Theories of (In)equality, Diversity & Social Justice
Fall 2014

HOD 3650
Dr. James Fraser
pavement@vanderbilt.edu

Course Description
This course examines theoretical perspectives on the production of (in)equality, and provides an introduction to classical and current texts on the topic. The purpose of the course is to provide you with multiple theoretical tools to apply to social issues that interest you.

Course Expectations, Assignments & Grading

Attendance: This class will be conducted with a focus on in-class discussions and activities. Because of this format, you are expected to attend all classes for the full scheduled time. Excessive tardiness will be counted as an absence. You can miss up to two classes throughout the semester without penalty, but you must turn in assignments ahead of time and arrange to get notes from a colleague. Your final grade will go down by 10 points (out of 100) for each additional class missed.

Reading: Complete all readings (and other assignments) prior to the class meeting for which they are scheduled. You must bring your book or copies of the readings to each class. See the course outline below for details on weekly readings.
Participation: Through communication, ideas are formed, revised, borrowed, and developed. It is through argument, description, explanation, and improvisation – within a community – that individual learning flourishes. This course requires full participation (including active listening, facilitating, note-taking, and question-asking) to create an environment of open and shared learning. An effective participant is not someone who simply talks frequently, but someone who reliably offers thoughtful insights that help others to learn.

Technology: Laptop computers and other portable technologies should be used in class only as learning-facilitation tools. During class, it is not acceptable to play games, answer email, surf the web, answer cell phones, text message, or engage in other non-class-related activities. Your participation grade will be penalized if you break this rule. Why? Not only do these practices negatively affect your learning and participation, but they also distract others and create an environment of disrespect.

Academic Honesty: In order to avoid plagiarism, your assignments must provide full citations for all references: direct quotes, summaries, or ideas. While you are encouraged to develop your thinking with your peers, you cannot use their material without citing it. Work from other courses will not be accepted in this course. Allowing your writing to be copied by another student is also considered cheating. Please review the Honor Code for complete guidelines on academic honesty: http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/HonorCouncil/.

Gender-Fair Language: Language structures thought and action. Biases in language can (and do) naturalize inequalities. Imprecise language also signifies un-interrogated values and sloppy thinking. For all of these reasons, the use of gender-fair language is expected in this course. For example, do not use words like “mankind” or “men” when referring to people in general; alternate between “she” and “he” instead of always using “he,” or construct sentences in the plural instead of the singular so you can use “they” or “them” and avoid the problem altogether.

ESL/LD Students: Course requirements can be adjusted to serve the needs and capabilities of ESL and LD students. Please speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class to make arrangements. Students may be advised to attend additional sessions during the professor’s office hours so they can draw comparable value from the course.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers (7)</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper (1)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Papers: You will write seven short essays over the course of the semester on the texts we cover in class. You may choose the texts you wish to engage in writing, and these essays need to be uploaded by 10pm on the Tuesday before the class in which we discuss the book in question. These short essays should include a concise summary of the material covered in the book, must engage critically with the material, and must make an argument. The essays will be three to four pages in length, and not more. The essays will be graded based upon clarity, accuracy, rigor of argument, and insightfulness. Late papers will not be accepted.

Final Paper: The final essay for this course will be an article-length piece (20-25 pages). In these essays, you will annex course materials to address an issue related to inequality, diversity, or social justice. You should expect to use key themes from the majority of the texts covered in the class, in addition to outside research. These essays must develop a rigorous theoretical argument on (in)equality as it pertains to your topic of interest. I strongly suggest that you meet
with me, preferably with draft in hand, before your essay is due. Successful essays will be drafted well in advance of the due date so that you can seek and incorporate my feedback.

**Class Schedule**

**Week 1 (August 20)**
Introduction: What is (in)equality and how do we theorize it?


**Week 2 (August 27)**

**Week 3 (September 3)**

**Week 4 (September 10)**

**Week Five (September 17)**
The Marx-Engels Reader
Part I. The Early Marx
For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing, 12-15

Part II. The Critique of Capitalism
Capital, Volume One, 294-438

Part III. Revolutionary Program and Strategy
Manifesto of the Communist Party, 469-500
Critique of the Gotha Program, 525-541

Part IV. Society and Politics in the Nineteenth Century
The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, 549-617

Part V. The Later Engels
The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State, 734-759
Letters on Historical Materialism, 760-768

**Week Six (September 24)**
Week Seven (October 1)

Week Eight (October 8)

Week Nine (October 15)

Selected Reading: Introduction (1-28), Chapter 1, Sections I-IV (31-110), Chapter 2, Section I (111-123), Chapter 3, Section 1 (201-225), Section 2 (284-328), and Afterword (329-352)

Week Ten (October 22)

Week 11 (October 29)

Week 12 (November 5)


Week 13 (November 12)

Week 14 (November 19)

Week 15 (December 3)
*Final Paper Due December 1st
Paper Presentations in Class (prepare to give a 10 minute talk on your paper)