

CHRISTIAN LOTZ

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT • CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER 15, 2018 BY CHRISTIAN LOTZ

Spring 2019: Phi 357 – Marx



General information

Instructor

[Here is more information about Prof. Lotz](#)

Class Meetings

Days: MW

Time: 3 PM – 4:20 PM

Place: 105 Ernst Bessey Hall

Office

Phone: 517.355.4490 [dept.]

Place: 518 South Kedzie Hall

Hours: MW 1pm-2pm, and by appointment

Other Contact

E-mail: lotz@msu.edu

Home Phone: please ask

Webpage: <http://christianlotz.com>

Box

You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (SK 503)

Schedule

Introduction: Theory and Praxis

Jan 7, Introduction

Jan 9, Feuerbach Thesis 11

Jan 14, Marx to Ruge, May 1843 ([online](#)), Marx to Ruge, September 1843 ([online](#)): Towards a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, 71-82

please read these excerpts, and bring them to class

Relations/Labor/Alienation/Property

Jan 16, Feuerbach Theses, 171-174

Jan 21,

No class: MLK Day ([read this](#))

Jan 23, Feuerbach Theses, 171-174; Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, 83-95

Jan 28, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, 83-95; voluntary: On James Mill, 124-133

Homework Assignment 1 (sent out via email, 5pt)

Jan 30,

No class: **weather**

Feb 4, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, 95-104

Society and Social Reproduction

Feb 6, German Ideology, 175-184

Feb 11, German Ideology, 175-184

Feb 13, German Ideology, 184-198; Free Individuals in Communist Societies, 207-208; Artistic Talent under Communism, 205-206

In-class Group Assignment 1 (3pt)

Homework Assignment 2 (sent out via email, 2pt)

Communism/History/Democracy

Feb 18, Communist Manifesto, 245-273

Feb 20, Communist Manifesto, 245-273; Letter to Sassoulitch, 623-629; Letter to Annenkov, 209-211

Feb 25, Critique of the Gotha Program, 609-616

Thesis Paper: Margo

Feb 27, Civil War in France (on Paris Commune), 584-603; On

Bakunin, 606-610

Thesis Paper (on Paris Commune): Isabel

Homework Assignment 3 (sent out via email, 5 pts)

Mar 4

Spring Break

Mar 6

Spring Break

Value as Social Form and Commodification: Reading Capital

Mar 11, Introduction

Marx, Capital, Prefaces, 89-106

Mar 13, Value

Marx, Capital, chapter 1.1-1.3

Thesis Paper (focus on why value is a social concept): Tom +

Jack

Mar 18, Value

Marx, Capital, chapter 1.1-1.3

Mar 20, Fetishism

Marx, Capital, chapter 1.4

Thesis Paper: Connor

Homework Assignment 4

(sent out via email)

Mar 25, Exchange and

Commodity Circulation

Marx, Capital, chapter 2 +

3.2.a+b

Thesis Paper (exchange):

Sarah

Thesis Paper

(circulation): Duncan

Mar 27, Capital

Marx, Capital, chapter 4

Thesis Paper: Guy

Thesis Paper: Mike

Homework Assignment 5 (sent out via email)



“Who would have imagined that Kitchen-Robby would abuse his freedom in such a way” (Gerhard Glück, Eulenspiegel, Berlin, 2000)

Apr 1, Contradictions/Capital

Marx, Capital, chapter 5

Thesis Paper: Cooper

Apr 3, Surplus Value

Marx, Capital, chapter 6

Thesis Paper: Christopher + Ezgi

Homework Assignment 6 (sent out via email)

Apr 8, Labor Process, Constant and Variable Capital

Marx, Capital, 7+8

Thesis Paper (labor process): Ian

Thesis Paper (valorization): Robert

No office hours this week

Apr 10,

No Class

Final Paper Assignment (sent out via email)

April 15, Relative Surplus Value

Marx, Capital, chapter 12+13

Thesis Paper (relative surplus value): Alan

Thesis Paper (cooperation): Henry

Apr 17, Capitalist Character of Division of Labor

Class canceled

Thesis Paper (focus on 14.5): Griffin + Lauren (please turn in on Apr 22)

Apr 22, Primitive Accumulation

Marx, Capital, 26

Thesis Paper: Eloise + Sarah/Zoe

Apr 24, Wrap Up

Last class

May 1, (day of final exam)

Final paper due by May 1 at 5:45pm via D2L dropbox

Course Description

Those who do not move, do not feel their chains
(Rosa Luxemburg)

In this class we will discuss central aspects of Marx's philosophy and social theory. We will focus on his conception of society and the role of labor, on a few political aspects of his philosophy, as well as on his main economic work, *Capital*,

which still is a fascinating, but very difficult book. We will not extensively deal with Marx's political theory (revolution, party conception, labor movement, etc.). We will exclusively deal with primary texts and exclude broader historical questions, such as the development of socialist philosophies in the 19th Century, or 20th Century developments within the great tradition of Marxism. As such, this course presents Marx as a systematic thinker who should be studied again if we want to understand the world we live in.

