This seminar is the core course for the Collaborative PhD Program with a Specialization in Political Economy. The seminar is designed to promote advanced and critical thinking on the political economy tradition and its future, including the development of core competencies around foundational concepts and contemporary debates. A primary goal is to encourage collaborative and interdisciplinary reading, thinking and discussion. The course is also designed to help guide students regarding the range of theoretical alternatives that may be of use in developing their own doctoral research.

Seminar Requirements

Assessment will be based on the level and quality of your participation (60%) and your major paper (40%). The participation mark encompasses regular weekly discussion as well as short seminar papers and presentations.

You may satisfy the major paper requirement in one of four ways:

1) A well-researched review paper based on the impact of Political Economy on your discipline;
2) A well-researched review paper based on the impact of your discipline on Political Economy;
3) A research paper based on your thesis research;
4) Another topic pertaining to the seminar, and negotiated with the professor.

Papers will normally be 6500-7000 words (double-spaced) in length and demonstrate a command of the literature and original thinking in the domain of political economy. Papers will be due on April 8.

This is an advanced seminar in which regular, active, and critical participation is expected from every member of the seminar, every week. **You must attend all seminar meetings, being prepared to discuss the assigned texts and related topics.** Always bring the texts, and your notes on them, to each meeting; be sure to have read through and considered your peers’ papers prior to each meeting as well. You may use the CULearn discussion board to start or continue conversations in between seminar meetings.

Students are expected to be respectful of other seminar participants inside and outside the classroom.

Each student will also pick two occasions on which to formally present on the material and write a short seminar paper on the texts for a given week:

- Each presentation, which should take no more than 20 minutes, should address the main argument, points of insight, and contentious issues in the assigned readings. If relevant, your discipline’s relationship to the general topic or to the assigned texts may also be worth explaining to the seminar. Your presentation will set the tone and agenda for the seminar discussion to follow.
- A seminar paper should comprise a concise set of well-written, thoughtful reflections that demonstrates a close reading of one or more texts and a rich understanding of the material. It may be focused narrowly on a particular theoretical point, or it may be an exploratory paper that
looks into the applicability of the week’s material to a subject of particular interest. Please
distribute your papers to the seminar by mailing them, as single-spaced PDFs, through CULearn,
by 7pm on the Monday preceding the seminar meeting.

Letter grades on the major paper and in the course will reflect the following scheme:

A: Outstanding, highly insightful work; demonstrates fluency with the theory and a very high level of
engagement with the text(s).

B: Good insights; ability to understand and engage with the text(s) is apparent, although
the work may be uneven, unsustained, or there may be one or more significant oversights

C: Level of engagement with the material and overall quality of work falls below expectations. It is given
when a piece of work reflects a poor grasp of theory, an inability to develop a basic argument, and/or
poor research skills. **At the graduate level, a final grade of less than B- at the end of the term is
considered a failure.**

Late Work: Late work will not be accepted except in extraordinary circumstances (and must be
cleared with the professor at least one week in advance).

** There can be no rescheduling of presentation and discussant roles after the
second week of the seminar. Please plan accordingly. **

Academic honesty: Academic honesty is crucial in the environment of a small graduate seminar, and I
take it very seriously, without consideration of extraneous circumstances.

Cell phones: Cell phones should be off for the duration of the seminar.

Computers: Laptop computers should not be used in class except with documentation from the PMC
that a computer is required for note-taking. In the latter case, access to the internet
should be disabled. Seminar participants should be giving attention to each other and to
their note-taking, not to transcribing nor to any of the variety of distractions available
from the internet.

Questions: Questions about the course material that don't come up in seminar are best handled with
each other over CULearn, or with me in office hours, rather than over email. If it is
impractical or impossible to schedule an office hour appointment, then you are
encouraged to email me your question and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Email turnaround time: I check my email at least once a day, but I am not perpetually
connected to mobile devices nor to the internet. Every effort will be made to respond
within 24 hours to requests to schedule a meeting. Other emailed questions may take
longer, depending on their content and complexity.

If you are unable to meet with me, please don't hesitate to meet with each other.
(The course material provides lots to chew on and work through collectively – even
over a meal, a pint, coffee, or tea.)
Course Outline

Part I — Where we came from

January 6      Introduction and intellectual autobiographies

Students are asked to come to class each prepared to do a 10 minute presentation of their intellectual autobiography. In this informal presentation, you should discuss what formative experiences led you to come to study what you do, what influences your thinking, why you selected the topic for your planned dissertation, etc.

We will also discuss the course outline and expectations for the seminar.

No required reading for January 6. However, students may be interested in looking up and perusing any of the following:

Geoffrey Hodgson, How Economics Forgot History: The Problem of Historical Specificity in Social Science (Routledge, 2001)
Ben Fine and Dimitris Milonakis, From Political Economy to Economics (Routledge, 2008)

Based in part on students’ declared interests, the remainder of the seminar will be divided into several parts, highlighting both core and contested concepts in political economy.

January 13     Classical political economy: markets and capital

Robert Heilbroner, Teachings from the Worldly Philosophy, pp. 55-157 [excerpts of Smith, Ricardo, et al]

and if this text is new to you: also chapters 1, 7, and 10.

Suggested:


Kevin Anderson, Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies (Chicago, 2010).


David Harvey, A Companion to Marx's Capital (Verso, 2010).
Howard & King, The Political Economy of Marx (Longman: 1975), chs. 3-5.
January 20  Canadian political economy - with guest Wallace Clement


Wallace Clement and Glen Williams “Introduction” to The New Canadian Political Economy (McGill-Queen’s, 1989), pp. 3-15.


