

Systemic Thinking and Critical Thinking: The Case of Capitalism

UGRA_016190

Departments	Department of Society, Politics and Sustainability
Teaching Languages	English
ECTS	6
Teacher responsible	Ferran Macipe Catalán - ferran.macipe@esade.edu

Course Goals

The learning objectives are:

- . to have an in-depth understanding of the economic roots and rules of capitalism
- . to be able to explain the role of capitalism in shaping our own lives
- . being capable of tracing the reasons behind the most severe problems facing humanity
- . being able to take a standpoint regarding capitalism and the alternative economic arrangements proposed by different thinkers and organizations
- . to improve and practice the skills of open-mindedness and constructive critical thinking

NOTE: Students must achieve a minimum grade of 5.0 on the final exam(s) of a course to be eligible to pass the course; a grade lower than 5.0 in the exam will become the student's final grade without averaging in other assessments. This rule applies to retake exams as well.

Previous knowledge

None

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for taking this course other than the following attitudes/values:

- . critical thinking
- . cooperation

Recomended courses

Social sciences courses with an integrative, systemic approach.

Description

Course contribution to program

This is a critical thinking course. The capacity to question, discern and reassess (highly valued in the workplace) is applied here to capitalism as a socio-economic system, to its way of functioning and rationale. The course also offers an understanding of the global context in which business for social impact will have to operate.

Short description

After a process that started a few centuries ago, capitalism has become the dominant socio-economic system in the world. For this reason, understanding the rules and mechanisms upon which capitalism is based has become indispensable for comprehending today's world and one's own role in it.

The aim of the course is three-fold: to understand capitalism, to develop a critique of its strengths and weaknesses, and to discuss alternatives, both in terms of ameliorative reforms and systemic changes.

The course is conceived to provide, not only an economic understanding of the world, once capitalism has become dominant in it, but also an appraisal of the sociological pressures it sets in motion. If well-versed and aware of them, it's more likely we can "be the change we want for the world" and achieve a place in the system that's well aligned with our values as citizens and professionals.

Activities

In-class discussions and debates

Analytical exercises

Written and/or oral exams

Readings

Essays

Content

#	Topic
1	Introduction. Critical and systemic thinking.
2	A framework of Capitalism I
3	A framework of Capitalism II
4	Strengths, flaws and contradictions of Capitalism
5	Capitalist culture and models. The entrepreneurial State (Mazzucato).
6	Digital capitalism and the attention economy. Sociology and psychology of the system (Han).
7	Financialization: problem and way out (Chang).
8	Systemic thinking: map of structural solutions within capitalism.
9	Prosperity without growth (Jackson). Participatory socialism (Piketty).

#	Topic
10	The economy for the common good (Felber)

Assessment

Tool	Assessment tool	Category	Weight %
Attendance and punctuality	An minimum of 80% attendance is required to pass the course	Ordinary round	0.00%
In-class analysis and discussion of issues	Students will be assessed on their capacity to regularly and meaningfully be a part of a collaborative conversation following the critical thinking tenets defined at the start of the course	Ordinary round	20.00%
Written and/or oral exams	Final exam on the assigned readings and course lectures	Ordinary round	30.00%
Individual or team exercises		Ordinary round	30.00%
Written and/or oral exams	Midterm exam on assigned readings and course lectures	Ordinary round	20.00%

PROGRAMS

BITLASI22-Bachelor in Transformational Leadership and Social Impact (Undergraduates: Business)
BITLASI22 Year 1 (Basic)