We have two primary goals to achieve with this course. If not before, at least by Weeks 10 and 11 of this course, enrolled students would have raised their levels of knowledge of: Karl Marx as a man thinking during the 19th century; his diverse and rich contributions to Classical Political Economy; and the writings of some of those who built on his contributions, what is often termed as “Marxian theory.” The second goal that registers as equally important: if not before Week 11 of this course, enrolled students would have raised their proficiencies for absorbing and thinking through high-level ideas, and then writing up their own ideas artfully and in a manner that makes use of a system of citation emphasized in this course.

Please be aware our course’s two main goals. If you are not in agreement with these goals, you might consider taking a different course.

If you are still in, then please consider that our course is structured to assist us all in achieving these two stated goals. If you would like to achieve other goals you should consider achieving them, too. If you need assistance from me, please show up to speak with me during office my hours.

This course is designed to introduce students to the unconquerable character known as Karl Marx, as well as to a portion of a body of social and economic thought he advanced, and that was later carried further by some of his best disciples.

If you would like to see further by standing on the shoulders of a giant, and from this vantage point to view the world as a social scientist, I do not think you could ever find a giant with higher shoulders than Karl Marx.

By all measures Karl Marx was a man of the 19th century. He was born in 1818 and toward the end of a bucolic era in what was still a quaint European society. Over his lifetime this society would be torn asunder by industrialism and urbanization of rural populations on a grandiose scale never before seen and experienced. Marx arrived in the world in the old Roman colonial city of Trier, located near today’s western border of Germany, and not too far from the border with Belgium. Marx died just more than sixty years later -- in London and in exile. When Marx died the western world had fully mastered industrial production—and with its mastery—clearly dominated those societies less advanced in this area with various forms of prowess, including military. At the time of Marx’s death in 1883 the capitalist system—whose laws of motion and inner workings he sought to explain—was noted for achieving hitherto unknown levels of material abundance. In addition, his epoch of laissez-faire meant a free running capitalist system riding roughshod over what had been long standing traditions that had offered social stability.
Marx’s contribution is based on his painstaking inquiry into the “laws of motion” of the capitalistic system. Clearly, his works were read and appreciated during his lifetime. However after his death in London in 1883, his ideas proved too powerful to be contained. By the second decade of the 20th century Marx’s ideas were already generating determining effects on the course of world history. By 1950, about one third of the world’s population lived under economies that relied upon economic planning for resource allocation. This was an economic system—that in several respects—was inspired by Karl Marx. At the start of the 21st century—and if we include the 1.3 billion in today’s China—then transitions away from planned economies are currently affecting about one third of the world’s population. With all of the turbulence his ideas have generated, and with these ideas affecting the fates of so many millions of people as well as the course of history, I think it behooves us to take some time to gain a substantial background in Marx’s contributions to social science thinking, in general, and to economic science, in particular. Mark Blaug (1988, 156) emphasizes that Marx generated about 10,000 pages dealing with political economy. Clearly, economists can claim Marx as one of our own—as well as philosophers, sociologists, political scientists, as well as post modernists advancing ideas in selected disciplines.

Karl Marx could claim widespread name recognition, for his name is lionized by many and vilified by many more. Few educated people in the world today could claim ignorance of his name. However, with so much name recognition, but a few people have actually devoted time toward reading and assessing Marx’s contributions to social and economic thought. The purpose of this course, then, is to devote some earnest attention toward reading and considering Marx’s ideas in their original translations to English.

Please take account of the system for calculating your EC345 final grade.

All students start at zero but can take advantage of what we using academic “new speak” pass off as Learning Opportunities. Lectures will be presented over ten weeks time. As a “Learning Opportunity #1” writing a midterm could count for as much as 50 points Learning Opportunities #2 involves writing the first draft of your term paper (inquiry) that runs about 2,850 words of text. This could count for as much as 25 points. Fulfilling Learning Opportunity #3 involves refining and handing in a polished second and final draft of your inquiry, and that could count for as much as 25 additional points, potentially yielding a whopping 100 points and a super strong A.

Please keep in mind that failure to turn in or perform any of the assignments on time would result in Zero (0) points for that assignment. Papers turned in late are docked five points for every twenty-four hour period after the assignment is due.

When the course ends in early June, grades will be calculated and turned in on time. One’s final grade would be based upon the accumulated points set against the standard PSU grading scale. I do not plan to offer incomplete or “I” grades, so best to stay on task.
Dates to consider remembering:

Monday, 25 April 2016, Learning Opportunity #1 due by 5pm
Monday, 23 May 2016, Learning Opportunity #2 due by 5pm
Wednesday, 08 June 2016, Learning Opportunity #3 due by 5pm.

