

PHIL 204: 19th and 20th Century Philosophy Marx and Critical Theories

Instructor Prof. Joshua Mousie

Office All by appointment only; signup on Canvas

Hours Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-5:00pm

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Course description

We often hear conflicting accounts about what it means to be a “Marxist.” These conflicts reflect the reality of Marx’s thought and the schools of thought that Marx influenced: Marx’s views develop and change during the course of his life, and philosophers inspired by his work are often highly critical of many of his theories (e.g., communism). In this class, we will read texts from the young and mature Marx as well as numerous critical theories from the 20th century that were influenced by Marx’s work. We will ask, “Can you be a political progressive today without being some type of Marxist?” “Does a deep concern for racial, gendered, or economic justice require you to be anti-capitalist?” Readings and discussions will cover a variety of topics: the relation between economics and politics, the nature of justice and a just political society, theories of social justice, theories of art and mass/popular culture, post-colonial theory, and the philosophy and politics of identity (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).

Required texts

Karl Marx, *The Portable Karl Marx*,

Angela Davis, *Women, Culture, & Politics*,

Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I,

Goals

1. To develop an understanding and appreciation of important writings, concepts, and theoretical frameworks in philosophy. [Knowledge]
2. To discover and develop your knowledge (and the knowledge of others) through research and writing projects. [Research and Scholarship]
3. To develop your leadership abilities by being responsible for guiding and facilitating discussion. [Academic Leadership]
4. To develop your ability to construct and articulate your philosophical views, on your own and by listening and being receptive to the critiques and suggestions of your peers. [Communication and Team Learning]

Requirements

Participation	5%	Research Paper	20%
In-class writing quizzes	10%	Praxis Project	15%
Discussion Facilitations	10%	Midterm Exam	20%
		Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale

94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C
87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	67-69	D+
80-83	B-	60-66	D
		< 60	F

Final grades are not rounded. An 89.999 is a B+

Participation:

Great discussions happen when everyone has a chance to participate in our conversations. Accordingly, we will try to actively involve everyone in our conversations and create a classroom culture that welcomes everyone. I expect you to be prepared and engaged with the text, and I expect you to participate nearly every class (for an A grade). To receive an A, you must participate in a respectful, relevant, and charitable manner. This means that you should not talk too much, be overly argumentative/aggressive, or be upset when I don't call on you every time you raise your hand; you should not bring up topics that are irrelevant or trivial; also, you should give the ideas of the author we are discussing, and the ideas of your peers, the most fair and generous interpretation, instead of being overly critical. You will be given a participation grade at midterm and at the end of the semester. Each grade is worth 5% of your overall grade.

There is a detailed participation rubric posted on Canvas that you need to consult in order to know exactly how you will be graded.

In-class writing quizzes:

Many of our classes will begin with reading quizzes. These quizzes will test how closely you read the assigned reading. The quizzes will be short writing assignments that respond to a prompt that I provide. There are no makeup quizzes, unless you have an excused absence (see policies). For excused absences, you have one week to take a makeup quiz, and you are responsible for scheduling the makeup quiz with me. The only other time you will receive a zero on a quiz is if you are not in class when the quiz begins. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Research Paper:

You will write a 5-7 page research paper that demonstrates a thorough understanding of one key concept in the thought of Karl Marx. Your paper must draw on several primary sources, and you must consult several secondary sources. Your paper proposal is due on February 10th and the final paper is due March 3rd. There is a document with assignment details in Canvas in "Files."

Discussion facilitation:

You will form groups of five during the first week of class. Your group will be responsible for facilitating our discussion four times. The dates are first come, first serve, but you can't facilitate back-to-back classes. There is a link to the signup website on our Canvas homepage. There is also a document with instructions and a grading rubric on Canvas. We will discuss the details of this assignment and my expectations at the beginning of the second day of class.

Praxis Project:

Taking inspiration from Marx's famous statement that the point of philosophy is to change the world, not just interpret it, you will complete a group project that focuses on putting one theoretical framework that we are reading into practice. You will be responsible for determining the form your practice takes. Possible projects include, but are not limited to, the following: an empirical study, organize a political demonstration or a community activity, create a work of art, etc. No matter what you decide to do, your praxis project must demonstrate a clear and thoughtful engagement with a text we read this semester, it must have a public showing of some kind, you must explain your project and its results via a 4-5 page group paper, and you must give a short presentation on your project on the last day of class. There is a document in Canvas (under "Files") with all of the assignment's details and requirements. Your group can discuss your project ideas with me at any point, but you have a formal proposal due on March 24th and the final project paper and documents are due on April 19th.

