

WESTERN UNIVERSITY – FALL 2018

POLS 2102A – CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY

Class Time: Tuesday, 10:30am - 12:30pm

Instructor: Dianne Lalonde

Email: dlalond3@uwo.ca

Location: UCC 67

Office Hours: By appointment

CONTENTS

[Course Learnings](#)

[Course Goals](#)

[Course Statements](#)

[Campus Resources](#)

[Course Book](#)

[Course Work & Grading Procedure](#)

[Course Outline](#)



[Western OWL – Course Website](#)

Capitalism and democracy are not terms that can be simply defined. We need to ask: What are their core values? How are they enacted in different times and environments?

Being clear on our understandings of these terms enables us to explore the relationship between them. How do capitalism and democracy interact? On what values do they exist in harmony, and on what values are they in crisis? Answering these questions will involve us working through important political works, current events, and our own personal assumptions.

It is also important to think through other possible systems and futures. What would a life without capitalism and/or democracy look like? Is that something we should be moving towards?

What will be covered in Capitalism and Democracy?

1. Definitions of democracy and capitalism



HOW DID DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALISM COME TO BE?
HOW ARE THEY BEING ENACTED AND LIVED IN OUR TIMES?
IN THIS FIRST SECTION, WE WILL DEEPEN OUR
UNDERSTANDINGS OF CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY.



2. How capitalism and democracy may be in harmony

INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY
THAT CAPITALISM AND
DEMOCRACY LEAD TO PEACE
AND DEVELOPMENT, WHILE
INCREASING INDIVIDUAL
FREEDOM.



3. How capitalism and democracy may be in crisis

INCLUDING THE WAYS IN WHICH
CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY
CAN LEAD TO ALIENATION AND
THE COMMODIFICATION OF
EVERYDAY LIFE.

FOR SALE

4. Possible alternatives to capitalism and democracy

WHAT HAPPENS IF ALL LABOUR IS TAKEN OVER BY ROBOTS?
HOW WILL WE RESPOND TO THE INEVITABLE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS?
IN THIS LAST SECTION, WE WILL CONSIDER FOUR FUTURES
WITHOUT CAPITALISM AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR DEMOCRACY.



Course Goals

Student Goals

- **Understand** the values and varieties of capitalism and democracy, in addition to their interaction
- **Challenge** the assumptions you hold and those held in the work we will be reviewing
- **Communicate** your challenges, questions, and thoughts clearly to the instructor and your fellow students
- **Apply** what you learn to analyze and respond to current political, social, and economic events

Instructor Goals

- **Engage** student's curiosity and desire to learn
- **Provide** a clear structure for lessons and grading, in addition to personal guidance
- **Inspire** students to critically and thoughtfully consider how these lessons impact their lives and the lives of others

Course Statements

Classroom Conduct Statement

We will engage in respectful and thoughtful dialogue. To do so, our comments will not be harassing or demeaning. We will not interfere with our learning by being disruptive. Examples of disruptive behavior include arriving late to class, talking without being called upon, and inappropriately using our computers and phones.

Name and Pronoun Statement

All people have the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity. In this class, you will have the chance to indicate the name that you prefer to be called and, if you choose, to identify pronouns with which you would like to be addressed. I will address and refer to all students accordingly and support classmates in doing so as well.

Content Warning Statement

During the course of this semester, we may discuss historical and current events that may be disturbing or even traumatizing to some students. If you suspect that the material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, please discuss your concerns with me prior to the class in which the subject comes up. Similarly, if we are discussing something in class and you feel the need to step outside during a class discussion, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will be responsible for getting the material from a classmate or the instructor.

Accommodation Statement

We all learn differently and we all need accommodation to assist our learning. If there is something in this course or beyond the course that is a barrier to your learning, please let me know. I encourage all students to utilize the resources below, and other resources on campus and in the community.

Campus Resources

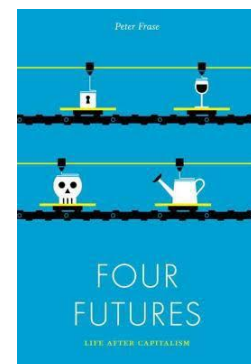
- [Services for Students with DisAbilities](#)
- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Writing Support Centre](#)
- [Indigenous Services](#)
- [International and Exchange Student Centre](#)

