

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

## **HIS 431: American Capitalism and the Global Economy**

### **Course Information**

*Course Credits:* 3  
*Semester:* Fall 2021  
*Prerequisites:* None

*Class Meeting Times:* TR 9:30-10:45a  
MER 380  
*Compressed Schedule:* TR 11:10a-12:10p

### *Faculty Information:*

**Dr. Jennifer M. Black, History Dept.**  
Email: [jblack2@misericordia.edu](mailto:jblack2@misericordia.edu)  
Office: MER 339 / Phone: 674-1491

Office Hours: TR 2:00-4:00pm, & by appt.  
Not sure what office hours are? [Check out this video.](#)

### **Course Description**

This course provides an analysis of the historical origins and development of American capitalism, from the late-eighteenth century to the present. It examines the shifting nature of capitalism and the ways that it has framed both the role of the US government (broadly construed) and the social experience of the American people, as well as America's role in the global economy.

### *Introduction*

American business has long been the topic of historical, political, and economic debate. What is the nature of American capitalism? What is the relationship between the American government and the capitalist economy? How have capitalistic pursuits motivated foreign policy? What are the effects of the capitalist economy on American society? This course will examine the historical origins and development of American capitalism since the late-eighteenth century, focusing on three major themes: the shifting nature of capitalistic thought and practice, its effects in framing the role of the US government (broadly construed), and the social impact of capitalism on the American people. Students in this course will engage in discussion of a variety of topics, including: industrialists, workers, foreign policy, domestic and global trade, banks and financial regulation, corporate responsibility, economic crises, and consumption. At the conclusion of the course, students will have developed a deep and critical understanding of the economic, political, and social implications of the American capitalistic system and its relationship to the global economy.

### **Course Goals & Objectives**

This course addresses the following programmatic and university goals / objectives:

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

| <b>Course Objectives:</b>  | <b>In completing this course, students will:</b>  | <b>Assessment Methods</b> |
|--|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Identify major trends in the history of American capitalism   | 1.A: Recognize and explain historical processes, continuity, and change.<br>1.B: Develop a body of historical knowledge with breadth of time and place—as well as depth of detail—in order to discern context.  | Discussion;<br>Exams      |
| 2. Articulate critical perspectives on both primary and secondary sources  | 3.A: Describe past events from multiple perspectives.<br>3.B: Identify, summarize, appraise, and synthesize other scholars' historical arguments.<br>3.c: Evaluate historical arguments, explaining how they were constructed and might be improved.  | Discussion;<br>Exams      |
| 3. Apply course material to contextualize social, economic, cultural, and political developments in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries | 2.A: Recognize history as an interpretive account of the human past—one that historians create in the present from surviving evidence.<br>2.B: Collect, question, organize, synthesize, and interpret a variety of historical sources.<br>2.C: Practice ethical historical inquiry through proper acknowledgement of sources. | Discussion;<br>Exams      |
| 4. Synthesize primary and secondary sources  | 4.a: Generate substantive, open-ended questions about the past and employ research strategies to answer them.<br>4.b: Craft well-supported historical narratives, arguments, and reports of research findings<br>4.c: Synthesize research with existing narratives, making an original argument.                              | Exams                     |
| 5. Articulate the major consequences and benefits of capitalism in the US, from a historical perspective                                     | 5.a: Historicize contemporary issues by correlating them to the past<br>5.b: Practice civil discourse and respect for diverse perspectives  | Exams                     |

| <b>Course Objectives:</b>  | <b>Program Learning Outcome</b>                                   | <b>University Learning Outcome</b> |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Identify major trends in the history of American capitalism   | Goal 1: Develop historical knowledge                              | UG #s 5, 6, 8                      |
| 2. Articulate critical perspectives on both primary and secondary sources  | Goal: 3. Recognize the provisional nature of historical knowledge | UG #s 3, 4, 7, 8                   |
| 3. Apply course material to contextualize social, economic, cultural, and political developments in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries | Goal 2: Evaluate and employ historical methods                    | UG#3, 4, 8                         |
| 4. Synthesize primary and secondary sources  | Goal 4. Create historical arguments and narratives.               | UG# 3, 4, 7, 8                     |
| 5. Articulate the major consequences and benefits of capitalism in the US, from a historical perspective                                     | Goal 5: Use historical perspective to inform active citizenship   | UG #s 1, 2, 5;<br>Core goal #6     |

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

**Required Texts**

- Andreas, Peter. *Smuggler Nation: how illicit trade made America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780199360987
- Rivoli, Pietra. *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. John Wiley & Sons, 2014. ISBN: 9781118950142
- Liebhold, Peter; Franz, Kathleen G.; and Davis, Nancy. *American Enterprise: A History of Business in America*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 2015. ISBN: 9781588344977

\*Additional articles available on Blackboard.

