

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY**

THE POLITICAL THEORY OF CAPITALISM

Fall 2008

Peter McNamara

MW 4-5.15

Office hours: W 1-3.30.

Sirrine Hall 221A

peter.mcnamara@usu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary purpose of this course is to inquire into the moral basis of capitalism. Does capitalism have a moral basis? What is it? What are its strengths? Weaknesses? Along the way we will consider the relations between and among capitalism and liberal political thought, the science of economics, and liberal democracy. We will also consider some of the most powerful religious and philosophical critiques of capitalism.

REQUIREMENTS

Readings

I have ordered two books.

1. Jerry Z. Muller, *The Mind and the Market*.
2. Nishiyama and Leube, eds., *The Essence of Hayek*.

There will also be a significant amount of online readings and class handouts. Most are available at the Online Library of Liberty at www.libertyfund.org.

Grade

Your final grade will be calculated on the following basis.

1. Two five page papers. 20% each.
2. Midterm exam. 20%
3. Final exam. 30%
4. Class presentations. 10%

Class Procedures

1. Come to class having done the readings and be prepared to discuss them.
2. Turn off your cell phone and disconnect from the internet **before** class starts.

READINGS AND CLASS SCHEDULE

(Please note that this reading and course schedule is tentative and subject to change.)

WEEK ONE

August 17

W **Introduction**

WEEK TWO

August 25

THE CHRISTIAN AND CLASSICAL APPROACHES TO COMMERCE

M Muller, Ch. 1

PROPERTY AND LIBERAL POLITICAL THOUGHT

W Hobbes, Leviathan, chs 13.

WEEK THREE

Sept 1

M Hobbes, Leviathan, chs 14.

W Locke, Second Treatise, ch. 2.

WEEK FOUR

Sept 8

M Locke, Second Treatise, ch. 5.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND LIBERAL POLITICAL THOUGHT

The “Luxury” Debate

W Mandeville, Fable of the Bees.

WEEK FIVE

Sept 15

M No class

W No class

WEEK SIX

Sept 22

M Mandeville, Fable of the Bees.

W Hume, On Luxury.

First Paper Due in Weds class.

WEEK SEVEN

Sept 29

Adam Smith and the Science of Political Economy

- M Muller, Ch. 3.
 W Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk I, chs 1-3.

WEEK EIGHT

Oct 6

- M **MIDTERM EXAM**
 W Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk IV, ch. 2.

WEEK NINE

Oct 13

- M Smith, Wealth of Nations, Bk V, ch. 1, f-g.
KARL MARX AND THE MODERN CASE AGAINST CAPITALISM
 W Muller, ch. 7.

WEEK TEN

Oct 20

- M Communist Manifesto, Pts I & II.
 W Communist Manifesto, Pts III-IV.

WEEK ELEVEN

Oct 27

CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM AND ANALYSIS

- M Schumpeter: Muller, ch. 11.
 W Keynes and Marcuse: Muller, ch. 12.

WEEK TWELVE

Nov 3

- M No Class
 W Rand, from *The Virtue of Selfishness*: 1) "The Objectivist Ethics"; 2) "Man's Rights"; 3) "The Nature of Government."

WEEK THIRTEEN

Nov 10

- M Rand, From *The Virtue of Selfishness*: "Government Financing in a Free Society." From *Capitalism: The Unknown Ideal*: "What Is Capitalism?"
F.A. Hayek and the Great Society
 W Muller, Ch. 13.
Second Paper Due

WEEK FOURTEEN

Nov 17

M Hayek, "Use of Knowledge in Society" in *Essence*, ch. 11.

W Hayek, "Social or Distributive Justice" in *Essence*, ch. 5.

WEEK FIFTEEN

Nov 24

M Hayek, "Keynes Centenary," "Principles and Expediency" in *Essence*, chs 3& 16.

W Thanksgiving

WEEK SIXTEEN

Dec 1

M Hayek, "Why I am not a conservative?" in *Essence*, ch. 15.

W **Conclusion**

WEEK SEVENTEEN

Dec 8

Final exam week