Course Book

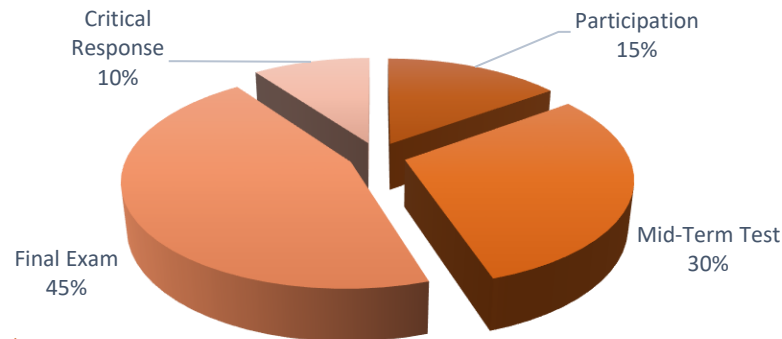
There is one required book for this course available through [The Book Store at Western:](#)

Four Futures: Life After Capitalism by Peter Frase (2016)

The book will also be available through reserve at Weldon Library.



Course Work & Grading Procedure



Participation (15%)

Participation will consist of three components: attendance, in-class discussion, and online engagement through OWL Forums. Your participation will be graded in accordance with the quality and quantity of your contribution. A rubric for participation grading, in addition to examples of strong contributions to discussions, will be shared on OWL.

Mid-Term Test (30%)

The mid-term test will occur in class on **October 23rd**. It will consist of multiple choice and short-answer questions. We will discuss the mid-term more in class and have a review session on **October 16th**.

Critical Response (10%)

The critical response will be 750 – 1,000 words. A list of questions, a grading rubric, and more details will be provided on OWL after the fall reading break. The response serves as preparation for the final exam and provides an opportunity for the instructor to give feedback on student analysis. The response is due in class on **November 20th**.

Final Exam (45%)

The final exam will occur during the Fall exam period. It will consist of short answer and essay questions. We will discuss the final exam in class and have a review session on **December 4th**.

Late Policy

Late assignments will receive a penalty of 3% a day and an assignment more than a week late will not be accepted. If you require accommodation, connect with [Academic Counselling](#).

Make-Up

If you require a make-up for the mid-term test or final exam, connect with [Academic Counselling](#). If you require make-up for participation, email the instructor at dlalond3@uwo.ca

Course Outline

UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALISM

SEPTEMBER 11TH. Defining Capitalism

- [Crash Course: Int'l Commerce, Snorkeling Camels, and The Indian Ocean Trade \(10 minutes\)](#)
- [Crash Course: Capitalism and the Dutch East India Company \(15 minutes\)](#)

SEPTEMBER 18TH. Varieties of Capitalism

- *Modern Capitalist World Economy: A Historical Overview* – Jeffrey Frieden (OWL)
- *Good Capitalism, Bad Capitalism, and the Economics of Growth and Prosperity* – William Baumol, Robert Litan, and Carl Schramm (OWL)

SEPTEMBER 25TH. Defining Democracy

- *On Democracy* – Robert Dahl (OWL)
- *Indigenous Democracy: The Great Law of Peace of the Haudenosaunee* – Lynn Gottlieb (OWL)

OCTOBER 2ND. Varieties of Democracy

- *Three Normative Models of Democracy* – Jürgen Habermas (OWL)
- [On electoral reform, what are Canada's options?](#) – Amanda Shendruk

OCTOBER 9TH. FALL READING BREAK

CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY IN HARMONY

OCTOBER 16TH. Peace & Development

MID-TERM TEST REVIEW

- *The End of History?* – Francis Fukuyama (OWL)
- *Is Capitalism Good for Women?* – Ann Cudd (OWL)

OCTOBER 23RD. MID-TERM TEST

OCTOBER 30TH. Freedom

- *Ethical Assumptions in Economic Theory* – Elizabeth Anderson (OWL)
- *The Virtue of Selfishness* – Ayn Rand (OWL)

CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

NOVEMBER 6TH. Alienation

- *An Introduction to Marx's Theory of Alienation* – Judy Cox (OWL)
- *The "Democracy-Politics Paradox": The Dynamics of Political Alienation* – Gerry Stoker and Mark Evans (OWL)
- In-class screening: *Black Mirror* (62 minutes)

NOVEMBER 13TH. Commodification

- *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets* – Michael Sandel (OWL)
- *Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance* – bell hooks (OWL)

LIFE AFTER CAPITALISM

NOVEMBER 20TH. Communism & Rentism

RESPONSE PAPER DUE

- *Four Futures: Life After Capitalism* - Peter Frase (Introduction and Chapters 1-2)

NOVEMBER 27TH. Socialism & Exterminism

- *Four Futures: Life After Capitalism* - Peter Frase (Chapters 3-4 and Conclusion)

DECEMBER 4TH. FINAL EXAM REVIEW