

## **Sociology W315: Work and Society (Fall 2005)**

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Hours: M Th 2:45-3:45  
or by appointment  
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This course will examine the nature of work in the capitalist economy, mainly in the US. We will focus on the dynamic of autonomy and control in work, the sources of rewards, the stratification of the labor force, and the role of other institutions like education, the family, and trade unions. We will examine worker rights and play a simulation game about the enforcement of worker rights. Finally, we will discuss the changing nature of work opportunities in the US economy in the new millennium.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This is a writing-intensive course and meets the college's writing requirement. That means there is a lot of writing, graded and ungraded. Since most of the writing is based on reading, there is also a lot of reading. You must plan to do the reading and assignments on time and come to class prepared to talk intelligently about them.

At the end of most classes we will take a few minutes to write a "One-Minute Paper" to answer two questions: what is the most important thing that you learned today, and what questions remain unanswered from today's class. These will be handed in anonymously and will not be graded. You may want to keep a copy for review purposes.

The following assignments will be required:

1. A short paper based on an assignment handed out in the first class and due September 12. This assignment will be read but not graded.
2. A short paper on an assigned topic. Details of the assignment will be handed out. The process will have several stages; intermediate due dates are September 26 and October 11 (class meets on Tuesday). Because these are part of a longer process, class attendance is required with the completed assignment on September 26 and October 11. The final paper will be due October 24.
3. Research paper on a topic of your choice. A proposal stating your thesis and discussing the evidence you will need to prove it is due November 3. You must meet with me in my office at least once by October 31 to discuss the proposal. It will be returned with comments. It will not be graded, but if it is not handed in on time it will affect the grade on your paper. It must be returned to me with the research paper.

A draft of the paper is due November 21, with the proposal previously submitted. It will be returned with comments for revision.

The completed paper is due December 15 (the last day of class).

4. In the next-to-last week of the semester, December 5 and December 10, we will play a simulation game about the rights of immigrant workers. Attendance is required on those two days.
5. Final exam.

All papers must be handed in in **hard copy** on the day due (no fax, no e-mail). Late papers will be penalized one-third of a grade for each day late. (If the grade is a B and the paper is one day late you will receive a B-; if it is two days late you will receive a C+; etc.) Handing in a paper on the day due means handing it in in class the day it is due. Papers handed in later the same day will be counted as one day late. Saturdays and Sundays do not count in determining lateness penalties.

The grade will be based on the following:

1. class participation: 6%
2. short paper: 20%
3. Term paper: 37%
4. Final exam: 37%

All assignments, graded and ungraded, must be handed in to receive a passing grade. Ungraded assignments which are preliminary to a graded assignment must be handed in with enough time to get feedback before completing the assignment.

**EXTRA CREDIT** may be earned in two ways (you may do either or both):

Optional midterm, October 20.

An in-class oral report sometime between October 1 and December 1. The date and topic must be confirmed with me in advance. For details on the oral report, see the course page. If you want to do an oral report, you must consult with me well ahead of time, so you should look at the oral report assignment on the course page right away. To give an oral report in October, you must consult with me by September 22. To give an oral report in November, you must consult with me by October 17.

**ONLINE COURSE PAGE:** Some course materials will be available on Blackboard 6. If you have used Blackboard before, you have probably used Blackboard 5. To use Blackboard 6, you must register for a CUNY Portal ID. Go to [bb.hunter.cuny.edu](http://bb.hunter.cuny.edu) and follow the instructions under BB6 information for students.

When you have an ID, go to the course page, click on "discussion board," then on "post a test message," and post a message.

Some course materials will be available on Blackboard. From the online syllabus, you can click on the link given for some readings and access them directly. Blackboard will also have copies of class handouts. However, in case not all handouts are on Blackboard, the official source for all handouts is in class.

There is also an online discussion board for optional participation. I will read the discussion board and try to answer any questions that arise.

**Electronic Communication:** Everyone in the class is expected to have an e-mail address and to check your e-mail regularly. Information distributed by e-mail will also be given in class but you will sometimes get it sooner by e-mail.

Every student is assigned a Hunter e-mail address but many prefer to use an outside Internet Service Provider. During the first week of class, **send me an e-mail message** from your preferred address. The

subject line should read "Sociology W315 Section [1 or 2]" and the body of the message should contain only your name and e-mail address. If you have any other communication for me, please send it in a separate message.

