

SOCI/MNGT 427

Location:

Date and Times:

# Sociology 427: The Labor Force

UNC-CH

FALL 2016

## *Michael Dunn*

Hamilton 160

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Office Hours:

*For simple questions, email is the fastest way to reach me. For questions or problems with course material or assignments, I encourage you to come see me during office hours.*

### *Important Dates at a Glance:*

- ◇ *9/15 Exam 1*
- ◇ *10/13 No Class University Day*
- ◇ *10/18 Exam 2*
- ◇ *10/20 Fall Break—No Class*
- ◇ *11/23 Thanksgiving—No Class*
- ◇ *11/29 Group Presentations*
- ◇ *12/1 Group Presentations*
- ◇ *12/8 Final Exam 9am*

## **Course Description and Goals:**

### **Why should you care about work and employment issues?**

- Did you know the average American will spend over 90,000 hours at work?
- Did you know the average American will hold seven jobs before the age of 30?
- Did you know that women earn 77.5 cents for every dollar than men earn?

Work is a central feature of modern life, and as a result, it has a powerful effect on our economic and psychological well-being. It shapes our identity, It determines our place in the social structure, and it impacts the opportunities available to us throughout our lifetime. In this course we will examine work from a social perspective, focusing mainly on the nature and history of work in the United States. We will be examining questions such as: How has the experience of work evolved over time? Have the rules of work changed fundamentally in the last few decades? How does work affect our social relationships? How does work reflect and impact inequalities?

### **BY THE END OF THIS COURSE YOU WILL:**

1. Understand the social forces that shape work and the labor force
2. Understand how inequalities are embedded in the labor market along lines of race class and gender
3. Apply concepts and theories we learn in class to work and economic issues that we read/hear about daily in the news and media

## **How to succeed in this course:**

Come to class prepared: This means having read and synthesized course materials before class.

Don't fall behind: This class builds on concepts learned in previous classes. Falling behind will only cause bigger headaches later.

Don't wait until it's too late: If a problem arises, make an appointment to see me in my office ASAP. If you wait until the end of the semester, there will be very little I can do to help you (and your grade).

## Class Rules and Policies:

*Class participation:* I expect you will attend every class prepared to participate in class discussions and group activities: this is not a lecture course. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives, which could affect your course grade. An absence, excused or unexcused, does not relieve you of any course requirement.

*Use of electronic devices:* Technology can be a wonderful learning tool, but also a huge distraction. I strongly encourage you to power down during class and take notes by hand. If you prefer, you may use a laptop or tablet to take notes. However, I require that if you do so that you will agree to turn off your wireless connection at the beginning of each class. I will advise you in advance if you need to bring your laptop for a class activity. Texting and the general use of cellphones are disruptive to me and to your fellow classmates and are therefore prohibited during class.

*Assignments:* Submit all assignments on Sakai via the Assignments tab. Assignments should be in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format. All assignments are due at the start of the class period (unless other wise noted). If at any time during this course you have a personal emergency that impacts your ability submit your work, let me know as soon as possible.

*Academic integrity:* The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code. I will report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the honor court. Information, including your responsibilities as a student is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected.

*Disability services:* Students in this course seeking accommodations to disabilities must first consult with the Office of Disability Services and follow the instructions of that office for obtaining accommodations.

*Language:* We will be discussing issues related to race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality in this class. Please choose words that respect the diversity of your classmates, this university, and the community in which we live. If you are unsure what may be appropriate, please ask me.

## Required Texts

Amy S. Wharton, *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*, 3rd edition. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0073528013

Arne L. Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s to 2000s*. Russell Sage. ISBN: 978-071544803

All other readings will be posted on SAKAI

# Expectations and Evaluation: Assignments and Grading

## *In-class quizzes and writing assignments: 25%*

Throughout the term, we will have frequent unannounced quizzes and brief in-class writing assignments based on the readings and our discussions. These assignments are intended to encourage you to think deeply about the material and to come to class prepared. Some assignments will be done in groups. I will drop your two lowest quiz grades, and therefore will not give makeup quizzes except in the case of **university-approved** absences (e.g. religious observance or travel for a university-sponsored sport or activity).

## *Group Work - Policy Brief Presentation and Paper: 15%*

This assignment asks your group to examine a controversial issue related to the labor force and to explore how social and economic policies might help to address this issue. Groups will be required to submit a 6-7 page analysis of the policy and present findings in class. More information can be found under "assignments" in Sakai.

## *Mid-term exams: 40% (20% each)*

The mid-term exams will consist of multiple-choice questions. All class discussions, lectures, activities, and films/videos/radio clips are fair game, as well as all assigned readings.

## *Final exam: 20%*

The final exam will cover the concepts and debates covered in class discussions, films, and assigned readings and will consist of multiple-choice. The final will be cumulative and closed-book. It is a UNC rule to have a final in this course. This exam may be rescheduled if you have three finals within a 24-hour span. If you are in this situation, please let me know as soon as possible.

## **GRADING SCALE:**

A	94-100	C	73-76.99
A-	90-93.99	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D+	67-69.99
B	83-86.99	D	60-66
B-	80-82.99	F	Below 60
C+	77-79.99		

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## **What can you expect from me?**

- 1) I will make an effort to help you learn the class material. In other words, I will be prepared for class.
- 2) I will be available to you outside of class should you desire help, clarification, etc.
- 3) When you are speaking, you will have my undivided attention.

## **Do you have more details on your grading policy?**

Yes! I am glad you asked. I do not grade on a curve, I do not negotiate grades and I do not grade on the basis of need. If you need to earn a certain grade in this course (e.g. to maintain a scholarship, to graduate, or to maintain your athletic status), then it is your responsibility to earn that grade. Do not ask me to change your final grade unless a mathematical error has been made.

## **Do you allow the use of laptops?**

Yes, but I reserve the right to change my mind if they become a distraction.

## **How about cell phones?**

Do you really need to ask? No.

## **How do I get an "A" in your class?**

For starters, attend class, and take careful notes. Read assigned readings before class. Be an active learner. Ask questions during lectures; everyone will benefit from your questions. Find another student or several students in class to study with for the exams. Start preparing for exams several days in advance. While these suggestions don't guarantee an "A", students who follow these suggestions tend to succeed in my courses.

***"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea,  
never regains its original dimensions."***

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

# Course Calendar and Reading List

\*\*\*ANY CHANGES IN CALENDAR WILL BE ANNOUNCED ON THE SAKAI COURSE WEBSITE\*\*\*

## Week 1

August 21st

### The meaning and history of work

1 -Jacoby, "The Way it was: Factory Labor before 1915"

3 - Meyer "The Evolution of the New Industrial Technology"

August 23rd

### The Post Industrial Economy: The rise of the corporation, downsizing, restructuring, new technology

9-Powell, "The Capitalist Firm in the 21st Century"

## Week 2

August 30th

### Labor Force Participation, employment and unemployment

Mitra Toossi. 2002. "A Century of Change: The U.S. Labor Force, 1950-2050." Monthly Labor Review (May): 15-28.

Arne Kalleberg. 2013. Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, pp. 40-58.

"Labor Force," Occ Outlook Quarterly, Winter 2011-12, pp. 26-32.

For reference: Current U.S. labor force characteristics:  
<http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm>

September 1

### Changing Employment Relations

Arne Kalleberg. 2013. Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, pp. 21-39.

Peter Cappelli. 1999. The New Deal at Work. 18-37.

## Week 3

September 6

### Precarious work and nonstandard work arrangements

Arne Kalleberg. 2013. Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, pp. 82-104.

Peter Coy, Michelle Conlin, and Moira Herbst. "The Disposable Worker." Business Week, January 18, 2010.

James Surowiecki. 2015. "Gigs with Benefits: Are Uber Drivers Employees?" The New Yorker, June 6.

David Bensman. 2014. "Misclassification: Workers in the Borderland."

September 8

### Low Wage Work

Arne Kalleberg. Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, pp. 116-119.

Heather Boushey et al., 2007. Understanding Low-Wage Work in the United States. Washington, D.C.: Center for Economic Policy and Research (March).

David Bradley. 2015. "The Federal Minimum Wage: In Brief." Congressional Research Service, January 13

## Week 4

September 13

### Catch-up and Review

September 15

### EXAM 1

## Week 5

September 20

### Education and Work

Arne Kalleberg, The Mismatched Worker, pp. 69-98

Jaison Abel et al. 2014. "Are Recent College Graduates Finding Good Jobs?" Current Issues in Economics and Finance, N.Y. Fed Reserve 20 (1)

Mary Daly and Leila Bengali. 2014. "Is it Still Worth Going to College?" FRBSF Economic Letter, May 5.

September 22

### Gender and work

18 - Henson and Rogers, "Why Marcia You've Changed!"

Deborah Harris and Patti Giuffre. "Not One of the Guys: Women Chefs Redefining Gender in the Culinary Industry"

## Week 6

September 27

### Work/Family balance. Work/Family policies.

35-Presser, "Toward a 24-Hour Economy ..."  
40-Hochschild, "The Time Bind: Men"

September 29

**Sexualities, gender, and work**

Patti Giuffre, Kirsten Dellinger, and Christine Williams. 2008. "'No Retribution for Being Gay?': Inequality in Gay-Friendly Workplaces."

Kristen Schilt. 2006. "Just One of the Guys? How Transmen Make Gender Visible at Work." *Gender & Society* 20:465-490.

**Week 7**

October 4

**Social class and work: "Welfare" in the U.S. and the Working Poor**

36-Hays, "Flat Broke with Children"

October 6

**Race, ethnicity and work. Affirmative action laws.**

20- Moss and Tilly, "Stories Employers Tell"

A chapter from a book by Deidre Royster. 2003. *Race and the Invisible Hand: How White Networks Exclude Black Men From Blue-Collar Jobs*. Berkeley: University Press.

**Week 8**

October 11

**Catch-up and Review**

October 13 – No Class University Day

**Week 9**

October 18

**EXAM 2**

October 20 – No class Fall Break

**Week 10**

October 25

**Age and work: Age discrimination, retirement**

Phyllis Moen. 2010. "Redefining Retirement"

Vincent Roscigno." 2010. "Ageism in the American Workplace.

October 27

**Service work and emotional labor**

27- Leidner "Over the Counter: McDonald's"

28 -Buchanan-"Lives on the Line"

**Week 11**

November 1

**Marginal work: AKA "Least Desirable" Jobs**

33-Rogers, "Are We Not Temps?"

34-Gowan, "American Untouchables"

November 3

**Occupational power and unions**

Ruth Milkman. 2013. "Back to the Future? U.S. Labour in the New Gilded Age." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 51 (4): 645-665.

James Walker. 2008. "Union Members in 2007: A Visual Essay." *Monthly Labor Review*, October, pp. 28-39.

Kim Weeden. 2002. "Why do Some Occupations Pay More than Others? Social Closure and Earnings Inequality in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 108: Read pp. 60-70.

**Week 12**

November 8 & 10

**Migration and Immigration**

Frank Bean D., Susan Gonzalez-Baker, and Randy Capps. 2001. "Immigration and Labor Markets in the United States," Read pp. 674-685.

William A. Kandel. 2014. "U.S. Immigration Policy: Chart Book of Key Trends." Congressional Research Service, December 17.

**Week 13**

November 15

**Challenges for Labor Force Policy**

Arne Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*, pp. 179-215.

November 17

**Future of Work**

Chapter from Pistoni – Robots will steal your job, but that's OK.

**Week 14**

November 22 – Group work day

November 24 – No Class, Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 15**

November 29 – Group presentations

December 1 – Group presentations

**Week 16**

December 1

**Last Day of Class! Wrap-up and Review**

FINAL EXAM

EXAM 3 – Date TBD