

SOC 346: Work and Occupations
Spring 2019
T/TH 4:00 - 5:20, Fenton 110

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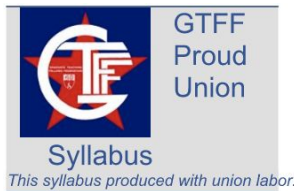
NOTE: I may change parts of this syllabus during the term. I will give notice if I do so, and update the syllabus on Canvas.

Description

Work is one of the most common and prominent features of human life. Given that we spend most of our waking lives working, the Sociology of Work is an important area of study. Throughout this course we will examine the major debates regarding the ways that work is organized. Then, we will look at the differences and similarities between occupational structures such as blue-collar work, professions, and service jobs. Next, we will discuss that ways that different types of work creates not only economic inequalities, but racial and gender inequalities as well. We will discuss the roles that gender and race play in the ways work is organized, and the consequences of labor arrangements with low wages and little benefits. Finally, we will discuss domestic labor and care work, and forms of unfree labor. Throughout the course we will examine the ways that workers themselves shape work arrangements, and organize to create better experiences for themselves and each other.

Course Goals

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of labor process theory, specifically analyzing the relationship between capital and labor in the context of work
- Students will explore how law and identity shapes workers' rights and workplace arrangements
- Students will apply course material to real-world events in order to strengthen their sociological imagination



Required Text and Readings

All reading material will be available on Canvas. Though you are not required to purchase any reading material for this course, we will be reading some exciting and interesting texts that I encourage you to purchase for yourself. I highly recommend you purchase *Labor and Monopoly Capital* by Harry Braverman.

In order for this class to be successful, you must actively engage with course materials and your colleagues. I acknowledge that you are a whole person with a life outside of this course. With that in mind, I have designed the course to include assignments that allow you to determine which classes you need to attend and which readings you need to complete in order to do well in the course. I advise you to take notes on the readings that you complete, and come to class prepared with clarifying questions, critiques, or examples of how you've thought about the material in the context of your life and the "real world."

Late Work

Diego and I accept late work at our discretion. Talk with Diego or me if you need to turn something in late. Usually, turning in late work will involve a grade reduction of 5% per day after the due date.

Accommodations¹

Historically, embodiment and learning have been separated. Mind and body have been thought of in opposition. Furthermore, educational settings have been designed without bodies in mind. That being said, I aim to change that both in my course content and pedagogical style. You are free to do what you need in order to be comfortable in our classroom so long as you are respecting the learning environment of your classmates.

Documenting a disability through the University can be a fraught process. If you have done so, and have documentation to provide to me, please do share it so we can adjust the class to meet your learning needs. However, I recognize that many students cannot afford to complete this documentation, so please bring any disabilities or learning difficulties to my attention so that I can work with you.

I will post all lecture PowerPoints on Canvas, although these are "bare bones" and should not be considered a sufficient replacement for attending lecture and taking notes.

We all have lives outside of class, and sometimes circumstances occur that limit our ability to be fully present. Should this occur, I encourage you to seek the necessary support. Available campus resources to help students cope with situations that may inhibit full participation include:

- The Accessible Education Center (<http://aec.uoregon.edu/>) for those with disabilities;
- The University of Oregon Counseling Center for those with mental health concerns or emergencies (<http://counseling.uoregon.edu>; or via 24-hour student crisis line at 541-346-3227).
- On-campus resources for those who have experienced sexual violence of any kind (<http://safe.uoregon.edu/>; or via confidential phone service at 541-346-SAFE (7233)).
- Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or a student that you know has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is encouraged to seek help by contacting Renae DeSautel, Sexual Violence Response & Support

¹ Language adopted from Andrea Herrera

Services Coordinator, desautel@uoregon.edu. She will keep your information confidential. In addition, the UO Ombudsperson Brett Harris (541-346-6400 or ombuds@uoregon.edu) can help.

- I am a student-directed employee. This means that I will offer you information, resources, support, and the ability to report issues of discrimination or harassment *if that is your choice*. For disclosures of sex or gender based discrimination, harassment or violence, I will only report the information you shared when you request that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor).

Off campus community resources include:

- White Bird Clinic (24 hour crisis) 541-687-4000
- Sexual Assault Support Crisis Line 541-343-7277
- Womenspace Help Line 541-485-6513
- Civil Liberties Defense Center 541-687-9180

Children in Class²

- All breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary.
- Bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
- In cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so they if your child needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents and students who do not otherwise need to exit the class quickly, please reserve seats near the door for classmates who need them.
- I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including parenting status.

Academic Honesty

Citing where you got an idea is how you “show your work” in the social sciences and humanities. By citing properly, you are not only showing how you arrived at your original conclusions, you are giving credit to the ideas that allowed you to arrive at your own.

Most cases of plagiarism I have dealt with are a result of an insufficient understanding of how to cite properly. As a member of the campus community, you are responsible for knowing the University’s plagiarism policy. The UO Library website has information on citation formatting and management, as well as how to avoid inadvertent plagiarism. (<http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>)

I take academic honesty seriously, and will not tolerate plagiarism. Proper citation is part of your grade on all assignments. Assignments that are plagiarized will automatically receive an F. Further disciplinary action will be taken if necessary.

² Language adopted from Dr. Melissa Cheyney

Assignments

Grading

In-class assignments: 20% (4 times at 5% each)

Labor Theory Paper: 25%

Event Analysis Paper: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

The following are brief assignment descriptions. More detailed information of each can be found on Canvas under "Course Handouts"

In-class assignments: There will be four in-class assignments throughout the term, each worth 5% of your grade. Each assignment is graded on a 5 point scale, and assessed according to accuracy and thoughtfulness. Dates for in-class assignments are listed on the syllabus. If you miss an in-class assignment, you can make up the entire 5% by coming to office hours. You may make up in-class assignments twice.

Labor Theory Paper: You will write a 1500 - 1750 word paper analyzing the theoretical concepts and arguments presented in Part One of this course. You may only use literature from this course. More details can be found under the course handout "Labor Theory Paper." Labor theory papers are due Tuesday, April 30th of Week 5.

Event Analysis Paper: You will write a 1500 - 1750 word paper applying concepts and cases presented in material from this course to a real-world event. You may choose to use concepts from the course to analyze a labor dispute, a labor law, a social movement, a digital debate about work, etc. The event you choose must in some way relate to topics from this course, or otherwise relate to issues of work and occupations. You are required to use at least two sources from this course. You are encouraged to email me or attend office hours to discuss the event you will analyze. Event analysis papers are due Thursday, May 23rd of Week 8.

Final Exam: The final exam in this course requires you to write three short answers responses to questions corresponding to weeks 5 through 10. Starting in Week 5, I will tell students in class what that week's corresponding final exam question is. I will not put exam questions on slides, so you must be in class or talk with a colleague to get question information. The purpose of telling you exam questions each week is to help you determine what you should be focusing on for each week's reading. With that in mind, I encourage you to make attempts to answer final exam questions each week as you take notes on the readings. For the final exam, I will select five out of the six potential questions, and you will be required to choose 3 questions to answer. Each question is worth 10% of your grade, for a total of 30%. You will initially have 1 hour to write short answers for each question. Then, you will have the opportunity to discuss your answers with a colleague, receive and give writing advice, and clarify anything you are confused about. Whenever you are ready you may revise your answers based on your conversations. You may also choose not to discuss your short answers and continuing writing for the remaining hour. The final exam will take place on Monday, June 10th from 12:30 - 2:30pm.

