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Rubric for Assignments – Short Essays

- Follow the specified word limit for each response
- Write in clear sentences
- To organise your responses, write in short paragraphs of 2-3 sentences each
- If a question has two parts, each should be discussed in equivalent depth
- DO NOT COPY YOUR RESPONSES FROM THE TEXTBOOK, FROM RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET, OR FROM ANOTHER STUDENT. THIS CONSTITUTES PLAGIARISM.
- If you draw your response from a particular source, such as the textbook, be sure to cite the text and the page numbers in the response, and in a reference list at the end of your assignment.

Sample question: What is the Surplus Approach in Economics? (250 words; 10 points)

The Surplus Approach or the Political Economy approach is a school of thought in Economics which dominated the discipline from the 18th Century till the late 19th Century. The Surplus Approach views Economics to be the study of the social relations that people enter into which mediate their relationship with nature in the process of producing the goods and services necessary for survival (Bowles et al. 2018, p. 54).

It is recognised in the Surplus Approach that while economic interdependence or division of labor is a facet of all economic systems (Bowles et al. 2018, p. 69), hierarchical power relations among groups of people first emerged roughly 11,000 years ago with the advent of settled agriculture, which is the first time in human history that the production of a 'surplus product' became the norm (Bowles et al. 2018, pp. 76-77).

(One small paragraph describing what the surplus product is – I am not doing so here because this is one of the questions on the first Assignment and I don't want to give you the answer!)

At the core of the surplus approach is the recognition that questions about how surplus is produced, i.e. the social relations central to the production of surplus, how surplus is distributed and controlled, and how surplus product is used, can help us understand the structure of different economic systems, and map their tendencies for change and transformation over time (Bowles et al. 2018, p. 68).

References (to be listed at the end of the assignment)

Bowles, S., Edwards, R., Roosevelt, F. & Larudee, M. (2018). *Understanding capitalism*. Oxford University Press.



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