

---

**STPEC 101 | Introduction to STPEC**

TuTh | 11:30am – 12:45pm

**Shemon Salam**

**3 credits**

This course will familiarize new students with the program and its vision. STPEC is a rigorous, democratically run, interdisciplinary academic program. STPEC is also a community of students, staff, instructors, alumni, and friends that will help you navigate your time at UMass. Ideally this course will also familiarize us with each other.

The content of this course is organized around concepts students will encounter in their other STPEC requirements, as well as in the STPEC community and the greater world. It will provide an introduction to social theory, political economy, race and ethnicity, gender, masculinities and femininities, globalization and inequality in the Global North and the Global South. Assignments facilitate exploration of these and related topics. Students will have the opportunity to learn the value of social theory and how to make an argument; communicate for effective dialogue, and how to begin to identify social justice issues.

STPEC 101, like STPEC's core classes, is seminar-style. This means small groups with an emphasis on discussion and reflection.

*This class is open to STPEC majors only.*

---

**STPEC 189 | Introduction to Radical Social Theory**

W | 4:00pm – 6:30pm

**Graciela Monteagudo**

**4 credits**

**Gen Ed: HS and DG**

This is an introductory course to radical social theory. Our focus is the history of social thought in the West, and the decolonial critiques of some of these ideas. In this course, students will learn that "radical" means "at the root," and radical social theory is theory that explains the roots of social inequalities and proposes ways of transforming society to build a better world. As a General Education course, our goal is for students to have the opportunity to discuss key societal issues through a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, anthropology, history, economics, Black, Latinx, and gender and sexuality studies. Through analysis of readings and films, we will explore the connection between cultural processes and power in the West and the processes of colonization of Black and Indigenous People of Color on a global scale and across time and space.

*Seats in this course are reserved for students in SBS or HFA. STPEC students may enroll.*

---

**STPEC 291X | STPEC Executive Committee**

**Time TBD**

**Hoang Phan**

**1 credit**

Enrollment required for students serving as representatives to the STPEC Executive Committee. Requirements for credit include: attending an orientation session and all student representative and full Executive Committee meetings, delivering weekly announcements to designated STPEC courses and, in STPEC courses in which they are enrolled, facilitating a 15 min forum prior to both full Executive Committee meetings.

*This course will be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time.*

---

**STPEC 320 | Writing for Critical Consciousness**

MW | 2:30pm – 3:45pm

**Graciela Monteagudo**

**3 credits**

**Junior Year Writing**

The STPEC Junior Writing Seminar focuses on individual development of voice. We will weave this theme through standard essay assignments, weekly response papers, cover letters and resumes, and a research paper with a theme of your choosing. I encourage integration of ideas from your other courses and experiences. Be prepared to think critically and examine texts carefully. We will be sharing our writing with each other – be ready to give and receive constructive

feedback. This course meets only once a week; attendance is crucial.

*Enrollment is limited to 20 students. STPEC majors only. Prerequisite: College Writing or equivalent.*

---

**STPEC 391H | STPEC Core Seminar I**

**TuTh | 1:00pm – 2:15pm**

**Shemon Salam**

**4 credits**

STPEC Core Seminar I looks at the Black Radical Tradition and racial capitalism from the 15th century to World II. Through these two frameworks and methods we will analyze gender, inequality, nationalism, and struggles of the oppressed. This is a student driven course where classroom discussions, presentations, self-reflections, and group work are central to the daily functioning of the class.

*Enrollment is limited to 15 students. STPEC majors only.*

*PREREQUISITES: One Intro to Social Theory course and one Intro to Political Economy Course chosen from the STPEC Recommended Course List.*

---

**STPEC 392H | STPEC Core Seminar II**

**TuTh | 2:30pm – 3:45pm**

**Graciela Monteagudo**

**4 credits**

STPEC Core Seminar II focuses on a series of interrelated political, social and theoretical movements of the 20th and 21st Century with an emphasis on how political practices and philosophies relate to the successes and catastrophic failures of modernism in complex and contradictory ways. Theories addressed include Autonomist Marxism, poststructuralism, and decolonial theory. We will research the connection between race, class, gender, sexuality, able-bodiedness and other axes of oppression resistance under neoliberalism, including violence against women. A major research paper of the student's choosing will be produced over the course of the semester. This allows for deep engagement with a topic and to practice applying the critical methodological and theoretical tools developed through the STPEC curriculum.

*Enrollment is limited to 15 students. STPEC majors only.*

*PREREQUISITES: One Intro to Social Theory course and one Intro to Political Economy Course chosen from the STPEC Recommended Course List.*

---

**STPEC 491H | STPEC Focus Seminar I**

**Topic Title: Power, Wealth and Social Movements in the Middle East**

**Omar Dahi**

**Tuesday | 4:00pm – 6:30pm**

**4 credits**

Within Western social sciences, area studies and conventional wisdom there is a "Middle Eastern exceptionalism" or as scholar, Asef Bayat puts it the idea that "everywhere the world has changed except the Middle East." This seminar will examine the political economy of the modern Middle East with an emphasis on social mobilization and collective action in the region. The course will provide an overview of modern Middle Eastern, examining some of the main factors that have shaped the politics and economics of the region, alongside case studies that demonstrate ongoing struggles against inequality and exploitation, authoritarianism, military occupation and imperialism. Students will be expected to keep up with a heavy reading load and complete a final research paper.

