Fall 2009: Political Science 0820S (freshman/sophomore seminar)

**Capitalism: For and Against**
Tuesday 4:00-6:20pm (J. Walter Wilson 401)

Professor: Yvonne Chiu
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Office Hrs: Tues. 1:00-3:00pm (Political Theory Project, 8 Fones Alley, Rm 109, 2nd fl)

**Course description:**
What is capitalism? What are its defining traits and institutions, and the roles of the market and the state? How should individual rights and social responsibilities be balanced? What are capitalisms' strengths and weaknesses? Are capitalist societies or other types of systems the best way to achieve justice, promote excellence, and provide freedom, happiness, and material well-being? What are the coherent criticisms of and alternatives to capitalism?

**Course Requirements:**
Complete all assigned readings carefully and before class. Come prepared with questions and comments about what you have read. Go over the readings relatively quickly once, try to pick out the main ideas and see what topics are covered, and then do them again, slowly and carefully, taking notes about what seems important or intriguing and about what you do not fully understand. These notes will also help generate useful and stimulating class discussion.

The class will be conducted in seminar format. Attendance, active participation, and your weekly discussion question (to be e-mailed to the instructor and all students by 12am on Tuesday each week) are required and comprise 15% of your grade. Absence from more than three sessions will automatically result in a failing grade. Students arriving late are counted as absent.

You will give a 15-minute presentation on a reading or set of readings. This constitutes 10% of your grade. This is not to be a simple summary of the readings. Instead, you should give a critical evaluation of the readings—use your time to raise a set of central questions, concerns or problems pertaining to the texts you have selected. You will sign up for these presentations on the first day of the class. The week of your presentation, send me a copy of your presentation by 12am on Tuesday. You will not need to e-mail a weekly discussion question to the class.

The writing requirement is three analytical papers (5-7 pages each). I will assign topics for each paper. See the schedule below for due dates. Each paper is worth 25% of your grade, for a total of 75%. Turn in a hard copy of the paper by the deadline—do not e-mail it to me. (For late papers, see below.) If there is a dispute over your paper grade, I will reevaluate the entire paper, not just the portion you are disputing.

Your grade breakdown:
Papers: 25% each (75% total)
Participation: 15%
Presentation: 10%

In order to receive a passing grade in the course, you must complete all the assignments.
Late work policy
Late papers will receive a whole letter grade deduction for every day late and papers will not be accepted more than three days late. For late papers, you must e-mail me your paper—the time stamp on the e-mail I receive will determine the date/time of submission—then submit a paper copy by 3pm the next day.

Plagiarism
I adhere strictly to Brown’s policy on academic honesty. Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in penalties up to and including a failing grade for the assignment and referral to the university for disciplinary action.

Emergencies
In the case of illness or other extenuating circumstances that cause paper tardiness or absence for which you wish to be excused, you must provide official documentation and give your doctor or relevant party permission to speak with me, as I will call him to verify the reasons for your absence.

Reading List

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments:**
* on OCRA
Password for OCRA readings = trade

**Week One (9/15/09):**
Introduction

**Week Two (9/22/09):**
*John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1690): Chapter 5 “Of Property”

**Week Three (9/29/09):**

**Week Four (10/6/09):**
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Constitutional Project for Corsica* (1765), or excerpts from *The Social Contract* or *Third Discourse*

**Paper #1 due @ beginning of class on October 13.**

**Week Five (10/13/09):**
Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (excerpts) – skip “Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole”
Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (1845) (excerpts)
Karl Marx, “Wage Labor and Capital” (1849) (excerpt)
Karl Marx, *The Grundrisse* (1857-58) (excerpts) – skip Section F

**Week Six (10/20/09):**
Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (1844)
Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848)
Week Seven (10/27/09):
John Stuart Mill, *Chapters on Socialism* (1879)

Week Eight (11/3/09):
*F.A. Hayek, “Competition as a Discovery Procedure” (1968)*

Week Nine: (11/10/09):

**Paper #2 due @ beginning of class on November 17.**

Week Ten (11/17/09):

Week Eleven (11/24/09):

Week Twelve (12/1/09):
* Aristote, *Nicomachean Ethics*: Book X
* Aristote, *Politics*: Book VII (i-iii, xiii-xv)

Week Thirteen (12/8/09):
No readings.

**Paper #3 due at 3:00PM on December 15, in my box at 8 Fones Alley.**