

**Carleton University  
Winter 2024  
Institute of Political Economy**

**PECO 5502 Y (PSCI 5502 W/SOCI 5505 W)  
*The Political Economy of Vulnerability and Need***

**Monday/ 11:35 am – 14:25 pm  
Location: 1524 Dunton Tower**

**Instructor: Maggie FitzGerald  
Email: [maggie.fitzgerald@carleton.ca](mailto:maggie.fitzgerald@carleton.ca)  
Office: Dunton Tower 1503**

**Office Hours: Monday, 10:00 am – 11:30 am, or by appointment**

**Course Description**

This course will critically examine and assess the ways in which ‘vulnerability’ and ‘need’ are understood and constructed in/by our political economic systems. More specifically, we will explore how subjects and their needs are constituted and shaped by capitalism and other intersecting systems of power (e.g., patriarchy, capitalism, heteronormativity), and we will track the political-economic processes through which certain vulnerabilities and needs are hidden, obfuscated, or marginalized, while others are centred. Lastly, we will consider alternative arrangements for responding to individual and community vulnerabilities.

**Course Objectives**

By the completion of this course, students will be expected to:

1. Identify and explain key theoretical perspectives on ‘vulnerability’ and ‘need’, especially in relation to the field of political economy.
2. Critically reflect on the relationship between our political economic systems, our vulnerabilities, and needs, and the ways in which we address or respond to these vulnerabilities and needs.
3. Enhance their academic skills of critical reading, research, writing, and presentations.

**Required Course Materials**

All course material will be available either through ARES, MacOdrum Library, or posted on Brightspace.

**Office Hours and Emails**

Office hours will be held on Mondays, 10-11:30 am. I will also often be available to meet after class. I try to answer emails within 24 hours, although this is not always possible. If you have a question about an assignment, it is therefore important that you email me at least 72 hours (and really, the earlier the better) before the assignment is due to ensure that I can respond in time.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Special Notes</b>
1	Class Introduction	Jan. 8 <sup>th</sup>	We will go through the syllabus, introduce the course, and sign up for class presentations.
2	Thinking about Vulnerability	Jan. 15 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Susan Hekman. 1995. <i>Moral Voices, Moral Selves</i>. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. (Read chapter 3, ‘Subject Strategies.’)</p> <p>Estelle Ferrarese. 2016. Vulnerability: A Concept with Which to Undo the World as it is? <i>Critical Horizons: A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory</i> 17, no. 2: 149-159.</p> <p>Estelle Ferrarese. 2016. The Vulnerable and the Political: On the Seeming Impossibility of Thinking Vulnerability and the Political Together and its Consequences. <i>Critical Horizons: A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory</i> 17, no. 2: 224-239.</p> <p>Martha Nussbaum. 2011. <i>Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach</i>. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. (Read chapter 2.)</p>
3	Marx on Needs	Jan. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<p>Agnes Heller. 2018. <i>The Theory of Need in Marx</i>. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.</p> <p>Skim: Karl Marx. 2007. <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i>. New York: Dover. (Read sections ‘Estranged Labour,’ ‘Private Property and Communism,’ and ‘The Meaning of Human Requirements Where There is Private Property and Under Socialism.’)</p>
4	Bare Life	Jan. 29 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Giorgio Agamben. 1998. <i>Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life</i>. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (Read ‘Introduction.’)</p> <p>Tiina Vaittinen. 2015. The Power of the Vulnerable Body: A New Political Understanding of Care. <i>International Feminist Journal of Politics</i> 17, no. 1: 100-118.</p> <p>H.-K. Hoppania and Tiina Vaittinen. 2015. A Household Full of Bodies: Neoliberalism, Care and ‘the Political.’ <i>Global Society</i> 29, no. 1: 70-88.</p>

