

Note: this syllabus is not a contract. It is subject to further change or revision, to best realize the educational goals of the course. Revisions will be announced in class or in course materials online with appropriate prior notice.

**San José State University
Department of Anthropology**

**ANTH 144 Gifts, Markets, Power:
*Building Alternative Economies***

Section 01 (44707), Fall 2021

ONLINE

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Melissa Beresford
Office Location:	Clark Hall 402G
Email:	melissa.beresford@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tu/Th 8:00 am – 9:00 am via Zoom (see departmental website for Zoom link)
Class Days/Time:	N/A: All course material will be posted online (see course format description below)
Pre-requisites	ANTH 11 or instructor consent

SJSU Course Catalog Description:

Cross-cultural analysis of economic systems. Topics include reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange; the history of money and virtual currencies; the cultural construction of debt and credit; corporate capitalism and cyclical crises; global economic integration; and contemporary “alternative” economic systems.

Detailed Course Description:

From Occupy Wall Street and the Bernie Sanders campaign, to new calls for universal basic income and free college tuition, we are seeing a renewed critique of capitalism in the public sphere. Critiques and resistance to capitalism, however, are not new. In this course, we examine how peoples and movements around the world have built alternative economies—even within the context of (and often in resistance to) global capitalism. We begin by examining the roots of industrial capitalism and how people have attempted to reform or abolish capitalism. We then examine a suite of alternative economic practices that people are implementing around the world today, including sharing economies, cooperatives, alternative markets, and economies of self-

reliance. Through hands on activities, students will gain a theoretical understanding of how different economies work and a practical toolkit for evaluating a diverse range of economic possibilities.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Explain the difference between conventional views of economies and diverse views of economies
2. Learn to critique different economic assumptions and review a range of different economic approaches and practices
3. Articulate their own arguments and opinions about the benefits and consequences of different economic practices and systems on the basis of empirical evidence and reasoned analysis
4. Develop their analytical, research, reading, and writing skills

Course Format: This will be an asynchronous online course, taught in modular format. This means that there are no designated class meeting times. Rather, all course material will be posted in modular format on the course Canvas site. There are 6 course modules. Each module contains a series of lectures, readings, and activities (reading responses and class discussion via the online discussion boards). In addition to the 6 course modules, there are three written assignments that require students to conduct guided research and analysis. Students are required to complete the course modules and the written assignments by the dates outlined in the course schedule.

Required Texts/Readings (Required):

- Gibson-Graham, J. K., Cameron, J., & Healy, S. (2013). *Take back the economy: An ethical guide for transforming our communities*. U of Minnesota Press.
- All other readings will be provided to you via the class Canvas platform

Final Grades (based on percentage of total possible points)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage of Total Course Points</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
<i>A</i>	92.5-100	Excellent
<i>A minus</i>	89.5-92.4	Excellent
<i>B plus</i>	87.5-89.4	Good
<i>B</i>	82.5-87.4	Good
<i>B minus</i>	79.5-82.4	Good
<i>C plus</i>	77.5-79.4	Average
<i>C</i>	69.5-77.4	Average
<i>D</i>	59.5-69.4	Passing
<i>F</i>	Less than 59.5	Failure

Note on “rounding” grades: The grades here have already been “rounded up” – meaning, if you earn an 89.5, I round up to give you an A minus (rather than a B plus). Grades will not be rounded up further than what is already stated here.

For your own protection, you should keep a copy of everything you hand in, and you should keep your graded assignments at least until grades are finalized at the end of the semester, and in the event you wish to contest any grades.

Course Requirements and Assignments:

Assignment/Exam	Total Pts	% of Grade
Syllabus Quiz	10	3.5%
6 Reading Responses (10 points each)	60	19.3%
6 Discussion Board Posts & Responses (10 points each)	60	19.3%
Writing Assignment #1	60	19.3%
Writing Assignment #2	60	19.3%
Final Writing Assignment #3	60	19.3%
Total Points Possible	310	100%

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica (this equates to three hours per unit per week, or 9 hours per week for a 3 unit course). Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Final grades for the course will be assigned on basis of the following. **Refer to the course schedule located on Canvas for the most current due dates, as these may change after the posting of this syllabus.** Please note that these are summary descriptions. Detailed instructions for each assignment will be posted on the course site.

1. Syllabus Quiz (10 points, 3.5% of final grade)

Each student is required to read through this syllabus and complete a syllabus quiz (located on Canvas) before proceeding with the course material. You must receive an 80% or higher and you can repeat the quiz until you reach it up until the quiz due date.

