

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department: Humanities & Social Sciences

Programme: Political Science

FHEQ Level: 5

Course Title: Capitalism and its Critics

Course Code: POLS 5103

Total Hours: 160 (Lev 3-5) (4 US Credit)

Timetabled Hours: 45

Guided Learning Hours: 15

Independent Learning Hours: 100

Credit 16 UK CATS credits

8 ECTS credits

4 US credits

Course Description:

This course examines the historical development of thought about capitalism. Liberal, mercantilist and radical political economy in the 18th and 19th centuries is covered, along with a range of 20th century scholars, such as Adam Smith, Karl Marx, J.M. Keynes and Joseph Schumpeter. The object of study in the course is theories of capitalism, and addressed themes include the nature of market society, the relationship between state and market, economic growth and economic crises, market failure and government failure. These themes enable the course to engage with the relations between capitalism and other systems such as democracy, fascism, communism, racism, anti-Semitism, slavery and patriarchy.

Prerequisites:

40 Credits

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide students with an understanding of the history and development of political economic thought concerning capitalism and the main thematic debates being addressed in all their complexity.
- To provide students with an appreciation of the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of political thought concerning capitalism, and to be able to relate these to both historical and contemporary questions of political economy.
- To provide a background for eventual careers in fields (including work in government, international organisations, business and the media) which require articulate, clear-thinking individuals with a grasp of political and economic ideas.
- To provide a framework to assist concerned citizens to think critically about issues that are of increasing importance in the 21st century.
- To promote critical engagement with a wide range of literature, and the development of both a succinct writing style, and the ability to present complex arguments orally.

Programme Outcomes:

5AII; 5BI; 5CI

A detailed list of the programme outcomes can be found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical engagement with competing theories and concepts used to understand capitalism.
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of capitalism as a historical set of practices and institutions.
- Demonstrates the ability to formulate and communicate arguments cogently, retrieve and generate information, and select appropriate criteria to evaluate sources and/or data.

Indicative Content:

- Key thinkers concerning the origins and development of capitalism (i.e., Smith, Marx, Keynes and Schumpeter).
- Key historical junctures in the development of capitalism and the relationship to the work of these key thinkers (i.e., World Wars, economic crises).
- Key themes and issues in the study of capitalism as a political economic system (i.e., democracy, fascism, communism, racism, anti-Semitism, slavery and patriarchy).

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

This course will be delivered face to face through a combination of lectures and interactive sessions. In addition to classroom activities, there are guided learning elements that are tutor led and arranged through Blackboard. These activities can be asynchronous online sessions, flipped classrooms, set readings with discussion boards or set guest lectures for example. Set activities are monitored by the instructor to ascertain student engagement. Students are encouraged to prepare for class and to play an active part, to raise questions, following-up ideas and interact with a wide range of provided material.

Indicative Text(s):

Heilbroner, R. (1999) *The Worldly Philosophers*. Revised 7th edn. Penguin.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Change Log for this CSD:

| Nature of Change | Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB) | Change Actioned by Registry Services |
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| First edition - November 2024 | | |
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