



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,637: Gesellschaft/Society: The Critique of Capitalism - Karl Marx's "Das Kapital"

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (70%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (30%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,637,1.00 Gesellschaft/Society: The Critique of Capitalism - Karl Marx's "Das Kapital"](#) -- English -- [Ramirez J. Jesse](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

None

Learning objectives

Students are able to

- understand, interpret, and evaluate Marx's critique of capitalism;
- critically reflect on the structures of capitalist society;
- critically compare and contrast Marx's ideas to mainstream economic categories.

Course content

What is capitalism? How does capitalism function, how did it emerge, and how will it end? This course addresses these questions through an in-depth engagement with what is arguably the most important critique of capitalism ever written: Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* (*Capital*). Taking advantage of a new English translation, we will read the book in its entirety. Along the way we will tackle topics such as the concepts of economic value and exploitation, the "mysteries" of money, workers' struggles to shorten the working day, the role of machinery in capitalism, the origins of capitalism in colonialism, and the system's possible breakdown. We will also consider what *Capital* has to teach us about contemporary issues like automation/AI and climate change.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

We will work through *Capital* in its entirety, accompanied by David Harvey's companion to the book. Sessions will center on a lecture by the instructor followed by open-ended discussion.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' own responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.



Course literature

Karl Marx, *Capital: Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 1, trans. Paul Reitter (Princeton UP, 2024)
David Harvey, *A Companion to Marx's Capital* (Verso, 2018)

Additional course information

Jesse Ramirez (PhD in American Studies/Yale University) is a cultural critic and author of three works of Marxist cultural studies: *Against Automation Mythologies: Business Science Fiction and the Ruse of the Robots* (Routledge 2021); *Un-American Dreams: Apocalyptic Science Fiction, Disimagined Community, and Bad Hope in the American Century* (Liverpool UP 2022); and *Rules of the Father in The Last of Us: Masculinity Among the Ruins of Neoliberalism* (Palgrave 2022).

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	70%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time



Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	30%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

1. **Presentation** (30%, group grade)
Students will critically compare and contrast the week's assigned reading with a related concept or approach in mainstream economics and/or business studies.
2. **Written work** (70%, individual grade)
Term paper, minimum 3500 words not including references and other extraneous material. Students can freely choose their paper topics as long as they engage extensively with some aspect of Capital.

Examination relevant literature

See course literature on StudyNet.



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).