2. Reading Responses (60 points total, ~20% of final grade)

Each module will have one reading response (6 total, 10 points each). Reading Response are short-answer quizzes. For each module, you will be given one short prompt. You will write one short paragraph (4-5 sentences). You must show engagement with the readings or lectures (with citations) to get full credit. You will be asked to critically think about materials from the readings and lectures, so you’ll need to have thought about the course materials to pass. Reading Responses are graded pass/fail.

3. Discussion Posts (60 points total, ~20% of final grade)

In response to each module's prompt (6 total), students will make one Discussion Post (50-100 words). Each student's post should have an interesting or provocative title so that others will want to read and respond to the post. Each post is worth 6 points. Posts are graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass, posts must (1) be at least 50-100 words, (2) have an interesting or provocative title, and (3) be relevant to the discussion topic.

Within 24 hours of the post deadline, students must post a response to two other classmates' initial post that are no more than 50 words and engage in critical or substantive ways with the initial post (e.g., exemplar, critique, question). Each response is worth 2 points (4 points total). These responses are graded on a pass/fail basis. To pass and earn full points responses must (1) adhere to the word limit and (2) engage critically or substantively with the initial post it is responding to.

4. Assignments (~60% of final grade)

There will be three hands-on activities that apply the materials we study. These assignments require you to conduct independent research beyond our course material, and use that research to synthesize the lessons and arguments we cover in the course. The final assignment prompts (and detailed instructions) will be posted on the course Canvas site. These prompts are posted here to give you an idea of what you will be doing, but please be sure to follow the detailed directions on our Canvas site when completing the assignments.

Assignment 1: You Are an Activist

In this hypothetical scenario, you are an activist in your local community. You are seeking to mobilize people to build awareness of the consequences of climate change and inspire a social movement that will help support your vision of necessary change. You must write your platform that will be posted on your website to inspire this movement and persuade people to engage in direction action and mobilization. Do do this you must: (1) explain how your local area is being affected by climate change; (2) explain how this will economically affect your community; (3) explain how social movements can mitigate or counteract the affects you describe; and (4) articulate the role you will play in this social movement.

Assignment 2: You Work for Uber

In this hypothetical scenario, you work for Uber. Over the past few years, there has been increasing negative press about the gig-economy model that is the basis of Uber's business model. Uber has hired you to head up their new division of Corporate Social Responsibility. You have been tasked with (a) figuring out ways to give back to society, and (b) improve the public image of Uber as a socially responsible business. You are now preparing a presentation to give to the Uber company executives to outline a CSR strategy. You must, (1) outline 2-3 major critiques of the gig-economy model for the executives; (2) suggest 2-3 ways that Uber can work to address these negative impacts, choosing from the following options: social entrepreneurship, developing an ESOP, lobbying for universal

basic income, or lobbying for a federal “baby bonds” program; and (3) evaluate how effective you expect these approaches/programs will be.

(Final) Assignment 3: You Are a Community Member

In this real life scenario, you are a member of your community (whatever community you choose). Please explain how you will build or contribute to building alternative economies in your own life. This writing assignment is designed to be a personal reflection on how your own personal beliefs, values, experiences, and goals integrate with our course material. The prompt here is deliberately wide. I want to give all of you the freedom to approach the assignment in the best way that suits your own experiences. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers for this assignment. Rather, you will be graded on the extent to which you address all the prompts below with careful thought and clarity of expression. To do this you must, (1) Explain your personal values or sets of ethical beliefs pertaining to economic systems and/or economic justice; (2) articulate what actions can *you* take to help enact these economic values and personal beliefs in your own life and/or community; (3) describe the potential problems or pitfalls you foresee in trying to execute the actions you explained in Part 2 and how might you overcome these problems or pitfalls; and (4) defend the outcomes and/or benefits that you envision if you are able to successfully implement the actions you explained in Part 2.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit in this course.

Incompletes

A mark of "I" (incomplete) is given by the instructor when you have completed most of the course (at least 80% of coursework) and are otherwise doing acceptable work (have a passing grade) but are unable to complete the course because of illness or other conditions beyond your control. You are required to arrange with the instructor for the completion of the course requirements.

Late Assignments

Students are responsible for knowing the course due dates (listed on course schedule located on Canvas), and for turning work in on time.

