

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF KARL MARX  
PHILOSOPHY 325

Dr. De Nys  
Spring, 2008  
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Office Hours:  
M 1:30 – 2:30  
W 4:30 – 5:30  
and by appointment

Texts: Karl Marx (ed. Simon), *Selected Writings*  
Schweikart, David, *After Capitalism*

Assignments:

- a) A reading of the texts according to the assigned schedule.
- b) A mid-term essay (4 - 5 pages) dealing with Marx's early writings.
- c) A paper (c. 8-9 pages) dealing with Marx's social and political philosophy in relation to Schweikart's appropriation of the same. This essay should discuss your assessments of (i) the extent to which Schweikart's proposals represent a genuine appropriation of Marx's critical social theory and (ii) the arguments he offers for those proposals.
- d) A final essay (4 – 5 pages) dealing with Marx's later theoretical and economic writings.

Grading Policy:

- a) Incompletes will be given only under the most severe of circumstances.
- b) All assignments must be completed if the student is to receive a passing grade for the course.
- c) The final grade will be calculated in the following fashion, mid-term essay, 30%, paper 40%, final essay 30%.

Description:

An examination and critical evaluation of key concepts in Marx's critical social theory that traces the development of that theory in writings selected from the several phases of Marx's career. Topics will include: Marx's relation to Hegel and the young Hegelians; his conceptions of human nature, history and society; the relation of economic society to political society; the critique of capitalism; socialism and social revolution; the relation of Marx's thought to current socialist theory and practice.

NB. Last day for dropping a course without incurring a grade of F is Friday, 22.

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF KARL MARX  
COURSE SCHEDULE

January 23, First class, Introduction to the course.

March 5, Mid-term essays due.

April 30, Papers on Marx and Schweikart due.

May 5, Final class.

May 12, Final essays due.

Ideally we will read and critically reflect on the following texts of Marx during the course of the semester.

“On the Jewish Question,” (1-26).

“Towards a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction,” (27-39).

“Excerpt Notes of 1844,” (40-53).

“Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,” (54-97).

“Theses on Feuerbach,” 98-101.

*The German Ideology* (102-156).

*The Communist Manifesto* (157-186).

“Introduction” to the *Grundrisse* (handout).

“Preface” to *A Critique of Political Economy* (209-213).

*Capital* (241-300).

NB: No late assignment will be accepted except under conditions of extreme emergency.