Wallace Clement, “Locating the New Canadian Political Economy,” in Thomas, Vosko, and Fanelli, eds., Change and Continuity: Rethinking the New Canadian Political Economy (McGill-Queen’s, 2016)

Leo Panitch, "The Role and Nature of the Canadian State" in Panitch (ed.), The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power (University of Toronto, 1977), 3-27


Suggested:


Any of the chapters from The New Canadian Political Economy, Understanding Canada: Building on the New Canadian Political Economy, or Changing Canada: Political Economy as Transformation.

Part II — Key Concepts

January 27  Class

Joan Acker, Class Questions, Feminist Answers (Rowan and Littlefield, 2006), chapters 2 and 3.

Erik Olin Wright, Understanding Class (Verso, 2015), chapters 1 and 7.


Suggested:


February 3  Productive labour

Marx, selections from Capital and Theories of Surplus Value (PDF)


Suggested:


Others TBA.

February 10  (Social) reproduction


Michèle Barrett, Women’s Oppression Today (new ed. - Verso, 2014 [1980]): Foreword (by Kathi Weeks); ch. 5 “Gender and the Division of Labour,” and Afterword “Revisiting the Marxist/Feminist Encounter in 2014”


Suggested:

Frederick Engels, Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State [1884]


Kate Bezanson, “Child Care Delivered Through the Mailbox: Social Reproduction, Choice, and Neoliberalism in a Theo-Conservative Canada,” in Braedley and Luxton, Neoliberalism and Everyday Life (McGill-Queen’s, 2010), 90-112.

Rosemary Hennessy, Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late Capitalism (Routledge, 2000)

Silvia Federici, Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation (Autonomedia, 2004).
February 24  Canadian Colonialism

Glen Coulthard, Red Skin White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition (Minnesota, 2014) - selections


Suggested:


“The Dene Nation: From Underdevelopment to Development” [1977], in Hugh Grant and David Wolfe, Staples and Beyond (McGill-Queen’s, 2006), 51-70.

March 2  [TBD - see below]

Part III — Political Economy of the Modern (Welfare) State

March 9  State and economy


Mariana Mazzucato, The Entrepreneurial State: Debunking Public vs. Private Sector Myths (Anthem, 2013): Introduction (1-13), chs. 1-3 (15-71), one of the case studies (chapter 5, 6, or 7), and chs. 9-10.

Suggested:

Michèle Barrett, Women’s Oppression Today, ch.7 “Feminism and the Politics of the State”


Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (Routledge, 1994 [1943]).


Any texts from the Poulantzas-Miliband debates

March 16  **The welfare state**


Suggested:


Erik Olin Wright, *Understanding Class* (Verso, 2015), part 3 (chs. 10-12): “Class Struggle and Class Compromise”


Mar 23  **Borders, migration, and citizenship**


Suggested:


**Part IV — Political Economy of the Environment and Climate Change**

**Mar 30**

*Political ecology*


Matthew Paterson and Simon Dalby, "Empire's Ecological Tyreprints" *Environmental Politics* 15:1 (2006), 1-22.


Suggested:


Climate change

Timothy Mitchell, “Carbon democracy”, *Economy and Society* 38:3 (2009), 399-432.


Suggested:


Carla Lipsig-Mummé, ed., *Climate@Work* (part of Labour in Canada series; Fernwood, 2013).
Possible topics and readings\(^1\) for the unassigned week (or for further exploration):

**Inequality**


**Debt and Development**


Arturo Escobar, "Development" in *Territories of Difference*


**Value**

Diane Elson, “The Value-Theory of Labour”


Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value* (selections)


Larsen, Nilges, Robinson, and Brown, eds. *Marxism and the Critique of Value* (MCM, 2014)

**The political economy of care**


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\(^1\) *Not a conclusive list, obviously.*
Moral Economies

Christopher Lind, Rumours of a Moral Economy (Fernwood, 2010)


Michael J. Thompson, Constructing Marxist Ethics: Critique, Normativity, Praxis (Brills, 2015).

International Political Economy


Labour in Canada

Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage, eds., Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada (Fernwood, 2012)


Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage, eds., Public Sector Unions in the Age of Austerity (Fernwood, 2013)


More on Space and Scale

Roger Keil and Rianne Mahon, eds., Leviathan Undone? Towards a Political Economy of Scale (UBC, 2009)

David Harvey, Spaces of Capital (Routledge, 2001)
David Harvey, Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution (Verso, 2012)

More on (Post)colonialism

Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity" in Therborn, Globalizations and Modernities

Franz Fanon, Black Skin White Masks

Himani Bannerji, The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity

Vivek Chibber, Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital (Verso, 2013)

Edward Baptist, Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism (Basic, 2014)

More on Neoliberalism and Globalisation

Jamie Peck, Constructions of Neoliberal Reason (Oxford, 2010)

Susan Braedley and Meg Luxton, Neoliberalism and Everyday Life (McGill-Queen’s, 2010).

Melissa Haussman and Birgit Sauer, eds. Gendering the State in the Age of Globalization: Women’s Movements and State Feminism in Postindustrial Democracies (Rowman and Littlefield, 2007). “Introduction: Women’s Movements and State Restructuring in the 1990s” and “Conclusion: State Feminism and State Restructuring since the 1990s”


David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism (Oxford, 2005)


Gérard Duménil and Dominique Lévy, "The Nature and Contradictions of Neoliberalism" in The Globalization Decade

Michel Foucault, The Birth of Biopolitics (Picador, 2010 [1979])


David McNally, *The Global Slump*

Randy Martin, *The Financialization of Daily Life*