- If you need an accommodation/extension on course assignments for religious practices, please follow the [university procedure](#) to request an accommodation.
- If you have a personal or medical reason for requesting an extension on an activity or assignment, you must obtain written consent from the instructor in advance of the assignment due date. Requests for excuses must be written as an email to the instructor and approval must be obtained by an email reply. If you have a personal or medical emergency that precludes you from contacting the instructor in advance of the assignment due date, contact the instructor to discuss your situation as soon as you are able to.
- Discussion posts and Reading responses that are submitted late without instructor approval will not be accepted.
- Written assignments will be accepted up to 5 days late (including weekends) and will be docked 10% points (i.e. one letter grade) for each day that they are late on top of assigned

grade. Students can request an extension without penalty only in cases of medical or personal emergencies/circumstances approved by the instructor.

Please note: If there is a system-wide outage when an assignment is due you will not be punished for not turning it in on time, but will be required to turn it in by the newly stated day and time.

Discussions

This course will rely heavy upon your thoughts and insights as we complete discussions via the online discussion boards

- Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from your own. When you disagree, challenge or critique the idea, not the person.
- Listen/read carefully to what others are saying/writing even when you disagree. Comments that you make (asking for clarification, sharing critiques, expanding on a point, etc.) should reflect that you have paid attention to the person's comments.
- Support your statements. Use evidence and provide a rationale for your points.
- Recognize that we are all still learning. Be willing to change your perspective, and make space for others to do the same.

University Policies Applicable to All SJSU Courses

Please go to <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> to review university policies, procedures, and resources that are applicable to all SJSU courses

Course Schedule

Week	Course Module	Activities	Due Date (submit on Canvas; all assignments and activities due at 11:59 pm on the due date)
0 8/19-8/20	Course Introduction Read the syllabus, buy books, check out the course platform	Syllabus Quiz	Mon. Aug 23
PART 1 - FOUNDATIONS			
1 8/23	Module 1 – How did we get here? <i>Part 1: Understanding Economies</i>	Module 1 Discussion post	Thu. Sept 2
		Module 1 Discussion Response	Fri. Sept 3
2 8/30	Module 1 – How did we get here? <i>Part 2: Capitalisms & Non-capitalisms</i>	Module 1 Reading Response	Fri. Sept 3
3 9/6	Module 2 – How do things change?: <i>Part 1 – Slow Changes: Reforms & Evolutions</i>	Module 2 Discussion post	Thu. Sept 16
		Module 2 Discussion Response	Fri. Sept 17
4 9/13	Module 2 – Successes & Failures: <i>Part 2 – Fast Change: Revolutions</i>	Module 2 Reading Response	Fri. Sept 17

5 9/20	<u>Writing Assignment #1: You Are an Activist</u>		Fri. Sept 24
PART 2 – ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIES			
6 9/27	Module 3 – Sharing Economies: <i>Part 1 – Basic Necessities</i>	Module 3 Discussion post	Thu. Oct 7
		Module 3 Discussion Response	Fri. Oct 8
7 10/4	Module 3 – Sharing Economies: <i>Part 2 – Organizing Society</i>	Module 3 Reading Response	Fri. Oct 8
8 10/11	Module 4 – Saving Capitalism: <i>Part 1 – Alternative Markets</i>	Module 4 Discussion post	Thu. Oct 21
		Module 4 Discussion Response	Fri. Oct 22
9 10/18	Module 4 – Saving Capitalism: <i>Part 2 – Market Reforms</i>	Module 4 Reading Response	Fri. Oct 22
10 10/25	<u>Writing Assignment # 2: You Work for Uber</u>		Fri. Oct 29
11 11/1	Module 5 – Cooperative Economies: <i>Part 1 – Production</i>	Module 5 Discussion post	Mon. Nov 15
		Module 5 Discussion Response	Tue. Nov 16
12 11/8	Module 5 – Cooperative Economies: <i>Part 2 – Consumption</i>	Module 5 Reading Response	Tue. Nov 16
13 11/15	Module 6 – Self-reliance: <i>Part 1 – In U.S. Black Communities</i>	Module 6 Discussion post	Thu. Dec 2
		Module 6 Discussion Response	Wed. Dec 3
14 11/22	Module 6 – Self-reliance: <i>Part 2 – In Latin American Communities</i>	Module 6 Reading Response	Wed. Dec 3
15 11/29	<i>Finish Module 6/Start Assignment #3</i>		
FINAL ASSIGNMENT			
16 12/6-12/9	<u>Final Writing Assignment #3: You are a Community Member</u>		Fri. Dec 10