### KISS322 SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE APPROACH OF NANCY FRASER

**Leader**  
Dr Teodor Mladenov- [Teodor.m.mladenov@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:Teodor.m.mladenov@kcl.ac.uk)

**Department**  
Education & Professional Studies

**Academic Year**  
2015-16

**Term**  
Spring

**Type of Event**  
Short course

**Location**  
3.146 Franklin Wilkins Building, Waterloo campus

**Number of Sessions**  
4

**Length of Session**  
1.5 hours

**Time and Date**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 February 2016</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 February 2016</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<td>18 February 2016</td>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
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<td>25 February 2016</td>
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**Description**

Nancy Fraser’s theory of social justice seeks to regenerate critical theory in a form fit for present predicaments by developing a unique and powerful synthesis between (post)Marxism, feminism and poststructuralism. It interrogates key concepts in social and political thought and facilitates in-depth analyses of contemporary political-economic structures, social welfare programmes, mechanisms of political participation and social movement activism. It also informs a robust critique of neoliberal capitalism.

The course will provide an overview of Fraser’s theory of social justice and will explore its usefulness for understanding and criticising the mechanisms that (re)produce injustices in contemporary society. The first session will introduce Fraser’s theory, highlighting its historical development. The second and the third sessions will dig deeper into Fraser’s ideas by looking at Fraser’s debates with Judith Butler and Axel Honneth. The final session will explore the links between Fraser’s theory of justice, her critique of contemporary neoliberalism and her analysis of the ‘cultural turn’ in critical theory and activism.

The course will appeal to those interested in contemporary social theory and its usefulness for the critical study of social movements and social policy, as well as for interrogating neoliberal capitalism more generally. The course is open to all and no preliminary familiarity with Fraser’s work is required, although some advance knowledge of key concepts...
and oppositions in social and political theory such as economy vs. culture, class vs. status, structure vs. agency, etc., could be useful.

The course will be structured as a series of seminars, each beginning with a 30 min. presentation by the course leader followed by an in-depth discussion of the session’s readings.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Session 1: Fraser’s theory of social justice – an overview**

This session will introduce Fraser’s three dimensions of social justice: economic redistribution, cultural recognition and political representation. We will also discuss Fraser’s motivation to include the ‘political’ in her initially two-dimensional conception of justice. General concepts will be fleshed out by looking at concrete examples of social movement struggles and social policy interventions.

Key readings:

**Session 2: Fraser’s debate with Judith Butler**

This session will develop our understanding of cultural recognition as an essential dimension of social justice by looking at Fraser’s exchange with Judith Butler. We will discuss the status of the ‘cultural’ and its distinction from the ‘material’ and the ‘economic’. We will also address the question about the ‘unity’ of struggles for social justice.

Key readings:

**Session 3: Fraser’s debate with Axel Honneth**

This session will provide a closer look at the relationship between redistribution and recognition. To this end, we will discuss Axel Honneth’s critique of Fraser’s dualistic conception of justice and Fraser’s subsequent response, in which she clarifies and elaborates her arguments against Honneth’s normative monism and recognitive reductionism.
Key readings:

**Session 4: Fraser’s critique of neoliberalism**

This session will link Fraser’s theory of social justice – and specifically her understanding of the rise of the politics of recognition and the ‘cultural turn’ – to her analysis of the rise of neoliberal capitalism since the 1980s. The participants will also be invited to reflect on the relevance of Fraser’s framework for their own work.

Key readings:

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<tr>
<th>READING LIST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREPARATION</td>
<td>Active participation is essential and participants will be required to read the texts for each session in advance (including the texts for the first session) in order to be able to contribute to discussions. The reading load will be between 50 and 100 pages per session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELIGIBILITY</td>
<td>No prior knowledge of Nancy Fraser’s work needed.</td>
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