

## Course Outline and Manual

### Social and Solidarity Economy:

#### Sociological Rethinking of Economic and Development Alternatives

Prof. John Clammer

4 Credits

#### Introduction to the Course

It can be argued that many, if not most, of the planetary problems that we face at the current juncture in history are attributable to the nature of the economy. Environmental problems such as pollution, waste generation, habitat destruction, destruction of environments through such activities as mining, excessive urbanization, over-fishing and others, and, of course, climate change can certainly be traced to economic activities. So too can many human impacts – unemployment, sweated labor in “Third World” factories, displacements and economically driven migration, the proliferation of what the anthropologist David Graeber pointedly called “Bullshit Jobs”, and the many negative effects of globalization. Some would also argue that although in principle the economy is supposed to be our servant, in practice we have become its slaves. This course will examine how this situation has arisen, and is distinctive in then setting about systematically exploring alternatives, discussing how they might be realized, and examining how they might impact both quality of life and future sustainability. There is indeed a substantial body of thinking and analysis to suggest that, if we do not radically change the nature of our economy, we will not have a sustainable future at all. The exploration of alternatives is in any case exciting and imagination-stretching, and you are invited to take the course not simply as a technical exercise, but as a positive tool for serious rethinking of possible social and economic futures.

#### The Syllabus

1. The Need for Economic Alternatives/Alternative Economics
2. Social and Solidarity Economy: The Basic Concepts
3. Degrowth 1: Basic Principles and Controversies
4. Degrowth 2: Implications for Work, Leisure, Wages and the Steady-State Economy
5. Localism, the “Subsistence Perspective”, Agro-Ecology, and Food and Water Security
6. The Circular Economy: Beyond Waste
7. Eco-Socialism

8. Eco/Econo-Feminism, Social Justice and Equity
9. North-South Relations: Trade, Aid, Tariffs
10. Creative Economies: Culture and Economy, the Impact of AI and Open Access
11. Regenerative Economies.
12. Transitions and Practical Utopias
13. Active Alternatives: Looking at Real Case Studies
14. Values, “Real Economies”, Consumption and the “Education of Desire”

### Reading

The literature in this field is rapidly expanding. Extensive resources are now also available on the Internet and I will alert you to these as appropriate. Key readings will be drawn from the following:

Richard Westra, Robert Albritton and Seongjin Jeong (eds.) *Varieties of Alternative Economic Systems: Practical Utopias for an Age of Global Crisis and Austerity*. 2019.

Giacomo D’Alisa, Federico Demaria and Giorgios Kallis (eds.) *Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era*. 2024.

Jason Hinkel *Less is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World*. 2020.

Tim Jackson *Prosperity Without Growth: Foundations for the Economy of Tomorrow*. 2017.

Kate Raworth *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economist* 2017.

Rutger Bregman *Utopia for Realists: And How to Get There*. 2018.

Ashish Kothari, Ariel Salleh, Arturo Escobar, Federico Demaria and Albert Acosta (eds.) *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary* 2019

### Assessment

The course is expected to be highly interactive and is not simply a lecture course. It will be run as a workshop/laboratory. Assessment will be continuous and based on frequent class presentations and discussions and group work and small research projects also done in groups as well as individually and submitted as short papers and reviews. The course assessment will culminate in a final imaginative capstone paper. The nature of the course and its format requires constant and complete attendance and participation otherwise responsibility for presentations and research falls on those who do attend and this is not acceptable.

All the usual JGU rules about plagiarism or any unfair use of means and attendance apply. The use of phones is not permitted in class. If you have any special needs you are encouraged to register yourself with the DSC.

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Office hours location and time will be announced.