Check out this site as a great resource for Marxism in general:
www.marxists.org



Studying is class struggle, too (activist poster from the 70s)

Course Goals

This lecture class should introduce to

- the concept of labor as the central concept for social-political philosophy
- how to think about the relation between labor and society
- the materialist conception of history and Marx's concept of society
- a few selected political ideas in Marx (though we will not focus on politics)
- basic concepts of Marx's *Capital*, such as social categories, money, capital, technology, capital accumulation, and labor power

Note

Students should be aware of the fact that this course is based on difficult texts. Accordingly, this class requires self-responsible learners and an intense confrontation with the primary text. Accordingly, if you are not excited about the prospect of a daily confrontation with abstract and historical reflections, then you should not take this class. This class is not based on a set of fixed knowledge and, as such, is not based on a behavioral idea of education; rather, we will try to

Note

This is a 300-level course in philosophy and, as such, contains difficult material and requires mature students. If you are not willing to study dense written material, listen to unusual lectures, and discuss ideas in an organized fashion, then you should not take this class. This class can be taken by students without prior knowledge in philosophy. You should not take this class if you are not an avid reader.

learn together and critically examine the material. The instructor of this class does not have anything to teach, but much to learn.

Required Texts

- McLellan, Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford University Press; please get the 2nd edition
- Marx, Capital, Vol I, (Penguin Classics)

No digital editions, please!

Helpful Texts (purchase not required, but recommended)

- Balibar, Introduction to the Philosophy of Marx (Verso)
- Heinrich, Introduction to the Three Volumes of Capital (Monthly Review Press)

Course Requirements

- daily reading and studying (around 5-10 pages, up to 50 per week)

- 1 thesis statement (short assignment, systematic summary of the readings)
- 1 final assignment
- 5 response sheets
- homework assignments and spontaneous assignments in class, including reading quizzes
- participation

Note

The class and my lectures are solely based on the texts selected for class and require a thorough study and preparation of the material. I will primarily lecture on the readings, which will help you to more fully understand the texts. Therefore it is not sufficient for students to come to class without having prepared the texts. And indeed, in the assignments you have to demonstrate whether you have appropriately prepared the readings selected for each lecture.

Note

Every academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, will - without exception - lead to a failing grade in class. Check the Ombudsman's page (see also note below on plagiarism):

<https://www.msue.edu/~ombud/>

Assignments

Make-Up Assignments

Students who need to miss assignments for excusable reasons, such as a death in their families, MSU related business, emergency weather conditions, or medical reasons, must inform me ahead of time, and will be permitted to make up assignments. I will only accept official doctor notes (no faxes, no emails) or letters from other professors. Unfortunately I am unable to accept any other reasons than those mentioned.

Attendance

To get a good grade in this class, regular attendance is required. I will not call roll. Hence, it is up to you to come to class or not. However, if you do not come to class on a regular basis and participate in the class discussion, it is impossible for you to achieve a good grade in this class; so coming to class is your responsibility and your call. If you choose to attend class, please come on time, turn off cell phones and other electronic devices that interfere with your (and others') concentration, have the reading prepared and be ready to

participate. If you are not prepared, do not bother showing up. It is a sign of disrespect to your peers and the instructor to attend class unprepared. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes from a fellow student and to catch up on reading. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make me responsible for a failure that results out of your decision. You should be aware that chances to master this class are minimal, if you do not show up for class or if you do not prepare the readings (=studying).

Thesis Statement (brief overview of assigned reading)

Each student has to prepare one thesis statement for class. The thesis statement should contain [a] a list of main points and claims, [b] concepts that are unclear, [c] intelligent questions about the readings. Students who prepare the thesis paper need to send their thesis papers by 6pm (the day before class) per email to me, bring copies for everyone to class and be prepared to briefly present their statement (this will not always happen). The thesis statement is limited to one page and you must use the following prepared document:

[Download thesis statement form](#)

Reading Quizzes

Given recent negative experience with student's unwillingness to read and study primary material, I *might* assign reading quizzes. Questions will be passed out in advance. Quizzes cannot be made up (except in cases mentioned above).

Homework Assignments

From time to time I will send out via email weekend homework assignments; usually a short writing prompt in relation to either lecture or video material online, or in relation to our readings. Given that these homework assignments are always due on Mondays, I will not accept late turn-ins. There is plenty of time for you to respond to the task, given that I usually send this out on time.

Unannounced Assignments

There *might* be – from time to time – spontaneously assigned group assignments in class. Students who do not attend class (and have no medical documentation) will lose all points.

Response Sheets

Every student is asked to submit up to 5 class response sheets during the semester. Please download the form here (plus: print it out five times and add it to your class folder). Response sheets must be submitted at the end of a class session. I do not accept late turn ins or turn ins by email.

[Download response sheet](#) (I will only accept answers that are given on this form)

Note

Students are not allowed to turn in response sheets during the last week of class!