Feel free send me e-mail. When you do, to avoid having your message discarded as spam, it is a good idea to include the course number in the subject line. Always include your name and section number. While I recognize that everyone is busy and not always free to come see me in my office, there are times when **e-mail is not a substitute for a conversation**. If I say you must come to see me to discuss your question, you must come to see me. If I say I will answer the question in class, you must come to class. If I ask you to raise this question in class so that I can tell everyone at once, you must come to class and raise the question in class.

**FULL TEXT READINGS ON LINE:** Many of the readings (and many other journals, magazines, and newspapers) are available on line through the Hunter College library. Most of them are available only from computers connected to the Hunter College network or other computers on which a proxy server has been installed.

To read these materials from an off-campus computer, the first thing you must do is install a proxy server. See <http://library.hunter.cuny.edu/proxy.htm> for instructions.

Once you have a proxy server installed, or if you are using a Hunter computer, you will find a journal article on line by going to the library home page (<http://library.hunter.cuny.edu/>). Click on "electronic journals" on the left side of the screen, then type in the name of the journal you are looking for. You will then be taken to the index page for that journal and can find the article by date.

Note: There are other ways to access these articles from on or off campus, but they do not work for all databases. If you are using an off-campus computer you will find that installing a proxy server is the easiest way and will work for all databases.

The online syllabus in Blackboard contains links to some articles available on line; you can get them by going to the syllabus and clicking on the link.

When you find an online article, you can save it to disk or print it. If you have a choice of formats, use the PDF format which will show you the article exactly as it appears in the original. Other formats may not include page numbers and illustrations.

**A personal note:** I have a physical disability. My right ear is extremely sensitive to noise: loud noise most of all, but also noise coming steadily from my right side. When talking to me, please keep to my left. I sometimes do strange-looking things, like facing sideways to avoid noise, or covering my right ear. Listening is hard in a room with noise coming from several directions, so I ask that you not ask me questions right after class. Come to see me in my office. (I am not hard of hearing. Talking louder may make it worse.) Thanks for your consideration.

#### **REQUIRED BOOKS (BE SURE TO GET THE EDITIONS LISTED):**

Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital (Monthly Review) Note: there are two editions of this book with different page numberings. Assignments are given by chapter.

Garson, All the Livelong Day (Penguin, 1994)

Padavic and Reskin, Women and Men at Work (Pine Forge, 2002)

Richlin-Klonsky and Strenski, *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers* (Worth). While there are no assignments in this book, you will find it helpful in completing the written work.

Wharton, *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change* (Mayfield, 2002)

*The First Measured Century An Illustrated Guide to Trends in America, 1900-2000*, by Theodore Caplow, Louis Hicks and Ben J. Wattenberg, is a book based on a PBS series giving data on American society during the twentieth century. It is also available at <http://www.pbs.org/fmc/book.htm>.

Chapter two of this book has interesting data on changes in work in the twentieth century. Print out all the tables from chapter two (color printer recommended).

In the syllabus below, this book is referred to as FMC; the pages to be consulted are listed under the sections of the syllabus when we will be discussing them. Bring them to class with you.

**COURSE PACK:** A packet of readings is available at Shakespeare's. These are not all the required readings; readings available on line are not included.

**REQUIRED READINGS** can be found in several places. Some are in the required books. Some are in the Course Pack. If a URL is given, the readings are available online from any computer. Other readings are online and can be read from a Hunter computer or a computer with a proxy server.

#### 1. The nature of work

Garson, ix-xvi, 3-154

Kolbert, "The Chief," *New Yorker* October 8, 2001

Padavic and Reskin, 1-14

Wharton and Gowan in Wharton, 1-6, 432-43

#### 2. Work in human history: Before capitalism

Hodson and Sullivan, *The Social Organization of Work* (Wadsworth, 2d ed., 1995), 3-17

Padavic and Reskin, 17-20

Rybczynski in Wharton, 7-14

Thompson, "Time, Work-discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (December, 1967), 56-97

"Chronometry: the Science that Rules our Lives" (interview with David Landes), *Harvard Magazine*, Jan.-Feb. 1984, 38-43.

