

Course Code & No. - Section: HIST 480 - Section 1
Course Title (Credits): Special Topics in History: Imperialism (3)
Term & Year: Spring / 2014
Course Ref. No. (CRN): 10303

Instructor: Dr. Robert King
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Office: PRIM 205
Office Hours: by appointment

Class Meeting Time: TR 10:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
Location: PRIM 214

Prerequisites (from Catalog): ENVS 200, ENVS 205
Corequisites (from Catalog): None

Course Description

This course provides the tools to understand imperialism, both historically and within the system of capital, where there is an emphasis. Imperialism will be studied from the point of view of capital dynamics, core-periphery relations, international relations, cartography, ideology, and systems analysis. Students will think critically about the causes of imperialism as well as the phenomenon of imperialism in current events, world and geopolitical affairs, and in their daily life.

Student Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic, critical and discerning grasp of the definition of imperialism;
2. Understand basic systems analysis and the dynamics of the capital system;
3. Develop a critical view towards the phenomenon of imperialism and its causes;

Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes

Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Classroom participation leading up to a midterm and a final exam;
2. A research project approved by the instructor in advance;
3. A final classroom presentation related to the research project.

Instructional Strategies

This course will be a combination of lecture and discussion based upon close reading of the text. Discussion will become increasingly important as we move further into the material.

Required Texts

Amin S., Arrighi G., Frank, A.G., and Immanuel Wallerstein. *Dynamics of Global Crisis*. New

York: Monthly Review Press, 1982.

Biel, Robert. *The Entropy of Capitalism*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012.

Meszaros, Beyond Capital: Toward A Theory of Transition. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000.

Articles

A Selection from Counterpunch.org, Truthdig.com, Monthly Review Press, etc., updated weekly

Attendance

Attendance in so concentrated a course will be especially important. Any missed classes must be made up in order to pass the course. If you miss 6 classes, you fail the course, regardless of standing academic performance. If you miss five courses, you will drop a letter grade. As well, regular tardiness is basically equivalent to an absence in class (2 x tardy = 1 absence). Once class begins, all members of the class will be expected to remain for the duration of the class.

Class Requirements

Food will not be permitted in this class. Always come prepared with your textbooks and necessary materials to take notes. I strongly discourage the use of computers for note-taking. If you need to use a computer to take notes, please first ask for permission. In addition, there will be no use of cell phones during class, including texting. If you are seen using a cell phone for any reason without prior permission, you will be asked to leave the classroom for the session. We will be using our texts frequently in class; therefore, please bring them to each meeting.

Prim Library Resources

Using the library's resources effectively (not just the internet) contributes to developing each of SNC's core themes by exposing students to high quality academic resources, diverse opinions, new ideas, and a future that includes building on a liberal arts education. In this course, you will be expected to utilize the library's resources (either onsite or remotely) as you complete your assignments.

Prim Library has many resources which are helpful for your research. You may find the following information helpful:

Electronic databases (for peer-reviewed research articles, reviews, newspaper and magazine articles):
Electronic databases most likely to include articles related to your research are EBSCO, Academic Search Premier, JSTOR, and ProQuest.

Lib Guides: <http://Libguides.sierranevada.edu> These web pages contain instructions about how to use resources available at Prim Library, how to evaluation the appropriateness of information from the Internet for a research paper, how to cite sources, and other topics related to finding and using information.

For any books not housed at SNC, you can use inter-library loan (ILL) to borrow books from major university libraries, free of charge. Speak with someone at the front desk at the Prim Library for help.

Sanctions for Cheating and/or Plagiarism

The Honor Code

The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code

SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student's academic record.

1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

Grading Policy

Grading will be based upon written work, presentations, the midterm and final exam, and classroom participation. Although exams will be the primary means of grade assessment, improvement from the midterm to the final can be very important in terms of the final grade. A simple average of the grades from the exams, presentations, and participation will be the baseline for the final grade.

Grading Scale

Exams = 70% of course grade
Presentation = 20%
Participation = 10%

100 – 98 % = A+
97 – 90% = A
89 – 88% = B+

87 – 80% = B

And so on...

ADA Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, hconover@sierranevada.edu, office in Prim Library: PL-304.

The SNC Email System

The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.

