CRD 141: Organization of Economic Space
"Politics and Geography of Modern Economies"
Winter 2020
Tuesday & Thursday 3:10-5:00
Hart Hall, Room 1150

Instructor
Dr. Mark Cooper
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1335 Hart Hall
Student hours: Tuesdays 11:00-12:00

Teaching Assistant
Liz Blum
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Student hours: Thursdays 12:00-1:00

Course Description
This class examines the politics and geography of modern economies and the ways in which the organization of economic activities affect individuals, communities, and the natural environment. Understanding modern economies requires an examination of the origins of ‘the economy’ as an object of social, political, and intellectual concern, as well as knowledge of the history, organization, and geography of economic change. The course offers a critical examination of how modern economies have been created, the problems and challenges associated with modern economies, and how to envision and shape alternative futures.

Course Objectives
There are three primary objectives for how this class should affect your understanding of the organization of economic space: 1) to understand the existing configurations of politics and geography of modern economies and how they came to be this way, 2) to understand the terms of debate about the problems of existing systems and how these debates shape the configuration of future economic systems, and 3) to offer you the conceptual, analytical, and evidentiary tools to engage these debates and contribute to community and economic change.

Assignment Due Dates and Grading Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Responses #1-15</td>
<td>most Tuesdays &amp; Thursdays</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>throughout quarter</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation and Report #1</td>
<td>February 4</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>February 13 (in class)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation and Report #2</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>March 19, 6:00pm</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Assignments are to be submitted on dates specified on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval.
Course Policies and Information

Email
Please begin the subject line of all emails to the professor or teaching assistant with “CRD 141.” During the week we will usually reply within 24 hours. Response time on weekends may be slower.

Bring Readings to Class
Please bring the week’s assigned readings to class with you, either printed or on a computer/tablet. Lectures and discussions will often refer to specific parts of the readings and ask you to revisit and reflect on the readings during class.

Student Hours & Meeting with the Professor
You are encouraged to meet with the professor and the teaching assistant during the quarter. We want to get to you know you and have the opportunity discuss the course – and anything else – on an individual level. Attending student hours is an easy way to do this, but we welcome scheduling meetings at other times as well.

Discussion Boards on Canvas
Discussion boards on Canvas are turned on for this course. Using the discussion boards to communicate with your classmates may be useful for obtaining notes from a lecture you missed, asking questions or discussing concepts or ideas from lecture or readings, and organizing study groups. You are free to discuss anything class-related in the discussion boards and use the boards however you like.

Lecture Slides, Lecture Notes, and Group Study
In most cases lecture slides will not be posted to Canvas, though selected slides comprised of charts or data will be posted. If you miss lecture for an excused or unexcused absence it is your responsibility to get lecture notes from a classmate. Group study for the midterm and final exam is permitted. Based on the grading scheme for the class though I encourage you to learn and understand the material for yourself, rather than focusing on memorizing material for the exams.

Notice of the Code of Academic Conduct
The UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct exists to support high standards of behavior and to ensure fair evaluation of student learning. Students who violate the Code of Academic Conduct are subject to disciplinary sanctions that include censure, probation, suspension, deferred separation or dismissal from the University of California.

Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes a violation of the Code of Academic Conduct. Please review the Code carefully and ask the professor if you have any questions. Remember that the professor and teaching assistant are obliged to refer you to Student Support and Judicial Affairs in all cases of violation or suspected violation. The Code of Academic Conduct is available at: https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/code-academic-conduct
Student Support

Please consider using the assistance from the Student Academic Success Center to help with writing strategies, editing, grammar, formatting or support for transfer, reentry, and veteran students.
http://success.ucdavis.edu/academic/writing.html

Please consult the Student Disability Center for assistance setting up an accommodation plan.
https://sdc.ucdavis.edu/

Confidential and professional support for social, emotional, and psychological issues can be accessed through the Student Health and Counseling Service.
https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/counseling-services

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy from the Center for Advocacy, Resources, and Education (CARE) at ucdcare@ucdavis.edu or 530-752-3299. In addition, Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) provides confidential counseling to all students and can be reached 24/7 at 530-752-2349. You can also report sexual violence or sexual harassment directly to the University’s Title IX Coordinator at wjdelmendo@ucdavis.edu or 530-752-9466. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the UCD Police Department at 530-752-2677. Information on UC Davis sexual violence prevention and response resources can be found here.
http://sexualviolence.ucdavis.edu/.

The Pantry is a student-run resource providing free food and personal items for students.
http://thepantry.ucdavis.edu/

The AB 540 and Undocumented Student Center strives to empower undocumented students, their families and members of the community in being informed leaders and active participants in our communities.
http://undocumented.ucdavis.edu/
Course Assignments

Readings and Responses: critiques, comments, questions (15 Responses, 1% each = 15%)

All course readings will be posted to Canvas. PDF files of readings are in the "Files" area of Canvas, organized by the date they should be read.

For example, the first reading is titled: "0109 response - Graeber, Bullshit Jobs Chapter 6.pdf" "0109" means that you should read this for class on January 9, "response" means that you should write your response on this reading.

Some days will have more than one reading, but the reading list and the file name tell you how we will use the reading.

For example, there is also a reading titled: "0109 discussion - Pettifor, On tectonic plates, the economic system and the economics profession.pdf"
"0109" means that you should read this for class on January 9, and "discussion" means that the reading will be used for discussion, not for your reading response.

