

Students will be expected to wear triple layer non-medical masks at all times in the classroom as per Huron policy and public health directives. Students are now permitted to drink water in class by lifting and replacing the mask each time a drink is taken. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Huron policy and public health directives will be referred to the Dean's Office, and such actions will be considered a violation of the Huron Student Code of Conduct.

Pandemic Contingency

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, typically using a combination of synchronous instruction (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) and asynchronous material (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor. In the unlikely event that changes to the grading scheme are necessary, these changes will be clearly communicated as soon as possible.

Student Code of Conduct

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Attendance Regulations for Examinations

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/attendance.pdf.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf. The

appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf.

Turnitin.com

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is **48 hours or less** and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf are met.

Students whose absences are expected to last **longer than 48 hours**, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds). The Student Medical Certificate is available online at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should**

consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>.

Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence

(a) Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade: Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, and if the student has exceeded the maximum number of permissible Self-Reported absences, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may **not** collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

(b) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email huronsss@uwo.ca.

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation where the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence have not been met, including where the student has exceeded the maximum number of permissible Self-Reported. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf. Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at huronsss@uwo.ca for any further questions or information.

Support Services

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron's Student Support Services at

huronsss@uwo.ca. An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>

Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>

Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1>

Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>

Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>

Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

Mental Health & Wellness Support at Huron and Western

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services: huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca

Community Safety Office: safety@huron.uwo.ca

Chaplaincy: gthorne@huron.uwo.ca

Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.