The Sierra Nevada College Mission Statement

Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

The Core Themes

Liberal Arts	Professional Preparedness
Entrepreneurial	Thinking Sustainability

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Homework Due
T 1/21	Introduction	Counterpunch.org, The Wages of U.S. Imperialism ; William Blum's <i>Rogue State : A Guide to the World's Only Superpower</i> , pgs. 1-27
R 1/23	Imperialism: A Definition	Discussion of Blum and Dynamics of Capital Handout
T 1/28	Pre-Modern History of Imperialism ; Classical City-States, Empires and the Necessity of Expansion	Quiz on Imperialism, Definition Notes provided by instructor ; Dynamics of Capital, Pt. 2
R 1/30	Imperialism in Capital, Marx and Metabolic Rift, We Cannot Tell By the Taste of the Wheat Who	Selections from Capital Vol. 1, Counterpunch.org, Welcome to The Brave New World

	Produced It and the Difficulties of Identifying Imperialism ; Commodity Fetishism and the Imperialism of Everyday Life	
T 2/4	Imperialism as Advanced Stage of Capitalism Revisited ; Why Lenin Needs to Be Updated ; Capitalism as the Most Revolutionary System in History	Quiz on Metabolic Rift ; Selections from Lenin Interview footage with Slavoy Zizek
R 2/6	Polanyi and Creative Destruction	Selections from Polanyi, Selections from Meszaros
T 2/11	Wallerstein and Core Periphery Relations, Analysis of Imperialism as Cartography vs. Critique	Bryant at Larval Subjects, Onto-Cartography; Dynamics of Global Crisis w/Wallerstein, Frank, Ahmin, Arrighi, pgs. 7-10.
R 2/13	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
T 2/18	Biel, Why Markets are Not Natural or Invisible and <i>Why They Are</i> !	Quiz on Capitalist Cartography ; Biel, <i>The Entropy of Capitalism</i> , Ch. 1, 1-20 ; Introduction to the Entropy Frame Handout
R 2/20	Accumulation Regimes and The Entropy Question	Biel, Chapter 2, 39-42
T 2/25	The Structural-Systemic Causes of Capitalist Imperialism	Meszaros <i>Beyond Capital</i> excerpts
R 2/27	The Structural Crisis of Capital	Meszaros <i>Beyond Capital</i> excerpts
T 3/4	Hegemony and The Struggle for Exergy	<i>Structural Crisis of Capital</i> excerpts ; Biel Ch. 1, 24-29
R 3/6	Meszaros: Socialism or State Capital? Transition But Not to Socialism; The Imperialist Phases of the Capital System	Quiz on Dynamics of Capital ; <i>Beyond Capital</i> excerpts ; Wallerstein <i>Global Dynamics of Crisis</i> , Crisis as Transition pgs. 11-54
T 3/11	Midterm Review	
R 3/13	MIDTERM EXAM	MIDTERM EXAM
T 3/18	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
R 3/20	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
T 3/25	Capital as Adaptive System and The Role of Agency, In Humans, Markets, and Systems	Biel Ch. 2, pgs.43-65
R 3/27	Capitalism Learns to Act With Systemic Processes; Dissenting Networks and Why The Dominant Order Fears Them	Biel Ch. 3, 73-91 & 112-116
T 4/1	Information and Feedback from Entropy; The Plunge Into Militarism	Biel Ch. 4, 117-134 & 148-174
R 4/3	Terrorism As Entropy Management	Biel Ch. 5, 179-230
T 4/8	A Non-Eurocentric Model for Capitalism ? Contradictions in the Contemporary Phase of Imperialist Governance.	Biel Ch. 6 & 7, 231-241 & 263-278

R 4/10	Soft Power and Imperialism	Biel Ch. 7, 279-299
T 4/15	Said and Cultural Imperialism; The Affect of Imperialism and Its Addictions, Machines and Zombies	Quiz on Biel ; Said, <i>Imperialism and Culture</i> excerpts ; Harman <i>Zombie Capitalism</i> excerpts ; Giroux on Zombie Politics- Bill Moyers Interview
R 4/17	Ideologies of Imperialism; The Stakes and Difficulties of Resistance; The Challenge and Burden of Historical Time	Richard Smith, <i>Capitalism and Destruction of Life on Earth</i> : 6 <i>Theses on Saving the Humans</i> ; Meszaros, <i>The Challenge and Burden</i> excerpts
T 4/22	The Institutional Basis of Imperialism and World Trade, IMF and World Bank, Bretton Woods and the Triumph of U.S. Financial Capital	Hudson excerpts, <i>SuperImperialism</i> pp. 39-57 & 137-162; Chomsky on IMF and World Bank Handout provided ; Counterpunch.org, Close Down The IMF
R 4/24	The Financialization of the Economy and Student Loan Debt; Jobs Offshoring and Rent	Hudson excerpts from <i>The Bubble and Beyond</i> , pgs. 1-20. ; Paul Craig Roberts, <i>The Failure of Laissez-Faire Capitalism</i> , 83-104 ; Roberts link to be provided by instructor
T 4/29	Imperialism in Educational Institutions; Democracy and its Thermodynamic Conditions	Presentations ; Giroux, Truthdig ; King article at Arachneed
R 5/1	Imperialism in Educational Institutions; Critical Pedagogy	Presentations ; Giroux, Truthdig
T 5/6	Final Review	Presentations
R 5/8	READING DAY	READING DAY
FINALS WEEK		