Course Evaluation

Assignments

1 final assignment	25 points
Participation	10 points
Homework assignments, unannounced group assignments, reading quizzes	35 points
1 thesis statement (use .doc, see above)	15 points

5 response sheets	15 points

	100 points

Grading

4.0 (=A)	100 – 93
3.5	92 – 87
3 (=B)	86 – 82
2.5	81 – 77
2 (=C)	76 – 72
1.5	71 – 65
1.0 (=D)	64 – 60
0.0	< 60

GENERIC SYLLABUS (might not be applicable to each class)

Laptop/Cell Phone/Tablet Policy

You are not permitted to use laptops or cell phones in class, unless needed for medical reasons. Flat devices, such as tablets, are permitted if you have purchased the literature required for class electronically. Please do not text under the table. Cell phones should be removed from tables. Failure to follow this policy will lead to unannounced assignments in class or loss of points (at the digression of the instructor).

Class Attendance

As mentioned above, I do not employ in my classes a class attendance policy. Having said this, you should be aware that class attendance is very important. When engaging in a philosophical and humanistic dialogue it is necessary to be an active and present participant in the ongoing discussion. If you miss class please do not email me asking if you missed anything important. Every class is important. You should get a study buddy for the class; a student in class who will inform you of what you missed. If you miss a class you can come to my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the material, providing you have read the material and you simply want to see if your understanding of the material is on target.

Time in office hours will not be used to repeat the class lectures.

Grading Criteria + Paper Writing Tips

Check out [this page for grading criteria, example of assignments, etc.](#)

Online Research Sources

Unfortunately, some people think that the internet as such is a reliable source of information. If you decide to use online sources for additional information or your paper then do not just use one of the common internet search engines, such as Google; rather, use reliable academic sources, such as Britannica Online, or the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#). The [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) isn't very good, but still acceptable. Check out MSU's [library resources!](#) And, as with other sources, you must cite any online sources to which you refer in your essay.

Writing Center Information

MSU's writing center offers excellent help on all matters regarding writing and learning. Check the website at

<http://writing.msu.edu> for an overview and hours. For more information, please call 517.432.3610 or send an e-mail to writing@msu.edu.

Grief Absence Policy

I follow MSU's general grief absence policy, which can be found [here](#).

Integrity of Scholarship and Grades (Plagiarism)

The following statement of University policy addresses principles and procedures to be used in instances of academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards, and falsification of academic or admission records, herein after referred to as academic misconduct. [See General Student Regulation 1.00, Protection of Scholarship and Grades.]

Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty

as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/>)

Plagiarism, from the Ombudsman's page

Plagiarism (from the Latin plagiarus, an abductor, and plagiarere, to steal) is defined by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy on Misconduct in Research (take that!) as "... the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit."

Accidental or Unintentional

One may not even know that they are plagiarizing. It is the student's responsibility to make certain that they understand the difference between quoting and paraphrasing, as well as the proper way to cite material.

Blatant

Here, students are well aware that they are plagiarizing. Purposefully using someone else's ideas or work without proper acknowledgment is plagiarism. This includes turning in borrowed or bought research papers as one's own.

Self

Turning in the same term paper (or substantially the same paper) for two courses without getting permission from one's instructor is plagiarism.

SIRS Evaluations

Michigan State University takes seriously the opinion of students in the evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction and has implemented the Student Instructional Rating System (SIRS) to gather student feedback (<https://sirsonline.msu.edu>). This course utilizes the online SIRS system, and you will receive an e-mail during the last two weeks of class asking you to fill out the SIRS web form at your

convenience. In addition, participation in the online SIRS system involves grade sequestration, which means that the final grade for this course will not be accessible on STUINFO during the week following the submission of grades for this course unless the SIRS online form has been completed. Alternatively, you have the option on the SIRS website to decline to participate in the evaluation of the course. We hope, however, that you will be willing to give us your frank and constructive feedback so that we may instruct students even better in the future. If you access the online SIRS website and complete the online SIRS form or decline to participate, you will receive the final grade in this course as usual once final grades are submitted.

Social Media and Sharing of Course Materials

As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students are the copyrighted property of the course instructor and are subject to the following conditions of use:

1. Students may record lectures or any other classroom activities and use the recordings only for their own course-related purposes.

2. Students may share the recordings with other students enrolled in the class. Sharing is limited to using the recordings only for their own course-related purposes.
3. Students may post the recordings or other course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in the class with the advance written permission of the course instructor and, if applicable, any students whose voice or image is included in the recordings.
4. Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

Student Support Program (SSP)

Michigan State University is offering all MSU students access to counseling support 24/7/365 through My SSP: Student Support Program. My SSP is free to all MSU students. My SSP is confidential, and can help with:

- Adapting to new challenges
- Being successful at school
- Relationships with friends and family
- Practical issues with studying
- Stress, sadness, loneliness, and more

The My SSP professional counselors are available to help anytime, anywhere with:

- Immediate support by phone and chat
- Ongoing support by appointment via phone and video
- In addition, culturally relevant support is available in the language of the caller's choice.

There are multiple options for connecting with a My SSP counselor:

- Download the free My SSP app on Google Play or iTunes
- Chat online at <http://us.myissp.com>
- Call 1-866-743-7732
- From outside North America, call 001.416.380.657

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY)

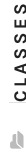
Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade

reported is (see Academic Calendar). You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Note on Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.



CLASSES