**UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO - DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**COURSE OUTLINE - SOCIOLOGY 3362F-001 ('Sociology of Utopia')**

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<tr>
<th><strong>TERM:</strong></th>
<th>Fall Term 2014</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INSTRUCTOR:</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Michael E. Gardiner</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OFFICE:</strong></td>
<td>SSC 5424 (661-2111, ex. 85139; e-mail: <a href="mailto:megardin@uwo.ca">megardin@uwo.ca</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CLASS TIME &amp; LOCATION</strong></td>
<td>Tu 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm (SSC 5406)</td>
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<td><strong>OFFICE HOURS:</strong></td>
<td>Weds 2:00 - 3:30 pm (or by appointment)</td>
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**REQUIRED TEXTS**


Custom Course Package (hereafter CCP), available from the UWO bookstore

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The literature on utopia is vast. Accordingly, this course will concentrate on utopianism in the context of Western modernity. We will begin by posing conceptual and definitional questions about the nature of utopia and its boundaries, and then survey the ideas of the main C19th and C20th theorists of utopia, including the utopian socialists, Marx and Engels, and many others. We will also look at various critical debates around utopia, including 'dystopia' and anti-utopianism. The second half of the course will examine how utopian impulses are registered empirically in various sociocultural phenomena, such as social movements and intentional communities (both historical and contemporary), authoritarian utopias, ‘ecotopias’, in technology and mass culture, and so on.

**REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

This course will be run on a seminar basis. Each student will be expected to give one oral presentation based on a class reading and submit each in written form one week after the presentation is given (1500 words, 5-6 pages, double-spaced). This will be a critical synopses of the reading designed to raise specific questions for debate and analysis, using primary texts where possible. The seminar report will be worth 20% of the final grade. (If the student misses their presentation without legitimate and documentable reason, they will automatically lose 25% of the value of this assignment.) Students must submit an outline of the proposed term paper, of minimum two pages (can be in point-form and must include a bibliography listing at least six publications, at least three outside of class readings), worth 10% of the final grade, and due Nov. 4. The major term paper (4000 words, 12 pages), worth 44% of the final grade, will be due Dec. 2 (in class). *(Comments on major term papers will only be provided if requested in advance or along with submission.)* Students must also submit a summary (minimum one page; maximum two) of the assigned readings for each class (excluding the reading one is presenting on), each worth 1%, for a total of 11%. The final 15% will be awarded for general class participation. All written submissions must be typed and in 12 scale font, except for the notes of assigned readings, which may be hand-written. *(The only acceptable excuses for missed deadlines will be for documented medical reasons or family bereavement/illness; late papers will otherwise be penalized 5% per day.)* All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com). The instructor reserves the right to require individual students to submit electronic versions of their essays to Turnitin.com.
GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Oral presentation: 20%
Proposal: 10%
Participation: 15%
Notes: 11%
Final paper: 44%
Total: 100%

READING AND SEMINAR SCHEDULE

PART ONE: CONTEXTUAL AND DEFINITIONAL ISSUES

Week 1. Orientation (Sept. 9)

Week 2. What is Utopia? (Sept. 16)
Krishan Kumar, “The Elements of Utopia,” from Utopianism, 1-19.
Krishan Kumar, “The Boundaries of Utopia,” from Utopianism, 20-42.

Week 3. The History of Utopia (Sept. 23)
Krishan Kumar, “The History of Utopia,” from Utopianism, 43-63.
Lyman Tower Sargent, “Utopian Traditions: Themes and Variations” (CCP, 1-9).

PART TWO: UTOPIA IN THEORY

Week 4. Utopian Socialism and Marxism (Sept. 30) (No classes or seminar presentations due to instructor absence, but assigned reading notes still required)

Week 5. Utopia and Sociology (Oct. 7)
Stephen Crook, “Utopia and Dystopia” (CCP, 11-24).
Ruth Levitas, “Sociology and Utopia” (PDF).

Week 6. Dystopias and Anti-Utopianism (Oct. 14)
Krishan Kumar, “Anti-Utopia, Shadow of Utopia” (CCP, 38-58).
PART THREE: UTOPIA IN PRACTICE

Week 7. Utopian communities (I) (Oct. 21)
Krishan Kumar, “The Practice of Utopia,” from Utopianism, 64-85.

Week 8. Utopian Communities (II) (Oct. 28)

Week 9. Utopian Communities (III) (Nov. 4)

Week 10. Totalitarian and Authoritarian Utopias (Nov. 11)
John Gray, “Armed Missionaries” (CCP, 71-81).
Frédéric Rouvillois, “Utopia and Totalitarianism” (CCP, 105-21).

Week 11. Utopia and Mass Culture (I) (Nov. 18)
Alexander Wilson, “Technological Utopias: World’s Fairs And Theme Parks” (CCP, 138-71).

Week 12. Utopia and Mass Culture (II): Film (Nov. 25)
Peter Fitting, “What Is Utopian Film? An Introductory Taxonomy” (PDF).

Week 13. Pirate Utopias (Dec. 2)
Hakim Bey, selections from Temporary Autonomous Zone (CCP, 199-207).
CCP:


PDFs (OWL CT):


Course Attendance Requirements

With the exception of legitimate medical/personal excuses (documentation required to be submitted) students are expected to attend at least 80% of the class meetings for this course. A passing grade in the course cannot be obtained without meeting this attendance requirement.

Missed Exams and Late Assignments

You should understand that academic accommodation will not be granted automatically on request. If, due to medical illness, you cannot write a test or exam, or submit an assignment by the due date, it is your responsibility to follow the University’s new “Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness”. This policy can be accessed at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Compassionate Grounds

Serious Illness of a Family Member: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member's physician to your home faculty's Academic Counselling office.

In Case of a Death: Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty's Academic Counselling office.

Note on Plagiarism:

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different forms of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. In using another writer's words, you MUST both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer. In acknowledging a source from which a quote has been taken, you are to use the Style Guide recommended by your professor.

Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B: In adopting other writers’ ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers’ trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of
acknowledgement given in “A” above. Since the words are your own they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own: where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in “A” above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgement and, when necessary, quotation marks if necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student’s receiving an “F” in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

**Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness** ([https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm](https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm)).

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: ([http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html))

**Accessibility Options:**

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. ([http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html))

**Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: ([http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf))

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://www.uwo.ca/uwcom/mentalhealth/](http://www.uwo.ca/uwcom/mentalhealth/)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.