**Course Delivery**

*Evaluation Methods & Student Assignments*

This service-learning course requires 10 service hours. Additionally, there are a series of short papers, a discussion lead, and a final exam in the course. The final course grade will be weighted as follows:

| <u>Item</u>           | <u>Weight</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Service Project       | 10%           |
| Participation         | 15%           |
| Discussion Lead       | 15%           |
| Reading Responses (6) | 30%           |
| Final Exam            | 30%           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>100%</b>   |

*Service Project*

For this course, we have partnered with the [Victims' Resource Center of NEPA](#) (Wilkes Barre, PA) for a brief service project to raise awareness for victims of human trafficking, in conjunction with the [Red Sand Project](#). The service project includes an event on human trafficking, held 10/12/21 at 12:30pm, and the Red Sand installation that afternoon. As part of the 10hrs of service work, students in the course will research and design posters with facts about human trafficking (both in the local, regional, national, and global arenas), install the posters on campus prior to the event, and assist with the Red Sand installation. More details will follow.

*Discussions & Participation*

In this course you will be graded on your active participation in class discussions. This gives you a chance to verbally demonstrate your understanding of the course material; participation thus includes raising your hand to ask or answer questions during lecture, and to respond to other students' comments and questions. Each class, I will calculate a grade for your participation points based on your contributions to class discussion, according to the following distribution: full participation (A) = 4pts; some participation (C-B range) = 2.5-3.5pts; present but no participation (D) = 2pts; absences beyond the two freebies = 0pts. Under this rubric, a student who attends all class meetings but does not contribute to class discussion will receive a D for participation.

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

Throughout the semester, each student will choose one week to lead our discussion (for one session that week, generally on Thursday). For that week, the student will create a discussion related to one of the topics assigned in the week's readings, and will prepare materials to help lead the discussion for the day. The goal of the discussion is to relate the historical content in the readings to current events / issues related to capitalism today. Detailed instructions on leading discussions will follow. You will have the opportunity to choose your session during the first week of class.

I will post discussion questions on the Blackboard each week on Sunday, for our upcoming discussion of the assigned readings. I encourage you to prepare answers to these questions in advance of our Tuesday meeting, as they will be used to help guide our discussion and will be useful in preparing for the exams.

### *Reading Response Papers*

You are required to submit six response papers throughout the semester, related to the course readings. Each week, I will post discussion questions to guide your reading comprehension. You may self-select the weeks for which you'd like to submit a response, and you need not inform me in advance of your selection. When you'd like to submit a response paper, you should choose two of the posted discussion questions for that week and formulate a written response to each question, of about 150-300 words each (for a total of 300-600 words), with citations (if appropriate). Please indicate the week number and questions you've selected on your paper. You should follow paper formatting guidelines as noted on the syllabus. These papers are due at the beginning of class on Tuesday (both in hard copy and to Bb) and will not be accepted late.

### *Exams*

The cumulative final exam will be composed of essays and short-answer questions designed to test your understanding of the course material and ability to apply it to current events. Additional details will follow.

