

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**SOCI 3006
FALL 2022**

The Marxist Tradition of Social Thought

Instructor: Justin Paulson
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Course Schedule: Tuesday, 11:35-14:25
Method of Delivery: in-person lecture course

Course Description:

How do we make sense of the persistence of inequality and stratification? What does it have to do with class? Or history? How did critical social thought develop in response to fascism and colonialism in the 20th century? How do we best understand the intersections of race, class, and gender? What relevance does Marxist sociology have to the challenges facing the world today?

This one-semester course will provide students with a general level of fluency in several Marxian traditions of Sociology. Selected authors and theoretical groupings may include the Frankfurt School of critical theory, the Birmingham School of cultural studies, Marxist feminism, the Combahee River Collective, social reproduction theory, and others. Case studies will include Canadian settler colonialism, understanding climate change, and select social movements.

Lectures will emphasize the intellectual history of the field; texts will be principally primary sources. The course is intended to be intellectually challenging and rewarding.

Throughout the course students will have the opportunity to:

- engage directly with primary texts to develop their own skills of close reading and theoretical analysis;
- learn to assess the strengths and weaknesses of different theoretical perspectives;
- develop their writing and rhetorical skills;
- deepen their understanding of the complexities of the social world and the relations of power, class, difference, identity, colonialism, agency, and history that drive this tradition of social thought.

Prerequisites: SOCI 2005 and at least 2nd-year standing

Reading (s)/Textbook (s): at least 2 books, and numerous articles available through ARES.

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:

Students in this class will read a variety of texts related to the course theme, and then meet for 3 hours each week. Class meetings may consist of lectures, discussions, and sometimes film. Note that lectures will not rehash the assigned texts, but are designed to complement them by

providing background, context, clarification, and historical and theoretical framing. Students should be prepared each week to engage with and discuss the readings and the issues that they raise.

Students are expected to:

- Carefully read the assigned texts **before** the class meets. In the week before each class, you should prepare some written questions, thoughts, and/or subjects for discussion that are drawn from your own reflections on the week's texts. Bring those notes—and the texts for that week—to class.
- Attend all lectures punctually, take notes (on paper and in the margins of the texts), and be prepared to discuss the reading for that week. *Attendance and participation are important; you should not take this course if you cannot attend regularly.*
- Meet with the professor as necessary, complete all assignments on time, and participate actively in discussion.

Evaluation:

20% reading quizzes (Brightspace, to be completed prior to each lecture)
25% midterm exam
35% keyword journals
10% participation
10% selected CSAS workshops (to be completed prior to the midterm)