Philosophy 3110: Social and Political Philosophy  
Gabriel Soldatenko, Asst. Prof. of Philosophy  
TR 9:30-10:45, Room: SO 3019, Spring 2015

Office Hours: Monday 10:00-12:00, Tuesday 11:00-12:00, and by appointment.  
Social Science #4091

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Course Description: This course is organized around a series of close readings of some of the major figures, and traditions, of critical social thought in the West. As a result, the course has two definite limits; in the first place, it is confined to continental philosophy after the mid-nineteenth century. And secondly, it only looks at those authors who are critical; and by “critical” we mean those philosophers and traditions that begin from the premise that a better world is possible, and that such an end is desirable. As a result, this class is not a survey course where we start from the ancients and end at the present. Rather, this course will take our present social arrangement as its point of departure and look at some influential authors who have provided some important tools for how to think critically of the modern world. Thus, the class is meant to provide students with both an understanding of what social political philosophy is, and second, provide a ground that allows students to develop their own philosophical sensibility through which to engage our current social arrangement.

Texts: All course materials will be provided through Desire to Learn (D2L). Note that the cost you save in not having to buy books may be incurred through printing and photocopying.

Course Requirements: Over the course of the semester students

• will bring the days reading to class according to the schedule on the syllabus and/or the professor’s instructions;
• will actively engage the course material and participate in the class discussion; and
• will attend class regularly, even if attendance is not taken.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the term students will have gained

• a detailed sense of the history of Western philosophy, and the interrelation between epistemological questions and their impact on society;
• an understanding of the basic methods and important concepts through which one can engage in social political philosophy;
• a firm understanding of that branch of social political philosophy called “critical theory”;
• a general understanding of the work of Karl Marx, the Frankfurt School, the Anarchist tradition, and Michel Foucault; and

Evaluation: There will be two long papers that will account for 60% of the final grade. In addition, there will be three short critical essays that will count for an additional 30%, and class participation will constitute the final 10%.
Absence Policy: There are no excused absences in college. Students are responsible for making up class by conferring with classmates (i.e. getting notes and discussing the main topics of conversation). Students are responsible for all material covered: readings, lectures, and documentary presentations. I will allow make-up exams only if I’m contacted at least two days prior to the exam date.

Academic Integrity Statement: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including but not limited to provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, and misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program.

ADA Statement: Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange the necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from KSU disAbled Student Support Services. No requirement exists that accommodations be made prior to completion of this approved University process. Accommodations are arranged on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs and circumstances have been evaluated. The following individuals have been designated by the President of the University to provide assistance and ensure compliance with the ADA. Should you require assistance or have further questions about the ADA, please contact: Carol Pope, Asst. Dir. for disAbled Student Support Services cpope@kennesaw.edu disAbled Student Support Services Website: http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/dsss/dsss.html

Schedule of Readings:

January 8: Introduction: Social Political Philosophy and Critical Social Theory

Part I. Materialism and the Critique of Capitalism

January 15

January 22 “Preface to the First Edition”
Chapter 4: “The General Formula for Capital”

January 29 Chapter 7: “Labor and Valorization Process”

February 5 Chapter 13: “Co-operation”
February 12
“Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, 1844”
Paper #1 Assigned on the 10th

Part II. The Frankfurt School

February 17: Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Beacon Press: Boston, 1966)
February 19
“The New Forms of Control”
“The Closing of the Political Universe”
Paper #1 Due on the 19th

February 24: Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Beacon Press: Boston, 1966)
February 26
“The Closing of the Political Universe” (continued)
“From Negative to Positive Thinking”
Critical Essay #1 Assigned on the 26th

Critical Essay #1 Due on the 5th

Critical Essay #2 Assigned on the 12th

Part III. Anarchist Social Thought


March 19: Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid (Extending Horizons Books: Boston, 2005)
March 24
1914 Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1
Critical Essay #2 Due on the 19th

Critical Essay #3 Assigned

Part IV. Society and Power

April 2
Critical Essay #3 Due on the 2nd

Spring Break (April 7th and 9th no class)

April 16: No class

April 21: “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” continued

April 23: Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power” in *Essential Works of Foucault v.3*


May 5: Paper #2 Due (no later than 4 pm)