### *Grading Scale for Course Grades*

|                  |                   |                      |                 |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Superior:</u> | <u>Very Good:</u> | <u>Satisfactory:</u> | <u>Poor:</u>    |
| A = 93-100%      | B+ = 87-89%       | C+ = 77-79%          | D = 65-69%      |
| A- = 90-92%      | B = 83-86%        | C = 73-76%           | F = 64% & below |
|                  | B- = 80-82%       | C- = 70-72%          |                 |

### **Course & Academic Policies**

Each week we will spend part of our time discussing the assigned readings, some time looking at primary sources (which may include images and film), and some time relating the historical content to current events. Reading assignments should be completed each week before Tuesday's class. You are encouraged to take notes on the texts as you read, and come to class prepared to offer your comments and questions. Bring materials necessary to take notes (pen / paper, laptop, etc.) and your document readers to class each week. Regular attendance is mandatory and will ensure your success in this course, as will your active participation in weekly discussions. Active participation includes listening to the material presented and thoughtfully engaging the class with your own observations or analyses. Our discussions will provide an opportunity for you to digest the course material—you are encouraged to question and think

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

critically about the material presented and use class as a place for exchanging those thoughts and questions with other students.

If you have specific questions or concerns about the assignments or your performance in the class, please come to see me as soon as possible. Addressing these issues early in the semester is key to your success in this class and, more generally, as a student. I am happy to meet with students either in office hours or by appointment to discuss course assignments, paper drafts (within a reasonable time-frame), questions, concerns, writing mechanics, general history, or anything else you'd like to discuss.

*Diversity & Classroom Etiquette*

The Department of History & Government embraces cultural, linguistic, and individual diversity in students. We believe that our program will be enriched and enhanced by diversity that includes but is not limited to gender and gender identity, race, ethnicity and national origins, sexuality, class, and religion. In this course we will discuss potentially controversial issues having to do with race, gender, sexuality, class, and politics. Some of the readings and other course materials contain objectionable material, including language that is demeaning of certain racial groups. You are all adults; I expect you to deal with these materials in a mature fashion with the understanding that their content can help us to better understand the past, even if the language is out-of-date and / or offensive. This does not mean that you can repeat such language without being appropriately sensitive to its offensive nature. Use your best judgement: if you must quote such language, then quote it and move on. If a less offensive term will do to make your point, then rephrase as needed. We each need to strive to maintain a tolerant and respectful environment. Moreover, open disrespect of another classmate will not be tolerated. I reserve the right to ask any student who is disruptive or disrespectful to leave the online classroom.

*\*NOTE: It is your responsibility to understand the guidelines for this course. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me as soon as possible. Failure to address such issues connotes your implicit acceptance and agreement with these guidelines. I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus, if necessary.*

## Weekly Schedule

*Readings with an asterisk (\*) are available on Blackboard*

**Week 1 (Aug 31, Sept 2): Introduction**

*Reading:*       \*Williams, *Keywords*, for Capitalism (3p)  
                          \*Adam Smith, Excerpts from *Wealth of Nations* (10p)  
                          Andreas, Intro (12p)

**Week 2 (Sept 7, 9): The Colonies**

*Reading:*       Andreas, chs 1-2, p13-44  
                          AE, p8-29

Discussion

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

**Week 3 (Sept 14, 16): Revolution & Early Republic**

*Reading:* Andreas, chs 3-4, p45-81  
\*Katie Hemphill, on Prostitution in Baltimore (p168-189)

Discussion

**Week 4 (Sept 21, 23): Industrial Revolution**

*Reading:* Andreas, chs 5-6, p82-114  
\*Baptist, on debt & slavery (23p)

Discussion

\*Poster Designs due 9/23 by 2pm

**Week 5 (Sept 28, 30): Westward Expansion**

*Reading:* Andreas, ch 7, p115-129  
AE p30-55

Discussion

**Week 6 (Oct 5, 7): Slavery & Civil War**

*Reading:* Andreas, chs 8-9, p130-176

Discussion

\*Poster installation this week

**Week 7 (Oct 12): Gilded Age Industry & the “White Slave Trade”**

*Reading:* Andreas, ch 10-11, p177-207  
AE p62-82

\*VRC / Service Event—10/12/2021, 12:30pm-4pm

\*Red Sand installation, 10/12/2021

\*NO CLASS October 14 (Fall Break)

**Week 8 (Oct 19, 21): Immigration, Bootleggers, & the Modern Age**

*Reading:* Andreas, ch 12-13, p208-252  
AE p83-103

Discussion

**Week 9 (Oct 26, 28): Postwar Abundance & Poverty**

*Reading:* AE p111-178  
*Watch at home:* [Harvest of Shame](#), CBS News, 1960

Discussion

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

**Week 10 (Nov 2, 4): The War on Drugs**

*Reading:* Andreas, ch 14, p253-290  
AE p179-203

Discussion

\*WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE: November 5—Last day to withdraw without academic penalty