Omar Dahi is an Associate Professor of Economics at Hampshire College

*PREREQUISITE: STPEC 391H*

*Enrollment is limited to 15 Senior and Junior STPEC majors only. Sophomores who obtain permission to enroll from the instructor should contact Monica Garcia for an override. Students may take Focus Seminars to fulfill upper level requirements. See the Recommended Course list for this semester to find out which category this seminar will fulfill and ask Monica to apply that change on Spire.*

---

**STPEC 492H | STPEC Focus Seminar II**

**Topic Title: Civilizational Crisis, Necropolitics, Movements for Black Lives and the Rise of Radical Vitalism**

**Agustin Lao-Montes**

**W | 4:00pm – 6:30pm**

**4 credits**

As many critical intellectuals and activists contend, the world is in the middle of a malaise that many characterize as a crisis of the capitalist Western civilization in its neoliberal globalization era. More than a simple economic crisis, there are problems on every meaningful element of life in the planet. That is why it is a crisis of a way of life with its forms of economy, politics, ecology, ethics, knowledge and subjectivity. It is a crisis of capitalist modernity, which has been the dominating civilizational matrix for over 500 years.

The globalization of the covid-19 as a pandemic, deepens and reveals such global crisis pointing to a planetary catastrophe. We can identify two intertwined dimensions of the world-historical juncture we baptized as the Coronacrisis. On the one hand, it represents an unprecedented situation the threatened human life itself. On the other hand, it exacerbates oppressions and inequalities such as entangled violences—patriarchal, racial, xenophobic, socio-economic, political—manifested in dispossession, deracination, hunger, homelessness, and ecological disasters that are the product of the destruction of flora and fauna, by agrochemicals, deforestation, grand commerce of animals, and emission of toxic gases, that together had provoked an ecological disaster. Its most visible symptoms are: the proliferation of lethal viruses, the erosion of food sovereignty, great floods, fires, earthquakes, and hurricanes. The pandemic had demonstrated the ubiquity and depth of the politics of letting die and making die that African philosopher Achille Mbembe named “necropolitics”.

This STPEC Seminar will explore not only the roots causes and symptoms of the Coronacrisis as a climatic moment of the civilizational crisis, but also the wave of resistances, struggles, and social movements that preceded the pandemic and acquired worldwide character with the global wave of protests with the banner “Black Lives Matter”, in the aftermath of the assassination of George Floyd on May, 25, 2020, constituting what we call the Ebony’s Spring. Arguably, the Ebony’s Spring, as a compelling response to the necropolitics of the coronacrisis, constitute a key articulation of the conditions of possibility for the rise of what we call a radical vitalism, namely a politics for life that is radical in so far as it challenges the entangled forms of oppression and inequality of capitalist modernity. On that key, the seminar will study the multiple causes and diverse manifestations of the crisis and how the pandemic exacerbated oppressions and facilitate space for the emergence of new ones, at the same time that it became generative of a new wave of antisystemic movements. Given that its goal is to investigation and analyze the proximate past and the present, history-in-the-making, sort to say, the seminar will be a workshop to device creative ways to understand a very complex and rapidly changing world on the basis of readings from some of the most interesting and imaginative interpretations as well as from our own experiences and projections for possible futures.

Agustin Lao-Montes is an Associate Professor in the Sociology Department at UMass Amherst

*PREREQUISITE: STPEC 391H*

*Enrollment is limited to 15 Senior and Junior STPEC majors only. Sophomores who obtain permission to enroll from the instructor should contact Monica Garcia for an override. Students may take Focus Seminars to fulfill upper level requirements. See the Recommended Course list for this semester to find out which category this seminar will fulfill and ask Monica to apply that change on Spire.*

---

**STPEC 494PI | Praxis**

**W | 11:15pm – 1:45pm**

**Shemon Salam**

**3 credits**

**Integrative Experience**

This course tackles the latest developments in racial capitalism by analyzing social struggles and organizations since the economic crisis of 2007. Using the latest research on gender, class, race, empire, and sexuality this course looks at how crisis and struggle are simultaneously shaping the world. For the final project students build their own organizational website. Students will construct their own organization based on the readings from this semester, STPEC courses, and other courses they have taken.

As an integrative experience (IE) course students are encouraged to draw on knowledge from prior courses, life experiences, and readings from outside the class. Praxis will be driven by applying theory to the real world. This course is highly student driven: composed of presentations, small group discussions, debates, and self-reflection.

*This course satisfies the Integrative Experience requirement for BA-STPEC majors.*

---

**STPEC 498Y | Practicum – Exploring the Intersection of Theory and Practice**

**Hoang Phan**

**3 credits**

This course fulfills the STPEC internship requirement. Students in this course undertake an internship of 120 hours or more in an organization of their choice, and engage in critical reflection on their experience. Fieldwork placements are identified and arranged by each individual student and must be approved by the instructor. Students are encouraged to use this class as an opportunity to synthesize knowledge gained in the classroom and test its applicability to “real life” situations.

*To enroll, submit a completed STPEC internship contract before the end of add/drop. Note: you must meet with Monica Garcia and get approval of your placement before you turn in your contract. She can be reached at [mmgarcia@umass.edu](mailto:mmgarcia@umass.edu).*

---

**The following courses do not fulfill any STPEC or University requirements**

**STPEC 298: Practicum (1-12 credits, mandatory pass/fail)**

**STPEC 398: Practicum (1-12 credits, graded)**

These two options are for students doing elective internships (i.e., this course does not fulfill the STPEC internship requirement). The primary differences between the courses are grading (STPEC 298 is pass/fail) and recommended final paper length: students in STPEC 298 write about 2-3 pages per credit, and students in STPEC 398 write about 3-4 pages per credit. Students in these courses receive one credit for every 40 hours of work that they complete in an organization of their choice. They must find a faculty sponsor who is willing to grade their written work and submit a grade. The STPEC Internship Advisor can provide assistance with finding placements and faculty sponsors, but this is ultimately each student’s responsibility.

*To register, speak with Monica Garcia, Director of STPEC’s Internship Program and complete a STPEC Internship Contract by the end of add/drop.*