#### 3. The rise of capitalism and the transformation of work

Hodson and Sullivan, *The Social Organization of Work* (Wadsworth, 2d ed., 1995), 17-33

Jacoby, Wharton, and Marx in Wharton 14-29, 37-48

Padavic and Reskin, 20-36

Reich, "The Proletarianization of the Labor Force," in Edwards et al., *The Capitalist System*, 3d ed., 122-30. Note p. 126, first full paragraph, sentence beginning "By contrast:" the date 1930 appears twice and it is apparently a typo for 1980.

Bennhold, "Love of Leisure, and Europe's Reasons." *The New York Times*, July 29, 2004

Surowiecki. "The Financial Page: Punctuality Pays." *New Yorker*, 4/5/2004, 31.

#### 4. The Changing Labor Force

Mishel et al., The State of Working America 2004-05, Introduction and Executive Summary  
<http://www.epinet.org/books/swa2004/swa2004web.pdf>

U.S. Dept. of Labor, Futurework: Trends and Challenges for Work in the 21st Century.  
Executive Summary.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20000302223628/http://www.dol.gov/dol/asp/public/futurework/execsum.htm>

Wharton and Levy in Wharton, 197-229

FMC Chapter Two: WORK: Men's Occupations, Farm Operators

#### 5. The Capitalist Labor Process

Babson, "Lean or mean: The MIT model and lean production at Mazda," Labor Studies Journal, 18, No. 2 (Summer 1993), 3-24.

Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital, chapters 1-4, 8, 10

Taylor, Mayo, Hodson, Vallas and Beck, Smith, Wharton, Burawoy, and Juravich in Wharton, 55-68, 92-102, 129-60, 292-308

#### 6. Marginal, Contingent, and Underground Work

Braverman, chapters 15-16

Garson, 157-257

Leidner, Paules, Ehrenreich, Henson and Gowan (again), in Wharton, 309-40, 391-401, 406-18, 432-43

#### 7. Racial Minorities in the Labor Force

Pincus, "The Social Construction of Reverse Discrimination." Journal of Intergroup Relations 38, No. 4 (Winter, 2001-2002), 33-44

Sturm and Guinier, "The Future of Affirmative Action." Boston Review, December 2000/January 2001. <http://bostonreview.net/BR25.6/sturm.html>

Wilson, Hossfeld, Collins, Newman, in Wharton, 229-39, 281-91, 394-405, 419-31

FMC: Chapter Two: WORK: Minority Professionals

#### 8. Women in the labor force

Padavic and Reskin, 37-97, 97-48

Cowan, Hochschild, Reskin, Giuffre and Williams, Wharton, Hochschild, Garey, Epstein et al., Hochschild, Daniels in Wharton, 29-36, 83-92, 240-67, 444-502

FMC Chapter Two: WORK: Daily Housework, Working Women, Women at Work: Values, Women's Occupations

## 9. Labor unions

Edwards and Podgursky, "Labor Unions: Context and Crisis." in Edwards et al., *The Capitalist System*, 3d ed., 149-65

Freeman and Medoff, "The Two Faces of Unionism." *The Public Interest* 57 (Fall, 1979), 69-93.

Milkman in Wharton, 115-28

AFL-CIO, *The Silent War: The Assault on Workers' Freedom to Choose a Union and Bargain Collectively in the United States* (June, 2002).

[http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/how/upload/vatw\\_issuebrief.pdf](http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/how/upload/vatw_issuebrief.pdf)

FMC Chapter Two: WORK: Labor Unions

## 10. Workers' Rights

ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. 86th Session, Geneva, June 1998.

[http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.static\\_jump?var\\_language=EN&var\\_pagename=DECLARATIONTEXT](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.static_jump?var_language=EN&var_pagename=DECLARATIONTEXT)

International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (available on many internet sites)

Adams and Friedman, Human Rights in Employment. *Perspectives on Work* 2, No. 2 (1998), 24-27.

Human Rights Watch, Blood, Sweat, and Fear: Workers' Rights in U.S. Meat and Poultry Plants, 1-140 <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/usa0105>

Schlosser, The Chain Never Stops. *Mother Jones*, Jul/Aug2001, Vol. 26 Issue 4, 38-49. (This article is incorporated into the book *Fast Food Nation* which you may have already read.)

## 11. Deindustrialization, High Technology, and the Future of Work

Garson 259-271

U.S. Dept. of Labor, *Futurework* (review)

Zuboff, Riain, Perucci and Wysong, Yam in Wharton, 103-15, 160-96