**Week 11 (Nov 9, 11): King Cotton**

*Reading:* Rivoli, p. ix -74

Discussion

**Week 12 (Nov 16, 18): Made in China**

*Reading:* Rivoli, p75-140

Discussion

**Week 13 (Nov 23): From Chinese Factories to US Markets**

*Reading:* Rivoli, p141-212

\*NO CLASS 11/25/21: Thanksgiving Recess

**Week 14 (Nov 30, Dec 2): Free Markets in Africa**

*Reading:* Rivoli, p213-285

Discussion

**Week 15 (Dec 7, 9): NAFTA & Today**

*Reading:* Andreas, ch15, p291-355

Wrap Up

**FINAL EXAM (Date TBA—Refer to posted Final Exam Schedule)**

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government  
**HIS 431: Service Project Instructions**

**General Information:**

For this course, we have partnered with the [Victims' Resource Center of NEPA](#) (Wilkes Barre, PA) for a brief service project to raise awareness for victims of human trafficking, in conjunction with the [Red Sand Project](#).

The [Victims' Resource Center of NEPA](#) is a non-profit organization est. in 1974 to help victims of violence in a variety of forms. Its mission aims to prevent victimization, to educate society to the needs of victims, and to increase the quality of care provided to victims. Primarily, the center provides a [range of services](#) for victims of sexual violence, domestic violence, and abuse. It also sponsors prevention education programs for the local community, and advocates on behalf of victims in Luzerne, Carbon, and Wyoming counties.

Our service project will help the VRC meet its mission to educate the local community about the problem of human trafficking, both locally and on a broader national and global level. It is primarily a project to raise awareness; you will be interacting with members of the Misericordia community and possibly with members of the general public, though this is likely to be indirect contact. You will not need to travel to the VRC or have any direct contact with victims seeking services.

There are three components to this service project:

- Small posters with facts about human trafficking, installed on campus
  - You will each complete some basic research about human trafficking in the region and globally, and will design a small poster that can be installed along the central sidewalks on campus (i.e. between INS and Banks)
  - We will use Google slides and Canva to organize / design our posters, and order from the print shop. The service-learning office will cover the costs of printing.
  - You should plan to install your poster on campus before the 10/12 event. We will coordinate spaces / placement / timing together in class.
  - We will also brainstorm other ways we can help raise awareness of this problem, perhaps through social media as well.
- An event on human trafficking, held 10/12/21 at 12:30pm
  - This event will be led by Tammi Burke, a staff member at VRC
  - Tammi will provide information about the problem of human trafficking in the region and nationally / globally, and will discuss how sympathetic parties can identify and support victims
- The Red Sand installation, 10/12/21 2:00-4:00pm
  - This is a participatory art installation that uses the sidewalks on campus to raise awareness
  - We will pour red sand into the cracks on the sidewalk to symbolically draw attention to the victims of human trafficking, who often “fall through the cracks” in the legal system
  - We will invite members of the MU community to join us in the art installation—please encourage your friends and classmates in other courses to attend! The



Misericordia University  
 Department of History and Government  
 service-learning office will provide all supplies necessary to complete the installation.

While each student is only responsible for one poster, there are several things we can do to really heighten the impact of this project. For example, we may want to designate one student to publicize our work on social media, using the hashtags #RedSandProject and #StopHumanTrafficking. We may also want to designate a student to compile our facts and information, along with photographs of the event, on a website. We will discuss all these options early in the semester.

### **Important Dates:**

Please mark your calendars for the following dates:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 9/9/21<br>9:30am         | Preliminary discussion about poster factoids in class                         |
| 9/10/21                  | Begin working on your poster design   |
| 9/23/21<br>2:00pm        | Poster designs due<br>1p poster supplement due                                |
| Week of 10/5             | Install posters   |
| 10/12/21<br>12:30-1:45pm | <i>Human Trafficking in NEPA- event with the VRC</i><br>Please plan to attend |
| 10/12/21<br>2:00-4:00pm  | <i>Red Sand Installation</i><br>Please plan to attend all or part             |
| 10/28/21<br>5:00pm       | Service reflection papers due via Blackboard                                  |

### **Detailed Instructions:**

#### *Research*

Your first step will be to research the problem of human trafficking locally and globally. You will be choosing one fact to represent on your poster, and we will organize our facts using google slides to make sure we don't have any duplicates. There are three main points we want to cover with these posters: facts about trafficking locally / regionally in NEPA, facts about trafficking globally, and what the public can do to help. We'll discuss these goals early in the semester and may assign certain students to cover certain topics to avoid overlap.