Exams

You will have two exams, a midterm and a final. Both tests will primarily involve short answer and essay questions, and they will test you on 1) your understanding of the philosophers' texts discussed during class, 2) any key concept/terminology we discuss, and 3) your ability to compare and contrast the views of different philosophers we discuss. The final exam is cumulative. There are no review sessions or study guides. You are responsible for taking notes on all important ideas and concepts discussed during class.

Midterm: Feb. 23rd

Final: May 1st @ 2pm

Additional Information & Classroom Policies

Unexcused Absence

An absence is excused only if you are 1) involved in an official Oxford event (sports, for example), 2) have a note from health services, 3) observing a religious holiday, or 4) have a note/e-mail from a dean excusing you from class. Any note must be for the day/time of our class.

Turning in Assignments

I will not accept assignments that are e-mailed to me. Any assignment that is not turned in by you at the beginning of class is late and will be penalized. If you leave class after turning in an assignment, you will receive a zero on the assignment. For daily assignments, late work is not accepted. For *all* assignments: each day late = one letter grade off (-10pts).

Electronics

You are not allowed to have laptops or cell phones out during class.

On days when the reading is a pdf, you either need to print the article or have an e-reader (no laptops or phones).

I do not consent to audio or video recordings of our classes.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating/plagiarism is not tolerated. Any form of cheating or plagiarism (regardless the assignment) will forfeit any possible credit for that assignment, and following school policy you will be reported to the Honor Council. (Please consult the Academic Honor Code in the Student Handbook.) If you have *any* questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism, don't hesitate to contact me.

Disability Accommodations

Any student who thinks s/he may need an accommodation should contact the Office of Disability Services (ADSR): adsroxford@emory.edu ; 770.784.4690. Unless you have official documentation from the ADSR office, I cannot grant accommodations. If you do not schedule testing in advance, you will have to take our tests during the regular class time without extended time or accommodations. Scheduling for an exam accommodation is your responsibility, and often you cannot schedule times on short notice.

Course Schedule: All dates and readings are subject to change.

PKM = Portable Karl Marx

Week	Topic	Required Reading
1		10 th – Syllabus and Introductions
January	I. Young Marx	12 th – <i>PKM</i> “On the Jewish Question”
	Early essays	
2	Early essays	17 th – <i>PKM</i> “Theses of Feuerbach” and “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy”
January	<i>The German Ideology</i> (1846)	19 th – <i>PKM</i> pp. 162-179
3	<i>The German Ideology</i> (1846)	24 th – <i>PKM</i> pp. 179-195
January	II. Mature Marx	
	<i>Capital</i> , Vol. 1 (1867)	26 th - Chapter 1, pp.125-154
4	<i>Capital</i> , Vol. 1 (1867)	31 st – Chapter 1, pp. 154-177
February		2 nd – Chapters 2 and 4
5	<i>Capital</i> , Vol. 1 (1867)	7 th – Chapters 5 and 6
February	(Paper proposal due the 10 th)	9 th – Chapter 7
6	<i>Capital</i> , Vol. 1 (1867)	14 th – Chapter 10, pp. 340- 374
February		16 th – Chapter 10, pp. 375 - 416
7	<i>Capital</i> , Vol.1 (1867)	21 st – Chapters 13 and 26
February		23 rd – Midterm Exam

Week	Topic	Required Reading
8 March	III. The Frankfurt School (Research Paper due the 3 rd)	28 th – Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (pdf) pp.94-115 2 nd – Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (pdf) pp.115-end
9 March	IV. Post-structuralism	14 th – Michel Foucault Paopticism (pdf) 16 th – Michel Foucault – Truth and Power (pdf)
10 March	V. Post-Marxism/Radical Democratic Theory (Praxis proposal due the 24 th)	21 st – Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (pdf) (pp. 149-171) 23 rd – Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (pdf) (pp.171- end)
11 March	VI. Critical theories of race, gender, and sexuality	28 th – Angela Davis, Chapters 1 and 2 30 th – Angela Davis, Chapters 3 and 4
12 April		4 th – Judith Butler (pdf) 6 th – Nancy Fraser (pdf)
13 April	VII. Postcolonial Theory/Subaltern Studies	11 th – Gayatri Spivak (pdf) 13 th – Chandra Mohanty (pdf)
14 April	(All praxis documents due the 19 th)	18 th – Anibal Quijano (pdf) 20 th – Presentation of Praxis Projects

Final Exam: