

Sociology 116, The Sociology of Work

UC Berkeley, Spring 2015

Tues. & Thurs. 11-12:30, 277 Cory Hall

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Spring semester office hours: Tuesdays, 1-3 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the sociology of work that will explore contemporary transformations in work and employment, and their impact on social relations. The course will focus primarily on working conditions and jobs in the United States, but will take account of how different types of work and workers are connected worldwide. During the first few weeks, we will consider the cultural meanings of work, theories about work and employment, and the history of the organization of work. The second part of the course focuses on trends in the current labor market—the types of jobs that are available, what those jobs are like and what that means for the lives of workers who hold them. The central theme for this part of the course is the polarization of the labor market into “good” and “bad” jobs. The third and final part of the course centers on exploring and explaining another dimension of labor market segmentation—how categorically distinct types of workers are associated with specific types of jobs, focusing on nativity, race, and gender and the processes that foster segmentation. We will conclude this section by considering how the gendered and segmented nature of work affects family life.

Evaluation:

Exam 1: Feb. 10. (15% of grade) *Please note the early date of this exam!* This will be an in-class exam that will focus on the material from weeks 1-3

Exam 2: March 17. (20% of grade) This in-class exam will focus on the materials from Part 2 (“On the Job in Today’s Labor Market”) of the course.

Response Paper (15% of grade): All students are required to turn in ONE short response paper. There are two possible dates to turn in a response paper. Please see the document called “Soc. 116 Paper Assignments” on BCourses for the full prompt for this assignment, which will involve applying material from class to a news article. Turn in a hard copy in class. **Choose one due date: Mar. 5 or Apr. 9**

Term Paper: April 28 (25% of grade): For the term paper, students will research several dimensions of a career or job of their choice, developing an argument about where it fits into Kalleberg’s schemas of “good” and “bad” jobs and the context of labor market polarization. Please see the document called “Soc. 116 Paper Assignments” on BCourses for the full prompt.

Final Exam (25% of grade): The final exam will cover material from the entire semester, and will be on **May 14th, from 8-11 am.**

Course Policies:

Grading: There will be a graduate student reader(s) for this course who will be responsible for most of the grading. The process for grading is as follows: I develop a rubric for the exams and papers and discuss it with the readers. We then grade several papers/exams together to make sure the grading is consistent. We will try to return exams and papers to you within two weeks. Readers may decide to hold regular office hours, or will meet with students by appointment. If you have a problem with a grade, you should first discuss it with the reader who assigned the grade. If that does not resolve the problem, then I will discuss it with the reader and meet with you. Please know that if we agree to re-evaluate your work, it will be under closer scrutiny and your grade could possibly go down as a result. If you ask us to consider raising your score, *be prepared to make a specific argument as to why you think you deserve more points, making sure to reference the rubric for the assignment in question.* We will use the gradebook function on BCourses to post grades, but you should always check and make sure the grade on the hard-copy of your assignment matches the one online.

Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, including announcements. You will be expected to integrate materials from lecture and readings on exams and papers. Do not enroll in this class if you are unable to attend the lectures regularly.

If you need **accommodations** for a disability or have a conflict due to the observance of religious holidays, please speak with me early in the semester to discuss appropriate arrangements.

Exams and assignments must be taken and turned in on time. If you have a personal emergency, contact me at the earliest opportunity to discuss alternative arrangements. Late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each day they are late (including weekends). For example, an "A" papers that is two days late becomes a B+. The final exam must be taken at the scheduled time.

Academic honesty is expected of all students. While I encourage students to discuss the readings and study together, everyone must do their own work. Suspected violations relating to this course will be reported to the appropriate administrative department and dealt with according to university policies. Be aware of plagiarism. Word for word use of even a single sentence from another author, publication or website without citation is plagiarism and is considered unethical. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the paper or exam with no opportunity to rewrite. If you have questions about how to properly cite materials, or how to paraphrase appropriately, ask during office hours, or consult the writing guide "Writing for Sociology", available on the Soc. department website.

Email: Email should not be used for questions about class materials—these questions should be asked in class or during office hours. I don't check email more than once per day, and cannot always respond right away, so talk to me before or after class, or during office hours if you have an important issue.

Office Hours: I urge students to talk with me sometime during the semester, just to say "hi" and especially if you are having trouble with the course. I can't help you if you don't communicate with me! There is a sign up sheet outside my office door for regular office hour appointments. You are free to drop by, but I'll give priority to people who have appointments. If you have another class or work during my scheduled office hours, we can schedule another time to meet.

Laptops, etc.: You are welcome to take notes on your laptop or tablet if you sit in the FRONT of the class.

Circulation of Course Materials: DO NOT reproduce course materials or post them on-line or anywhere else. This includes the syllabus, lecture slides, notes, review sheets and exams.

Course Materials:

Books: There are two required books which can be purchased in the bookstore or via online sources. They are also on 2 hour reserve at Moffitt Library.

1. Kalleberg, A. (2011) *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
2. Zolniski, C. (2006) *Janitors, Street Vendors and Activists: The Lives of Mexican Immigrants in Silicon Valley*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press

Reader:

The reader is also required. Purchase at the Copy Central on Bancroft St. A copy will also be on 2 hr. reserve at Moffitt library.

I. HISTORICAL and THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Week 1: Jan. 20 & 22

Introduction to current labor market trends, and the cultural significance of work in the U.S.

Readings: Kantor, J. (2014) "Working Anything But 9 to 5", *New York Times*
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/08/13/us/starbucks-workers-scheduling-hours.html? r=1>

Cooper, J. (2014) "Why Silicon Valley's Work Culture is Killing Us", *Forbes*
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/groupthink/2013/08/25/why-silicon-valleys-work-culture-is-killing-us/>

Kalleberg, A. (2011) Ch. 1 "Job Quality in the United States". *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Week 2: Jan. 27 & 29

Theoretical perspectives on work

Readings: Marx, K. "Alienated Labor", Weber, M. "Bureaucracy", Taylor, F. "Fundamentals of Scientific Management", Braverman, H. "The Division of Labor", Hochschild, A. "The Managed Heart". Pp. 44-78 in Wharton, A. (2006) *Working in America, Continuity, Conflict and Change, 3rd edition*. (Reader)

Week 3: Feb. 3 & 5

Historical foundations and macro-structural forces that shape labor markets: what jobs are available and who is going to work at them?

Readings: Fischer, C. & Hout, M. (2006) Ch. 5 "How Americans Worked: New Workers, New Jobs and New Differences". *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation (Reader)

Kalleberg, A. (2011) Ch. 2 "Economic Transformation and the Decline of Institutional Protection" {READ} & 3 "New Workers, New Differences" {SKIM}. *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

II. ON THE JOB IN TODAY'S LABOR MARKET

Week 4: Feb. 10 & 12

Exam 1 in class on Feb. 10

Good and Bad Jobs

Readings: Kalleberg, A. (2011) Ch. 4 "Dimensions of Polarity", Ch. 5 "Precarious Employment Relations" and Ch. 6 "Economic Rewards: Earnings and Fringe Benefits". *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Week 5: Feb. 17 & 19, Good and Bad Jobs

Readings: Kalleberg, A. (2011) Ch. 7 "Control Over Work Activities and Rewards", Ch. 8 "Time at Work: Hours, Intensity and Control", Ch. 9 "Job Satisfaction". *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Week 6: Feb. 24 & 26, Good and Bad Jobs: Policies and Controversies

Readings: Voss, K. & Fantasia, R. (2004). *Hard Work: Remaking the American Labor Movement*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press. Ch. 4 "Practices and Possibilities of a Social Movement Unionism" (Reader)

Kalleberg, A. (2011) Ch. 11 "Implementing the New Social Contract". *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Week 7: March 3 & 5, Good and Bad Jobs: Workers' Lives

Readings: Conley, D. (2009) *Elsewhere, USA*. New York: Vintage. Preface, through Ch. 4, pp. ix-67 (Reader)

Week 8: March 10 & 12, Workers' Lives

Readings: Shulman, B. (2003) *The Betrayal of Work*. New York: The New Press. Introduction- Ch. 3, pp., 1-68 (Reader)

Week 9: March 17 & 19, Introducing Labor Market Segmentation

Exam 2 on March 17

(No reading assignment)

SPRING BREAK MARCH 23-27

III. EXPLAINING SEGMENTATION

Week 10: March 31, April 2, Segmentation: Immigration, Globalization, Ethnicity and nativity on the job

Readings: Zolniski, C. (2006) *Janitors, Street Vendors, and Activists: The Lives of Mexican Immigrants in Silicon Valley*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press. Ch. 1, 2 & 3

Week 11: April 7 & 9, Segmentation: nativity, race and ethnicity

Readings: Zolniski, C. (2006) *Janitors, Street Vendors, and Activists: The Lives of Mexican Immigrants in Silicon Valley*. Berkeley, CA: UC Press. Ch. 4 and Conclusion & Epilogue, p. 173- 209

Week 12: April 14 & 16, Segmentation: gender

Readings: Reskin, B & Padavic, I. (1994) *Women and Men at Work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. Ch. 4, 5 and 7 (Reader)

Week 13: April 21 & 23

Live to work or work to live? Trends in time spent at work and impact on families

Readings: Jacobs, J. & Gerson, K. (2004) *The Time Divide: Work, Family and Gender Inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Ch. 4 & 5 pp. 80-115 (Reader)

Week 14: April 28 & 30

Work and Families

Readings: Blair-Loy, M. (2003) *Competing Devotions: Career and Family Among Women Executives*. Ch. 1, 2 and 5 (Reader)

Week 15: RRR week.

Final review sheet will be posted by Tuesday, May 5th

Final Exam is May 14, 8-11 am, Location TBA

