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PSC 595.01: ST - Capitalism and Democracy in the Americas

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Capitalism and Democracy in the Americas

Instructor: Professor Paul Haber 243-4862
Political Science Department, course #595
Autumn 2001
Meets Tuesday 11:40 – 2:00
Office Hours: LA 355 TR 2:10 – 3:30

haber@selway.umt.edu

Overview: This graduate seminar critically examines the politics of capitalism and democracy in the United States and Latin America from a variety of perspectives.

Course Expectations and Assignments: The success of this seminar depends on members' careful attention to the readings and active participation in weekly discussions. The format of the class discussion will vary and is amenable to changes and experimentation over the course of the semester. We will hold a preliminary discussion of format and expectations on the first day of class. All students will be required to hand in written work although the specific requirements will vary from student to student depending on individual student needs. For example, a student at work on a thesis project might want to propose the writing of a chapter. Students who are required to write a series of substantive papers as part of the requirements for graduation might want to submit such a paper. Other students might prefer to write a series of five page long critical essays on the readings.

All students will submit to me a typed proposal for writing requirements no later than February 13th. Each student is also responsible for discussing the proposal with me (at the same time you bring it to my office is fine).

There are two primary goals of this class. First, to introduce students to one of the most important political questions of today: the relationship between capitalism and democracy. We ground our conceptual deliberations of this relational concept in the history and current affairs of the United States and Latin America. The second goal of the class is for each student to make substantial progress in their ability to think critically about complex political questions, in both written and oral forms.

Since class participation is so important in this class, and because the class meets only once a week, students should make every effort to attend class and to arrive on time. If you miss a class, please write me a note telling me why you missed, and hand it in the day of your return. If you are late, make sure that you let me know at the end of class so that I will not mark you absent.

The following books are available at the bookstore. Some of the books are also in the Mansfield library. If people are going to plan on using some of the library copies, perhaps we should figure out a share system.

Ben Agger. *Critical Social Theories: An Introduction*. Westview Press, 1998.

John Dryzek. *Democracy in Capitalist Times*. Oxford University Press, 1996.

John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*. The New Press, 1998.

Jorge Castañeda. *Utopia Unarmed*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

Theda Skocpol and Morris Fiorina, eds. *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Brookings, 1999.

Robert Putnam. *Bowling Alone*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Gary Burtless et al. *Globophobia: Confronting Fears about Open Trade*. Brookings Press, 1998.

Schedule of Class Meetings and Reading Assignments: Please remember that the reading assignments listed here are subject to change and new items may be added as our discussions evolve over the course of the semester. Thus, it is imperative that you check with a class participant if you miss class to be sure you will be on target for the next class.

Jan 30: Introduction and Overview.

Feb 6: Setting the Theoretical Stage. Discuss Agger, Chapters 1-4

Feb 13: Setting the Theoretical Stage. Discuss Agger, Chapters 5-8

Feb 20: Democracy in Capitalist Times. Discuss Dryzek, Chapters 1-4

February 27: Democracy in Capitalist Times. Discuss Dryzek, Chapters 5-7

March 6: Global Capitalism. Discuss Gray, Chapters 1-5

March 13: Global Capitalism. Discuss Gray, Chapters 5-Postscript

March 27: A Defense of Globalization. Discuss Burtless et al.

April 3: History of Latin American Resistance to Capitalism. Discuss first half of Castañeda.

April 10: History and Future Prospectus for the Latin American Democratic Left. Discuss second half of Castañeda.

April 17: Social Capital in America. Discuss first half of Putnam

April 24: Social Capital in America. Discuss second half of Putnam

May 1: More on Social Capital and Democracy in America. Discuss first half of Skocpol and Fiorina

May 8: More on Social Capital and Democracy in America. Discuss second half of Skocpol and Fiorina.