5	Reproduction and Material Life	Feb. 5 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Karl Marx. 1978. <i>The German Ideology</i>. New York: International Publishers. (Read ‘Feuerbach, Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlook’ and ‘Karl Marx. Theses on Feuerbach.’)</p> <p>Silvia Federici. 2004. <i>Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation</i>. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia. (Read ‘The Accumulation of Labour and the Degradation of Women.’)</p> <p>John Bellamy Foster. 2002. “Capitalism and Ecology. Talk presented to the Socialism 2002 conference in Chicago on June 15, 2002.  <a href="http://napoletano.net/cursos/geomarx2018a/textos/Foster2002.pdf">http://napoletano.net/cursos/geomarx2018a/textos/Foster2002.pdf</a></p> <p>Optional:  Rhacel Salazar Parrenas. 2001. <i>Servants of Globalization</i>. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (Read chapter 3.)</p> <p>Meg Luxton. 2006. “Feminist Political Economy in Canada and the Politics of Social Reproduction.” In <i>Social Reproduction</i>, edited by Kate Bezanson and Meg Luxton, 11-44. Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.</p> <p>Ryan Katz-Rosene and Peter Andrée. 2021. Canada’s Ecological Political Economy and the Climate Crisis: An Interview with Dr. Laurie Adkin. <i>Studies in Political Economy</i> 102, no. 1: 51-60.</p>
6	Recognition and Community	Feb. 12 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Iris Marion Young. 2011. <i>Justice and the Politics of Difference</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Read chapter 1, ‘Displacing the Distributive Paradigm.’)</p> <p>Glen Sean Coulthard. 2014. <i>Red Skin White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition</i>. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Read chapters 1 and 2).</p> <p>Joana Ramiro. 2019. “Capitalism Killed Intimacy and Replaced it with Pornhub.” Jacobin  <a href="https://jacobinmag.com/2019/02/intimacy-social-reproduction-love-asmr-pornhub">https://jacobinmag.com/2019/02/intimacy-social-reproduction-love-asmr-pornhub</a></p> <p>bell hooks. 2000. <i>Where We Stand: Class Matters</i>. New York: Routledge. (Read pages 1-49).</p>
7	<b>READING WEEK – NO CLASS</b> <b>Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup></b>		

8	Desire and Pleasure	Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Rosemary Hennessy. 2000. <i>Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism</i>. New York: Routledge. (Read chapters 6 and 7.)</p> <p>Melissa Gira Grant. 2014. <i>Playing the Whore</i>. Brooklyn: Verso. (Read chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4.)</p> <p>Gracie Butt. 2019. "Commons of Love: The Socialist Case for Polyamory." <a href="https://www.leftvoice.org/commons-of-love-the-socialist-case-for-polyamory/">https://www.leftvoice.org/commons-of-love-the-socialist-case-for-polyamory/</a></p> <p>Clementine Morrigan. 2015. "Love is a Limited Resource: On Trauma and Queer Utopias." In <i>Love Without Emergency: I Want This But I Feel Like I'm Going to Die</i>, by Clementine Morrigan. Self-published Zine.</p> <p>Megan Rivers-Moore. 2012. Almighty Gringos: Masculinity and Value in Sex Tourism. <i>Sexualities</i> 15, no. 7: 850-870.</p>
9	Creativity	March 4 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Max Haiven. 2014. <i>Crises of Imagination, Crises of Power: Capitalism, Creativity and the Commons</i>. London: Zed Books. (Skim all, but read especially 'Introduction' and chapters 1, 4, 6, and 7.)</p> <p>Ann Swidler. 2010. "Access to Pleasure: Aesthetics, Social Inequality, and the Structure of Culture Production." In <i>Handbook of Cultural Sociology</i>, ed. by John R. Hall, Laura Grindstaff, and Ming-Cheng Lo, 285-294. New York: Routledge.</p>
10	Critique and Voice	March 11 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Herbert Marcuse. 1964. <i>One-Dimensional Man</i>. Boston: Beacon Press. (Read chapters 1 and 2.)</p> <p>Carol Gilligan and Naomi Snider. 2017. The Loss of Pleasure, or Why We Are Still Talking about Oedipus. <i>Contemporary Psychoanalysis</i> 53, no. 2: 173-195.</p> <p>Wendy Lerner. 2000. Neo-liberalism: Policy, Ideology, Governmentality. <i>Studies in Political Economy</i> 63: 5-25.</p>
11	Rethinking Vulnerabilities and Recentring Needs: Beyond Capitalism I	March 18 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Silvia Federici. 2012. <i>Revolution at Point Zero</i>. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia. (Read 'Wages Against Housework'.)</p> <p>Kathi Weeks. 2011. <i>The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries</i>. Durham: Duke University Press. (Read all, but especially 'Introduction' and Chapters 3, 4, and 5.)</p>

12	Rethinking Vulnerabilities and Recentring Needs: Beyond Capitalism II	March 25 <sup>th</sup>	J.K. Gibson-Graham. 2006. <i>Postcapitalist Politics</i> . Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Read chapters 4, 5, and 7). Maggie FitzGerald. 2020. Reimagining Government with the Ethics of Care: A Department of Care. <i>Ethics and Social Welfare</i> 14, no. 3: 248-265.
13	What's Missing? and Final Paper Presentations	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Becky Chambers. 2021. <i>A Psalm for the Wild-Built</i> . New York: Tordotcom. <b>Schedule to be determined.</b>
14	Final Paper Presentations	April 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Schedule to be determined.</b>

Schedule subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

### **Course Evaluation**

Class Participation	15%
Class Presentation	20%
Critical Review Essay	20%
Final Paper Presentation	15%
Final Paper	30%
Total	100%

### **Class Participation (15%): Due date: Ongoing**

Students are expected to attend all classes, read the assigned texts prior to class meetings, and participate actively and regularly in class discussions. Class participation will be evaluated based on the quality and quantity of contributions to class discussions, with particular emphasis on quality. Quality contributions to class discussions should demonstrate that you can analytically and critically engage with the themes, ideas, issues, and (dis)connections between the readings.