Week 1  Tuesday, “Marx, the Man: Some Biographical Notes”

Read “Intro.” plus Chapters 1-5. “Childhood and Adolescence” to “Paris”
Plus Chapter 8 “Exile in London: The First Phase”
And Ch. 11 “Last Years”
Also take in the research paper by Thomas Howell, found at our google reading site.
sites.google.com/site/econreadings45/

You might also consider an optional reading from Paul Johnson’s *A History of the Jews*, 1987. In this book Johnson considers Marx’s connections to the Judaic realm.

Thursday “Marx, the Philosopher:” Meet Georg Friedrich Hegel: Marx’s Philosophical Inspiration

Topic: The Dialectic  G.F. Hegel *Philosophy of Right* (see google readings)

Marx’s “turning of Hegel on his head”

“Dialectical Materialism as a Philosophical View”

“Dialectical Materialism” “Please read *The German Ideology*, co-authored by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Ch. 1 “Opposition of the Materialist and Idealist Outlook” parts A “Idealism and Materialism” and B “The Illusion of the Epoch”
Other views on the Dialectic (optional readings)
Frederick Engels, *The Dialectics of Nature*.

Topic  “Marx, the Economist”


Part I, “Commodities and Money” Chapters  I, II, III

Week 3  Part II, The Transformation of Money into Capital, Chapters IV, V, VI
Part III  The Production of Absolute Surplus Value,

  Chapters VII to XI
Week 4  Marx, the Theorist
Part IV Production of Relative Surplus Value,
    Chapters XII to XV
Part V “The Production of Absolute and of Relative Surplus-Value”
    Chapters XVI to XVIII

Week 5
Part VI “Wages” Chapters XIX to XXII

Learning Opportunity #1  Due Monday, 25 April on or before 5:00 p.m. Please slide your exam under my office door at CH241P

Week 6  Marx’s Foundational Thinking in Economic Development
For this week we shall consider Marx’s neglected classic: Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations. I shall discourage reading the long intro from E. Hobsbawm and instead to concentrate on Marx’s ideas in the original. Pp. 67-120

Then we shall consider how these ideas on the uneven character of capitalist accumulation provide foundation for what can be thought of as the school dealing with “World Systems.” Clearly, we could consider writings of Immanuel Wallerstein, or Samir Amin. But I believe the best representative and carrier of this tradition is Andre Gunder Frank. Frank’s 1972 book: The Development of Underdevelopment is available through a google search as a pdf. Also, read about Frank in the article entitled “Legacies” authored by Cristóbal Kay (found at a google site.)

Week 7

Part VII “The Accumulation of Capital”
    Chapters XXIII to XXV

Part VIII “The So-Called Primitive Accumulation”
    Chapters XXVI to XXXIII

First Draft of Research Paper Due: on Monday, 23 May, by 5:00 p.m. Please slide under my office door.

Weeks 8, 9  Topic, “Capitalist Reproduction”
Capital Vol. II, Part III, Chapter XX “Simple Reproduction”
Capital Vol. II, Chapter XXI “Accumulation and Reproduction on an Extended Scale”
Topics: “Marx and Crisis Theory”
*Capital, Vol. III.* see Chapter on Crisis Theory “The Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall.”
*Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* by V.I. Lenin

**Topics** “Some Who Carry on Marx’s Tradition”
V. I. Lenin *The Development of Capitalism in Russia, Chapters 1 and 2*
Important to consider is Rosa Luxemburg’s great classic, *The Accumulation of Capital*, especially, Section III, and within this section, especially Chapters,27- “The Struggle Against Natural Economy,”
Chapter 28 “The Introduction of Commodity Economy”
Chapter 29 “The Struggle Against Peasant Economy”


**Week 10** Topics” *Imperialism.* by J.A. Hobson (any edition)
“Revisionism and the Rise of Social Democracy” “Marx’s Critics”
Eduard Bernstein. *The Pre-Conditions for Socialism*
Karl Kautsky *Die Agrarfrage.*
Marx’s Critics Mikhail Bakunin, *Marxism, Freedom, and the State,* see Chapter 3, “The State and Marxism” (found with google search)
F. Hayek *The Road to Serfdom,* as well as, *Collectivist Economic Planning* edited by: Ludwig von Mises

**Final Draft due at time by 5:00 pm on Wednesday evening of 08 June, 2015. Please slide under my office door.**

**House Rules:**
Please do not consume food of any form in our classroom.
Please do not use a mobile phone in a manner that breaks my concentration while lecturing, or during the break. If your rely upon a laptop or notebook computer, best to lead me to believe that you are concentrated on the rich content of my course lectures.

If a student disturbs me by breaking my concentration with use of a mobile phone or any form of computing device, the student will be asked to leave the course for that day.

**Affirmative Action**

Portland State University supports equal opportunity for all, regardless of age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion or creed, sex or
gender, sexual or gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other basis in law.

Disability Resources at PSU

Students with accommodations approved through the Disability Resource Center are responsible for contacting the faculty member prior to, or during, the first week of term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval should contact the DRC immediately.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected and required of students enrolled in this course. Suspected academic dishonesty in this course will be handled according to the procedures set out in the Student Code of Conduct.