# Integrative Studies 231A,

**Human Values, The Arts, and Humanities**

**Topic: The Culture of Capitalism**

**Spring Semester 2009, Michigan State University**

**Dr. Christian Lotz**

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## Tentative Schedule (last UPDATE: February 08, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Oral Present.</th>
<th>General Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 15</td>
<td>Exploitation, Global Capitalism, Poverty</td>
<td>Robbins, Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, pp.1-10 and pp38-57 (pdf per email)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>The Importance of Labor</td>
<td>Marx, The Marx Reader, pp.171-174; 85-95 (Theses on Feuerbach; Alienated Labor)</td>
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<td>Marx</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>Alienation and the Individual</td>
<td>Marx, The Marx Reader, pp.171-174; 85-95 (Theses on Feuerbach; Alienated Labor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>The Role of Private Property</td>
<td>Marx, The Marx Reader, pp.95-104 (Private Property and Communism)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Private Property, Environmentalism and the Communal Good</td>
<td>Marx, The Marx Reader, pp.175-198 (The German Ideology: Preface-Communist Revolution)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>The Role of the Family</td>
<td>Marx, The Marx Reader, pp.175-198 (The German Ideology: Preface-Communist Revolution)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Example: Capitalism and Sports</td>
<td>Cudd, Capitalism and Sports (pdf per email)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Critique of Marx, Role of Ethics</td>
<td>Weber, The Protestant Ethic, pp.1-51</td>
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Christian Lotz, Integrative Studies 231B, Michigan State University, Spri... https://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes/s2009humanities/index.htm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Class Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Feb</td>
<td>Catholicism versus Luther and Calvin</td>
<td>Weber, The Protestant Ethic, pp.51-103</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Feb</td>
<td>Ascetism: Modern Life and Protestant Ethics</td>
<td>Weber, The Protestant Ethic, pp.103-126</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Mar</td>
<td>In-class exam (Marx/Weber)</td>
<td>In-class exam (Marx/Weber)</td>
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<td>17 Mar</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Mar</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Arthur Miller: Death of a Salesman</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Mar</td>
<td>Introduction to Miller</td>
<td>Miller, Death of a Salesman</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Mar</td>
<td>Miller and Marxism</td>
<td>Miller, Death of a Salesman, additional texts TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Mar</td>
<td>Miller and Weberianism</td>
<td>Miller, Death of a Salesman, additional material passed out in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 Mar</td>
<td>Social Relationships and Economic Relationships</td>
<td>Miller, Death of a Salesman</td>
<td>Assignment for Response Paper I will be passed out in class</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Modern Position I: Milton Friedman</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>23 Mar</td>
<td>Economics and Politics</td>
<td>Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom, chapter 1-2</td>
<td>Friedman Response Paper I due in my box</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Apr</td>
<td>On Friedman</td>
<td>Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom, chapter 6-9</td>
<td>Chicago school of economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Apr</td>
<td>The Role of Government</td>
<td>Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom, chapter 6-9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Modern Position II: Naomi Klein</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Apr</td>
<td>Critique of Friedman</td>
<td>Klein, The Shock Doctrine, Introduction + part 1, chapter 2, pp.3-27, 59-88</td>
<td>Klein</td>
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<td>28 Apr</td>
<td>class cancelled</td>
<td>class cancelled</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 Apr</td>
<td>Critique of Corporatism</td>
<td>Klein, The Shock Doctrine, part 5, pp.355-408</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responses?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Apr</td>
<td>What can we do?</td>
<td>Film, The Edukators</td>
<td>Assignment for Response Paper II will be passed out in class</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 Apr</td>
<td>Resistance to Capitalism</td>
<td>Film, The Edukators</td>
<td>Response Paper II due in my box</td>
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<tr>
<td>32 Apr</td>
<td>Open Discussion</td>
<td>Film, The Edukators</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
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**Class Meetings:**

Days: TTH  
Time: 10:20am-11:40am  
Place: B102 Wells Hall

**Office:**

Christian Lotz, Integrative Studies 231B, Michigan State University, Spri...  
https://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes/s2009humanities/index.htm
Phone: 517.353.9392
Place: 503 S. Kedzie Hall
Hours: T (1:00-2:00pm), TH (1-1:30pm), by appointment and by phone

Exceptions:

Other Contact:
E-mail: lotz@msu.edu
Home Phone: please ask in class

Webpage
URL: http://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes
(Please check the webpage regularly for the current schedule)

Box
You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (and in front of my office)

Teaching Assistant: Matthew Johnson

Office:
Phone: TBA
Place: 528 South Kedzie Hall
Hours: TH (12:30-2:30pm)

Other Contact:
E-mail: john2603@msu.edu

Course Description

In this class, we will critically explore our social environment by investigating the nature of capitalist culture. As we will not exclusively focus specifically on economic questions, we will instead ask how capitalism determines our attitudes, our way of life, and our beliefs. We will ask ourselves how Capitalism determines our social relationships and how it shapes our character. We will read texts from classical philosophy (Marx) and sociology (Weber), from economy (Friedman), as well as contemporary authors (Klein). In addition, we will study the course topic by discussing Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* and the film *The Edukators*.

