

## ‘Beyond Growth?’

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### SYNOPSIS

There is an burgeoning popular literature on the impending collapse of the neoliberal capitalist model, much of it brought about by the world running out of resources (land, water, oil) or destroying its own life-support system (climate, biodiversity). This seminar provides an opportunity for participants to read carefully and thoughtfully one chosen sample from the literature and to assess its intellectual merits.

The core task within the seminar is to **compose a high-quality academic book review**. In practice, this means that every participant will read, in its entirety, one of books listed below. Without exception, these books deal with environmental collapse, de-growth, zero-growth, post-growth, or some such. Upon reading and upon consulting additional sources, the student will write and present a research paper on the book, *reviewing* and *critiquing* the assigned reading. *Reviewing* means (i) summarizing and (ii) contextualizing the key points of the reading’s argument so as to make its content understandable to a person who has not studied the reading. *Critiquing* means engaging with the substance of the reading’s argument, assessing the quality of its logical consistency, coherence, or empirical factuality.

### PREREQUISITES

This is an undergraduate level seminar that requires knowledge of undergraduate-level micro, macro, math, and statistics.

### ASSESSMENT

Your performance will be evaluated based on the following assignments:

1. A research paper (“Seminararbeit”), which is your written book review. Maximum length: 4000 words. Weight: 50 percent.
2. A seminar presentation. Duration: 20 minutes. Weight: 30 percent.
3. A written referee report constructively critiquing the research paper of a fellow participating student and 3 minute presentation thereof. Maximum length: 1000 words. Weight: 20 percent

### SCHEDULE

<i>October 13, 2015, 5:00-6:00PM</i>	Introduction, assignment of places and topics, email list
<i>Dec. 3, 2015, 5:00PM</i>	<b>Due-date</b> for uploading a draft (for feedback by your advisor) of your research paper on Moodle (voluntary)
<i>Dec. 7-11, 2015</i>	45min feedback session with your advisor (student to make appointment by email)
<i>Jan. 7, 2016, 5:00PM</i>	<b>Deadline</b> for uploading your complete research paper on Moodle for evaluation by your discussant. No excuses, no exceptions.
<i>Jan. 14-15, 2016</i>	<b>Seminar event and presentations.</b> Venue: SR 215, Bergheimer Str. 20
	<b>Deadline for referee’s reports, to be handed in in hard copy at the start of the seminar event.</b>
<i>Jan 19, 2016, 3:00PM</i>	<b>Deadline</b> for handing in your final research paper in <b>hard copy</b> at the Secretary’s office, room 219, Bergheimer Str. 20.

## **KNOCK-OUT CRITERIA**

For a pass grade, the following minimum requirements are to be fulfilled:

1. You need to be in attendance for the entire duration of the seminar event.
2. You need to hand in a research paper, a report, and give a presentation on time according to schedule.
3. You need to observe the upload deadline of your research paper.

## **PREPARATORY READING**

To provide you with an orientation for what an academic book review looks like, every registered participant will receive a copy of the following 2270-word book review:

Dixon, Ruth (2015): Book Review of *Why Are We Waiting? The Logic, Urgency, and Promise of Tackling Climate change*, Nicholas Stern. MIT Press (2015). *Journal of Economic Psychology* 50, 135-137.

While not perfect, it provides a first glimpse of what a good book review does and how it does it. Looking at additional book reviews will help to get a better understanding of what a *high quality* book review should entail.

## **E-LEARNING**

This course will have a Moodle website presence at <http://\learning2.uni-heidelberg.de>. The password is 'Simon'.

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## List of Topics and Readings

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Below are the eighteen books that constitute the choice set for the seminar audience. Each participant is assigned one of these books. All books are available at Heidelberg Universities libraries in hard copy with one exception, which is available electronically. There is no need to be concerned if there are discrepancies in terms of publisher or year of publication. Also, if in doubt, do consult a copy written in the original language rather than a translation.

1. Thomas Malthus: *A summary view of the principle of population*.
2. Tim Jackson: *Prosperity without growth: Economics for a finite planet*, Earthscan Verlag, 2009
3. Meinhard Miegel: *Exit, Wohlstand ohne Wachstum*, Propyläen Verlag, 2010
4. Niko Paech: *Befreiung vom Überfluss*, Oekom Verlag, 2012
5. Irmi Seidl: *Postwachstums-gesellschaft: Konzepte für die Zukunft*, Metropolis Verlag, 2010
6. Diane Coyle: *Economics of enough: How to run the economy as if the future matters*, Princeton University Press, 2011.
7. Franz Josef Radermacher: *Welt mit Zukunft*, Murmann Verlag, 2011
8. Peter A. Victor: *Managing without growth, slower by design not disaster*, Edward Elgar, 2008
9. Donella H. Meadows, Dennis Meadows: *The limits to growth: The 30-years update*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004
10. Donatella H. Meadows, Dennis Meadows: *Beyond the limits: confronting global collapse, envisioning a sustainable future*, Chelsea Green Publishing 1993
11. Herman E. Daly: *Steady state economics: Second edition with new essays*, Island Press, 1991.
12. Reinhard Heinberg: *End of growth: Adapting to our new economic reality*, New Society Press 2011
13. Serge Latouche: *Es reicht!: Abrechnung mit dem Wachstumswahn*. Oekom Verlag 2015.
14. Ralf Fücks: *Intelligent wachsen: Die grüne Revolution*. C. Hanser Verlag, 2013
15. E. F. Schumacher: *Small is beautiful: Die Rückkehr zum menschlichen Maß*. Oekom Verlag 2013.
16. Jared Diamond: *Kollaps*. S. Fischer Verlag, 2005 (oder: *Collapse*. Penguin 2011)
17. Johannes Heimrath: *Die Post-Kollaps-Gesellschaft*. Scorpio Verlag 2012.
18. Harald Welzer, Bernd Sommer: *Transformationsdesign: Wege in eine zukunftsfähige Moderne*. oekom verlag 2014.