Grade Breakdown

97-100 A+

93-96 A

90-92 A-

87-89 B+

83-86 B

80-82 B-

77-79 C+

73-76 C

70-72 C

67-69 D+

63-66 D

60-62 D-

0-59 F

Course Schedule and Readings

Further readings are all optional

Week 1: Course Framework

April 2

- No reading

April 4

- Is Capitalism Gendered and Racialized? Joan Acker, pp 111 - 116
- How Not to Skip Class: Social Reproduction of Labor and the Global Working Class, Tithi Bhattacharya, pp 68-71

PART ONE: LABOR PROCESS THEORY

Week 2: Labor Power and Labor Process

April 9

- Chapter 1: Labor and Labor Power, Harry Braverman, pp 31 - 40
- Chapter 3: The Division of Labor, Harry Braverman, pp 49 - 58
- In class assignment #1

April 11

- Braverman's Legacy: The Labor Process Tradition at 20, Vicki Smith

Week 3: Forms of Control

April 16

- Chapter 6: The Habituation of the Worker to the Capitalist Mode of Production, Harry Braverman, pp 96 - 106
- Barker, James R. 1993. "Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-managing teams." *Administrative Science Quarterly*

April 18

- Hyman, Richard. 1987. "Strategy or structure: Capital, labour and control" *Work, Employment and Society* 1(1):25-55

Week 4: Worker Resistance

April 23

- Hodson, Randy. 1995. "Worker Resistance: An Underdeveloped Concept in the Sociology of Work." *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 16(1): 79 - 110.
- Brofenbrenner, Kate. 1997. "We'll Close! Plant Closings, Plant-Closing Threats, Union Organizing and NAFTA"
- In class assignment #2

April 25

- Prasad, Pushkala and Anshuman Prasad. 2000. "Stretching the Iron Cage: The Constitution and Implications of Routine Workplace Resistance" *Organization Science* 11(4): 387 - 403

PART TWO: SEGMENTED LABOR MARKETS AND INEQUALITY

Week 5: Dual Labor Markets

April 30

- *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* book review symposium
- Hudson, Kenneth. 2006. "The new labor market segmentation: Labor market dualism in the new economy" *Social Science Research* 36: 286 - 312
- **Labor Theory Paper Due**

May 2

- Huws, Ursula. The Making of a Cybertariat? Virtual work in a real world

Week 6: Workplace Injustice

May 7

- Acker, Joan R. 2006. Inequality regimes: Gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender & Society* 20.4 (August): 441–464.
- Bhattacharya, Ananya and Heather Long, America still leaves the disabled behind

May 9

- Okechukwu et al. 2014. "Discrimination, Harassment, Abuse and Bullying in the Workplace: Contribution of Workplace Injustice to Occupational Health Disparities"

Week 7: Law and Inequality

May 14

- Walsh, Thomas J. 2003. "Hoffman Plastic Compounds, Inc. v. NLRB: How the Supreme Court Eroded Labor Law and Workers in the Name of Immigration policy. *Law & Inequality: A Journal of Theory of Practice* 21(2): 313 - 340
- In class film: The Harvest (La Cosecha)
- **In class assignment #3**

May 16

- Emily van der Meulen, When Sex is Work: Organizing for Labour Rights and Protections
- NACLA report on the Americas: Compounding Risk for Sex Workers in the United States

PART THREE: REPRODUCTIVE AND UNFREE LABOR

Week 8: Reproductive Labor and Care-work

May 21

- The Devaluation of Women's Labor, Silvia Federici
- Wages against housework, Silvia Federici

May 23

- The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective, Angela Davis
- **News Analysis Due**

Week 9: Prison Labor and Student Athletes

May 28

- Beaman, Krystal K. 2008. "‘Used Goods’: Former African American College Student-Athletes’ Perception of Exploitation by Division I Universities." *The Journal of Negro Education* 77(4): 352-364
- Homework: watch film *The Business of Amateurs* (2016)
 - https://tubitv.com/movies/368742/business_of_amateurs_the?autoplay=true&utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed
- **In class assignment #4**

May 30

- Rooted in Slavery: Prison Labor Exploitation
 - The Political Economy of Prison Labour, Christoph Scherrer and Anil Shah
-

Week 10: Next steps?

June 4

- *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto*, Cinzia Arruzza, Tithi Bhattacharya, and Nancy Fraser

June 6

- No reading
 - Course summary and final exam prep
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Final Exam: Monday, June 10th @ 12:30

- **Bring greenbook**