On fifteen of the twenty class meetings during the quarter you will prepare a reading response that consists of critiques, comments, or questions on all of the day’s readings. There are no assigned readings or reading responses on the weeks when Assignment 1 and Assignment 2 are due. Reading responses must be uploaded to Canvas by 12:00pm on the day of class.

Responses should be 200-300 words, have your name and the date of the reading at the top of the page, and not exceed 1 page in length (use single spacing if necessary.)

Reading responses should not summarize the readings. They should written clearly and concisely and identify what you see as the readings’ key points and their strengths and weaknesses at empirical and theoretical levels, and pose questions for discussion. Responses should demonstrate your engagement with the readings and provide a contribution to that day’s discussion. You are responsible for completing all assigned readings, but occasionally you may focus your reading response on particular readings if you wish to focus on depth rather than breadth.

The objective of these responses is to generate starting points for class discussion. Responses should raise issues that you feel are worth discussing in class such as:

- identify sections or concepts within the readings that you do not understand;
- comment on parts of the readings that you agree or disagree with;
- comment on parts of the readings that you find especially interesting;
- explore how the readings relate to your own personal experience;
- explore how the readings relate to each other;
- explore how the readings relate to ideas and issues raised elsewhere in this course.

Class Participation (5%)

Discussion and interaction with the professor, teaching assistant, and other students is an important component of this course. If you come to class with the readings and reading responses completed, participating in discussion should be easy. The goal of group discussion is to examine course topics and readings more closely, share your impressions and reactions to the course topics and readings, and learn from the perspectives and impressions of your fellow students. Successful discussions require active listening and giving full consideration and respect to other students’ ideas and opinions. Both the quality and quantity of each student’s participation in discussions will be considered in grading class participation. Participation requires attendance, and you are expected to be present for every class period unless the professor approves your absence beforehand.
**Presentations and Reports (2 Assignments, 10% each = 20%)**

Two class presentations and written reports will be required of each student. Presentations should be well organized, thoughtful, and draw on information beyond the readings and materials provided in the course. Presentations should be **5-6 minutes long**, with a question from the class afterward. Presentations should include several slides which will be shared with the class on Canvas. A written report of 1400-1600 words (excluding graphics and references) that summarizes your presentation and provides additional in-depth examination of your topic will be turned in. Both the presentation slides and the written report must follow the formatting instructions provided in the detailed assignment instructions.

Assignment 1 will examine a commodity or product (such as plastic bags, bananas, or lithium batteries) and the political, geographical, cultural, and economic dimensions of its commodity system. This may include: (1) the origins of the product, its use, and how it has changed (2) the geography of its commodity system from raw materials and production, to consumption and waste, (3) the labor, capital, regulatory, and environmental conditions that characterize the commodity, and (4) using analysis and evidence to speculate on the potential futures of the commodity or product and its role in the economy. The presentation and report should clearly apply selected concepts and themes from the first half of the course. The presentation slides and written report for Assignment 1 must be **uploaded to Canvas by Tuesday, February 4 at 12:00pm (noon).**

Assignment 2 will examine a region and analyze the political economy and economic geography of a region in recent history and the present. In your assignment you should: (1) describe the form and features of this region’s political economy and economic geography, (2) explain what kinds of commodity production are associated with this region and why this space became associated with this commodity, (3) discuss the relative presence of economic equality/inequality and the characteristics of economic life in the region, and (4) use analysis and evidence to speculate on the potential futures of this region’s political economy and economic geography. The presentation slides and written report for Assignment 2 must be **uploaded to Canvas by Tuesday, March 3 at 12:00pm (noon).**

**Midterm Exam (20%)**

A midterm exam will be given during the normal class time on **February 13**. The midterm exam will include material from lectures, discussion, readings, and student presentations. The midterm exam will include multiple choice, written response, and short essay components.

**Final Exam (20%)**

A final exam will be given during the assigned final exam time for the class: **Thursday, March 19 at 6:00pm**. The final exam will include material from lectures, discussion, readings, and student presentations from both the first and second half of the course. The format of the final exam will be similar to the midterm exam and include multiple choice, written response, and short essay components.
Course Topics

January 7 – Individuals, communities, and the economy
January 9 – What is the economy and how do we study it? (reading response #1 due)

January 14 – Markets and marketization / Values and valuation
January 16 – The origins of the modern economy (reading response #3 due)

January 21 – Globalization and trade (reading response #4 due)
January 23 – Commodities and commodity systems (reading response #5 due)

January 28 – Geography, space, place, and the economy (reading response #6 due)
January 30 – Critiques of modern capitalism (reading response #7 due)

February 4 – Assignment 1 Presentations, part 1
February 6 – Assignment 1 Presentations, part 2 (assignment #1 due Feb 4)

February 11 – Forms and varieties of capitalism / Fordism to finance (reading response #8 due)
February 13 – Midterm Exam, in class (reading response #9 due)

February 18 – Neoliberalism (reading response #10 due)
February 20 – Debt and inequality (reading response #11 due)

February 25 – Natural resources and the economy (reading response #12 due)
February 27 – The environment and climate change (reading response #13 due)

March 3 – Assignment 2 Presentations, part 1 (assignment #2 Mar 3)
March 5 – Assignment 2 Presentations, part 2

March 10 – Changing capitalism (reading response #14 due)
March 12 – Economic alternatives and alternative economies (reading response #15 due)

March 19 – Final Exam, 6:00pm