TEACHING GUIDE - 2026-2027

# Re-Imagining Capitalism: Alternatives for the 21st Century

UGRA_002955

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| Departments | Department of Society, Politics and Sustainability |
| Teaching Languages | English |
| ECTS | 4 |
| 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

## Previous knowledge

None

## Prerequisits

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

. critical thinking

. cooperation

## Teaching methodology

Lecturing will be combined with class discussions and individual and small group reflections. Working in groups, participants will prepare selected topics. The materials provided by the professor will be complemented with additional external sources obtained by the course participants through their own research of the topic.

The tenets of critical thinking (questioning, considering, re-imagining, identifying biases, etc.) are an essential part of the approach and will make themselves present in all activities and teaching tools.

## 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.

### 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.

## Program Learning Objectives

### B13-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

- Responsible Leadership
- Critical and Analytical Thinking
- Creativity & Innovation
- Systemic Thinking

### B13S-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

- Responsible Leadership
- Critical and Analytical Thinking
- Creativity & Innovation
- Systemic Thinking

### BBA20-Bachelor of Business

- Responsible Leadership
- Critical and Analytical Thinking
- Creativity & Innovation

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| Administration (BBA) | - Systemic Thinking |
| BBA23-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) | - Responsible Leadership<br>- Critical and Analytical Thinking<br>- Creativity & Innovation<br>- Systemic Thinking |
| BBE20-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) | - Responsible Leadership<br>- Critical and Analytical Thinking<br>- Creativity & Innovation<br>- Systemic Thinking |

## 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). |
| 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 | |
| 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 | Retake and ordinary round | 30.00% |
| Written and/or oral exams | On the assigned readings and course lectures | Retake and ordinary round | 30.00% |
| Final individual project | It will consist of writing an essay (under specific guidelines) that builds on the main lessons of the course | Ordinary round | 20.00% |
| Individual or team exercises | Exercise(s) in small groups | Ordinary round | 20.00% |
| Written and/or oral exams | | Retake | 40.00% |

PROGRAMS

AI26-Exchange Program Bachelor in Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
- AI26 Year 1 (Optative)

AI26S-Exchange Program Bachelor in Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
- AI26S Year 1 (Optative)

B13-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- B13 Year 1 (Optative)

B13S-Exchange Program Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- B13S Year 1 (Optative)

BBA20-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA20 Year 2 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 3 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 1 (Optative)
- BBA20 Year 4 (Optative)

BBA23-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA23 Year 3 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 1 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 4 (Optative)
- BBA23 Year 2 (Optative)

BBA25-Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) (Undergraduates: Business)
- BBA25 Year 1 (Optative)
- BBA25 Year 2 (Optative)
- BBA25 Year 3 (Optative)

BITLASI22-Bachelor in Transformational Leadership and Social Impact (Undergraduates: Business)
- BITLASI22 Year 4 (Mandatory)
- BITLASI22 Year 1 (Mandatory)

DBAI21-Double Degree in Business Administration and Artificial Intelligence for Business (Undergraduates: Business)
- DBAI21 Year 3 (Optative)
- DBAI21 Year 4 (Optative)
- DBAI21 Year 2 (Optative)

DBAI23-Double Degree in Business Administration and Artificial Intelligence for Business (Undergraduates: Business)
- DBAI23 Year 4 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 2 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 3 (Optative)
- DBAI23 Year 1 (Optative)

DBAI25-Double Degree in Business Administration and Business and Artificial Intelligence (Undergraduates: Business)
- DBAI25 Year 2 (Optative)
- DBAI25 Year 3 (Optative)
- DBAI25 Year 4 (Optative)

GMC25-Global Manager Certificate (Undergraduates: Business)
- GMC25 Year 1 (Optative)

N90-BI Norwegian Business School (Summer School: Business)
N90 Year 1 (Optative)