IAH Course Goals

Integrative Studies at MSU seeks to assist students to become more familiar with ways of knowing in the arts and humanities and to be more knowledgeable and capable in a range of intellectual and expressive abilities. IAH courses encourage students to engage critically with their own society, history, and culture(s); they also encourage students to learn more about the history and culture of other societies. They focus on key ideas and issues in human experience; encourage appreciation of the roles of knowledge and values in shaping and understanding human behavior; emphasize the responsibilities and opportunities of democratic citizenship; highlight the value of the creative arts of literature, theater, music, and arts; and alert us to important issues that occur among peoples in an increasingly interconnected, interdependent world.

Note

Real learning is not properly measured by multiple-choice tests; especially since in the humanities there is no specific content of a sort that may be covered well in standardized examinations, which every student in the humanities should be expected to master. Instead, you will - hopefully - come to recognize that this class is about a general intellectual reflection on what we are and why we are here. The class deals with your dignity as human beings and with your intellect and reason, which is best expressed in a form of learning that is based on understanding and insight, and not mere learning by heart. It is hoped that the class will stimulate the view that intellectual activity (and therefore human reality) has to do with the passion of thinking, and the passion of understanding of our world. Intense confrontation with texts is the center of this class.
Specific Course Goals

This lecture class should students introduce to

- analysis of society and our social environment
- two classical approaches to the analysis of modern capitalism: Marx and Weber
- two modern approaches to the analysis of modern capitalism: Friedman and Naomi Klein
- a critical position regarding modernity, labor, poverty, and consumption
- the analysis of capitalistic culture in theater (Miller)
- the idea that capitalism is a form of *social relationships* (love, recognition, family, etc)
- the idea that we cannot simply pose capitalism as an economic problem; rather, we first have to understand how capitalism is a way of life and how it shapes our attitudes towards life
- how to discuss classical positions in the contemporary economical situation

Required Texts (Bookstore)

- Marx, Karl, *The Karl-Marx Reader* (ed. by McLellan)
- Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
- Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*
- Klein, *The Shock Doctrine. The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*

Additional Resources


Course Organization

The course will be organized such that, ideally, each class period will include [i] "interactive" lecture, [ii] discussion time or [iii] response time. Students will be asked to intensively prepare a certain text or part of a text for the next class period.

Course Requirements

- Daily reading and studying (around 5-10 pages)
- 5 response sheets
- 1 exam
- 2 response papers
- Assignments and active participation (please note that a large portion of your grade depends upon your performance in the discussion sections)

Note

The class and my lectures are solely based on the texts selected for class and require a thorough study and preparation of the material. I will primarily lecture on the readings, which will help you to more fully understand the texts. Therefore it is not sufficient for students to come to class without having prepared the texts. And indeed, in your papers and in the exam you have to demonstrate whether you have appropriately prepared the readings selected for each lecture.

Reading assignments and preparation for lecture/discussion sections

The reading assignment per session is limited; however, this means that I expect you to come to class having prepared the texts carefully and thoroughly and that you are able to talk meaningfully about the text, raise questions of your own and provide answers when called upon. I will take the liberty to call on students randomly. An approximate preparation time for each class is a minimum of two hours. The reading for the next session, if not clear from the course schedule (below), will be announced at the end of the previous class. "Preparing for class" implies underlining and making excerpts from the text assigned; looking up unfamiliar vocabulary and writing them into a note book (I encourage you to keep a vocabulary booklet for all of your classes). Just reading the text won't be sufficient. You have to study the material. If you do not have a dictionary, get yourself one. Some vocabulary might not be sufficiently explained in a regular dictionary (this goes especially for philosophical terms), so it is necessary to consult additional sources (e.g., the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* — online —
is an excellent source of information, and the MSU Library Website is a great resource for nearly all questions in this context).

**Make-Up Assignments**

Students who need to miss the exam or the movie for excusable reasons must inform me ahead of time, and will be permitted to make up the exam and movie assignment. I will only accept official doctor notes (no faxes, no emails) or letters from other professors.

**Class Attendance**

I hope and strongly encourage that students attend all lectures. However, I will not require attendance, as I think that college students should manage their own class attendance decisions. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make me responsible for a failure that results out of your decision. You should be aware that chances to master this class are minimal, if you do not show up for class or if you do not prepare the readings (=studying).