To start, please read [this Fox News report, from July 2021](#). Use the article's statistics and information to help you research additional statistics on human trafficking in PA and elsewhere. Additional reputable sources include:

- [The Human Trafficking Institute](#)
- [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#)

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

- [Human Trafficking Resources page from PennDOT](#)
- [PA Department of Human Services Resource page on Human Trafficking](#)
- [PA Judiciary Resource page on Human Trafficking](#)

Begin compiling ideas and facts about human trafficking in PA and elsewhere. Take note of your sources, important statistics, and related information. Consider which statistic / factoid you'd like to highlight for your poster, and begin thinking about how you can do that. We will discuss these ideas in class on 9/9/21.

*Poster Designs & Deliverables*

We will use google slides to organize our posters and to prevent duplicates. Please see the link in Blackboard to access the slides for the class. You may use the themes available on google slides to design your poster, or if you'd like something more professional, you can use [Canva, a free web-based design platform](#).

Each poster should be visually appealing and succinct in its message. Please also consider using highly-accessible colors in your design (i.e. no red text on black, no yellow text on blue, etc.). We want to emphasize the information presented, so images are not required, but if you feel strongly that your poster should have a graphic element you might consider some kind of clip art or other graphic element rather than a photograph. Keep in mind that we can only use open-source graphics. Your poster must contain the following:

- A “headline” or brief factoid to grab the viewer’s attention (i.e. “Over 40 million people are enslaved globally today”)
- Explanatory text (if appropriate)- limited to 50 words
- Attribution / source for your stat / fact (use shortened URLs if possible)
- A QR code pointing to a website where the viewer can find more info

You should proofread and finalize your poster design by 9/23/21 at 2:00pm and upload the PDF to the blackboard in the appropriate submission space. Please double-check spellings, attribution, etc.—these are the final poster drafts that will be printed.

In addition to preparing the poster, you should also prepare the following 1p supplement to turn in (also due by 9/23/21 at 2:00pm):

- Some explanatory text that expands on this headline—about 150-200 words
- A list of relevant sources supporting this explanatory text

Once we get the posters back from the print shop, each student will be responsible for installing his / her own poster on campus using materials provided. We will discuss placement, spacing, etc. in class.

*VRC Event & Red Sand Installation*

On 10/12/21 from 12:30-1:45pm, Tammi Burke from the VRC will lead the event on Human Trafficking. All HIS 431 students are expected to attend, unless you have a prior commitment (which you must clear with me).

Misericordia University  
Department of History and Government

Directly following the VRC event, we will begin the Red Sand installation. The basic principle of this installation is to fill the cracks in the sidewalks with red sand. The service-learning office will provide the necessary supplies for this installation. We will start with the sidewalks in the center of campus, between Banks and INS, and move outward from there as supplies / volunteers allow. The sand installation will last from approximately 2:00pm-4:00pm. All HIS 431 students are expected to participate in the installation (all or in part), unless you have a prior commitment that you clear with me first. In this case, I will assign alternate tasks to the affected student(s).

*Service-Learning Reflection*

Your final task is to compose a one-page reflection (min. 300 words) on the service-learning experience. Consider the following questions as you reflect on the value of the experience and its impact on the community: What impact did this experience have on your attitudes, beliefs and personal values? What impact did you have on the community? What role did the academic course content play in this problem? Where else did you need to draw information to overcome this problem? Would you recommend this service project to another student? Why or why not? Due 10/28/21 by 5:00pm.

**Grading Breakdown:**

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Completed Poster design | 30pts |
| Poster 1p supplement    | 20pts |
| VRC event attendance    | 15pts |
| Red Sand installation   | 15pts |
| 1p service reflection   | 20pts |