### **Class Presentation (20%): Due date: To be determined**

Each student will be responsible for beginning a seminar with a class presentation. Specifically, each student must give one in-class presentation of about 20 minutes introducing and responding to the required readings (and optionally, recommended readings) for a particular class. You will sign up for the date of your presentation in the first class. Note that the class presentation should not simply summarize the readings. Instead, the class presentation should

- (a) discuss how the readings relate to each other (as well as to other themes discussed in the course);
- (b) present analytical and critical reflections on individual readings or the general approaches under discussion; and
- (c) raise questions about the readings for class discussion. It is essential that your

presentation is not a mere summary of the readings, as it is expected that all students will have read the material prior to the class.

I am happy to meet with you before your presentation to help you plan.

**Critical Review Essay (20%): Due date: To be determined**

Each student must write one critical review essay (5 pages double spaced plus bibliography). The review essay must provide a critical analysis and assessment of the assigned readings for a week of your choice. Your review essay must provide a coherent argument, including a thesis statement, and must engage with at least two of the readings for the chosen week. You may use either required or recommended readings; you may not use any outside sources. The purpose of the critical review essay is to reflect exclusively on the readings for a given week. You cannot write your critical review essay for the same week as your class presentation. The review essay is due, in hard copy, at the beginning of the class on the day your chosen readings will be discussed.

Resubmission Option:

Each student will have the option to revise and resubmit their critical review essay. You have until the last day of classes (April 10th) to submit your revised essay. Please submit your revised essays directly to me (hard copy); please also include the original essay so that I can assess how you've responded to the feedback.

One of the most important writing skills you can develop involves receiving feedback, assessing and considering the feedback, and then re-working your paper in light of the concerns raised by the reviewer/evaluator. My hope is that this option gives you a chance to develop these important skills, which will serve you well in a number of endeavors (both academic and professional).

In general, if you wish to resubmit the essay, the idea is to take my feedback and comments, and then rework your essay to strengthen it based on any issues I raised. I am happy to talk with you if you would like to pursue this option and need some help getting going. And, of course, this is completely optional - if you are happy with your work, or simply don't have time to revisit, that's entirely alright. Furthermore, no one will be penalized for taking this option (that is, if by some chance your grade on your revised essay is lower than the original, I will keep the original grade. More simply, I will always keep the higher grade.)

**Final Paper Presentation (15%): Due date: To be determined (April 1<sup>st</sup> or April 8<sup>th</sup>)**

Each student will present a draft of their final paper to the class during the last two weeks of classes. This presentation will provide you with an opportunity to share your work with your peers, and to receive constructive feedback as you complete your final paper. I will determine a presentation schedule after receiving your paper outlines. This presentation should be about 8-10 minutes, followed by 5-7 minutes of questions and feedback.

**Final Paper (30%): Due date: April 10<sup>th</sup>**

You are required to write a final paper, 20 pages double spaced, on a topic of your choice related to the course themes. It may be a theoretical discussion or applied analysis. The paper must be emailed to me by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>.

## ADDITIONAL POLICY INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### **Student Mental Health**

As a university student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

- **Carleton Resources:**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

- **Off Campus Resources:**

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

### **Requests for Academic Accommodation**

**Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances:** Students must contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible, and normally no later than 24 hours after the submission deadline for course deliverables.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

**Pregnancy and Family-Status Related Accommodation:** Please write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first few weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details about the accommodation policy, visit the Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) website.

**Religious obligation:** Please write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

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### **Plagiarism**

Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include, but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, websites, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works,



laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**\*\*\* Artificial intelligence text generator tools (also known as large language models) are not permitted to be used in any assessments for this course. Any use of such tools will be considered academic misconduct in this course.\*\*\***

More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:  
<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

### **Intellectual property**

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

### **Submission and Return of Term Work**

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. The departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

### **Grading**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
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<b>90-100</b>	<b>A+</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>67-69</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>85-89</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>63-66</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>80-84</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60-62</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>77-79</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>57-59</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>73-76</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>53-56</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>70-72</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50-52</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>1</b>

**Carleton E-mail Accounts**

All email communication to students will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.