



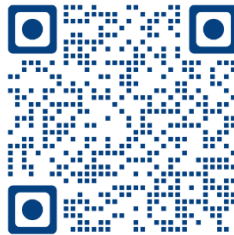
\$150 BOOK SCHOLARSHIP PER STUDENT! (20 STUDENT LIMIT)

HIST 416-001 (in-person Tuesday 5-7:30)

HIST 416-950 (online anytime section)

Instructor: Jonathan Bean (jonbean@siu.edu)

Syllabus available at <https://tinyurl.com/2pasbtxe> or scan QR code:



Course description: “Socialism: The Dream and the Nightmare” examines the history of socialism, from Marx to the triumph of socialist states around the world and, then, their sudden collapse in the 1990s. This course examines the writings of socialist thinkers and their critics, histories of communism in various nations, democratic socialism in Europe, along with the experiences of those who lived under socialism. This is a multi-disciplinary course that incorporates philosophy, history, film, literature and other media.

Background: Socialism was a secular faith that swept the globe more rapidly than Christianity or Islam, which took centuries to spread their gospels. “Faith” is a word that socialist converts used to characterize their zeal for eliminating private property and establishing a “Heaven on Earth” that required no God. Their faith ran so deep it justified the slaughter of millions in the name of the greater good. Like Christianity or Islam, socialism was a millennialist faith: humanity was heading toward an End of History, with all goods owned in common (through the State); the divisions caused by private property ownership and self-interest would end as humans pursued the common good. More than an economic system, Socialism promised a New Socialist Man and Woman free of self-interest, greed, and envy. That was the Dream that enraptured some of the brightest minds of the 20th century.

The Nightmare ensued wherever Socialism was fully implemented: mass poverty, forced famines, Great Terrors, brutal one-party rule, total censorship, the destruction of religion and the press or any institution separate from the State. The death toll from socialism and communism was somewhere between 60 and 100 million people. The Soviet “Great Terror” (1930s) and Chinese “Great Leap Forward” (1950s) each killed *twice* as many people as the number of those who died in the Holocaust. Yet Western socialists denied what was happening or proclaimed that it would be “different next time.” But it was always the same.