**Response Sheets**

Every student is asked to submit "response sheets" after my lectures. Every student can submit up to 5 response sheets over the course of the semester.

Click here to download the response sheet (Word document)

Note: I will only accept responses that are given on this form.

**Response Time**

Selected response sheets will be addressed at the beginning of each class. The rest of the response sheets will be handed over to the TA, who will use them to address selected questions in his/her sections. This procedure will help you to clarify problems, reflect on topics, and to find answers to questions that came up during the lecture.

**Response Paper Assignments**

There will be 2 paper assignments (2-3 pages, 600-900 words, 12pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margin). The paper assignment should lead you to a reflection and consideration of the media content in class. I expect well constructed essays that begin with an introduction, present a main claim and are explanatory. Mere summaries or simple "reflection" and "I feel X" papers will not be satisfactory. I will pass out in class on selected dates (see schedule) questions, the written answer to which you will turn in the class after the assignment was passed out (email submissions are not acceptable). Late turn ins will result in loosing 20%-40% of your grade. It is your responsibility to get a copy of the assignment from a study buddy in class if you missed class. I will not send you the assignment per email if you missed class.

**Movie**

We will be watching a version of Miller's *Death of Salesman* in class, and, in addition, we will discuss other material in the form of movies and documentaries. If you miss one of those classes for inexcusable reasons (=medical, with documentation), then it is your responsibility to make up the material on your own.

**Exams**

There will be one brief in-class essay exam. You will be offered a set of essay-questions, one of which you will answer in a brief essay about the material that I discussed in my lectures. Note that mere memorization of what I lectured about will not be a satisfactory preparation of the exam; rather, you should demonstrate that you thought about and understand the material. You will not be able to answer the exam question(s) if you did not study the texts.

**Participation**

You will receive points for participation and assignments in your discussion section (see below).

**Course Evaluation**

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

Lecture:
5 response sheets (to be submitted during the course of the semester) 20 points
1 in-class exam (on Marx/Weber) 30 points
2 response papers (no more than 900 words) 10/10 points

**Discussion section:**
Assignments and participation in discussion section 30 points

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100 points

**Attendance**

To get a good grade in this class, regular attendance is required. I will not call roll. Hence, it is up to you to come to class or not. However, if you do not come to class on a regular basis and participate in the class discussion, it is impossible for you to achieve a good grade in this class; so coming to class is your responsibility and your call. If you choose to attend class, please come on time, turn off cell phones and other electronic devices that interfere with your (and others') concentration, have the reading prepared and be ready to participate. If you are not prepared, do not bother showing up. It is a sign of disrespect to your peers and the instructor to attend class unprepared. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes from a fellow student and to catch up on reading.

**Grading:**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100 - 93</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>92 - 87</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>86 - 82</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>81 - 77</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>76 - 72</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>71 - 65</td>
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<td>64 - 60</td>
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**GENERIC SYLLABUS (might not be applicable to each class)**

**Class Attendance**

As mentioned above, I do not employ in my classes a class attendance policy. Having said this, you should be aware that class attendance is very important. When engaging in a philosophical and humanistic dialogue it is necessary to be an active and present participant in the ongoing discussion. If you miss class please do not email me asking if you missed anything important. Every class is important. You should get a study buddy for the class; a student in class who will inform you of what you missed. If you miss a class you can come to my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the material, providing you have read the material and you simply want to see if your understanding of the material is on target. Time in office hours will not be used to repeat the class lectures.

**Grading Criteria**

check this page

**Helpful information about oral presentations, paper writing and plagiarism**

Check this page

**Online Research Sources**

Unfortunately, some people think that the internet as such is a reliable source of information. If you decide to use online sources for additional information or your paper then do not just use one of the common internet search engines, such as Google; rather, use **reliable academic** sources, such as Britannica Online, or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy isn't very good, but still acceptable. Check out MSU's library resources! And, as with other sources, you must cite any online sources to which you refer in your essay.
Writing Center Information

MSU's writing center offers excellent help on all matters regarding writing and learning. Check the website at http://writing.msu.edu for an overview and hours. For more information, please call 517.432.3610 or send an e-mail to writing@msu.edu.

Plagiarism

In any essay or exam answer submitted for assessment, all passages taken from other people's work must be placed within quotation marks, with specific reference to author, title and page. no excuse can be accepted for any failure to do so, nor will inclusion of the source in a bibliography be considered inadequate acknowledgement. If the marker decides that plagiarism has occurred, the student may be judged to have failed the class.

Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in (insert course number here). Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY)

Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Note on Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.