

Sociology of Work, Occupations & Labor Markets

Sociology 570
Department of Sociology
Rutgers University
Fall 2019

Professor: Quan D. Mai

Time: Tuesdays, 9:30AM to 12:10PM

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30PM or by appointment

Room: Davison Hall – Conference Room

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we apply a sociological perspective to the broad and fast-growing subfield of work, occupations, and labor markets. This course cannot cover the entire subfield. Instead, it is designed to provide a broad introduction, as well as to dive deep into a selected set of subjects. Over the course of the seminar, we will cover three major themes: [1] classical perspectives on work, [2] the changing nature of the labor market, and [3] how work, occupations, and labor markets intersect with other social structures. In the first section, we will revisit the classic theoretical foundations of the sociology of work. The second section explores how employment norms are rapidly changing, and how these changes affect workers who no longer operate in permanent standard organizational careers. In the third section, we analyze how the labor market intersects with important social structures such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, family, education, and organized labor to generate stratified outcomes in modern society. The materials covered in this course will operate both at the *macro* level of analysis (global economies, changing structure of labor markets), *meso* level of analysis (the family, the workplace, occupational groups/sectors), and *micro* level of analysis (workers themselves). These inquiries adopt a diverse set of methodological toolkits including qualitative, quantitative, and experimental approaches.

LEARNING GOALS

In this course, you will

1. Become familiar with main theoretical and empirical frameworks that influenced social research on work, occupations, and labor markets.
2. Improve your critical writing skills, specifically the ability to synthesize separate authors' arguments in ways that go beyond summarizing, but rather demonstrate analytic and interpretive value.
3. Learn how scholars use qualitative, quantitative, and experimental methods to investigate and explain the labor process and how it contributes to reproducing inequality.
4. Develop your oral and written communication skills through critical discussion, intellectual debate, and writing.
5. Cultivate your own research interest, develop ideas for qualifying papers, dissertations, primary and/or secondary research areas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Weekly memos (20%)

Each week, you are required to produce a 1-2 page typed, double-spaced reaction to the readings. The assignment briefly summarizes the themes of the reading and the debates that the readings are engaged with. You should also share your critiques of the readings, and provide TWO questions that you will raise in class discussions. Your weekly memos need to be emailed to me by Mondays at 5PM. Please be on time. This portion accounts for 20% of your grade.

2. Lead discussion (20%)

Over the course of the semester, each student is expected to lead and/or co-lead a class discussion on that week's application reading. I will share more details during the first week.

3. Participation (20%)

Each student is expected to attend every single class and actively participate in class discussions of the reading.

4. Research proposal (40%)

You are required to submit a research proposal by the end of the semester. The topic must be related to work, occupations, and the labor market. A good proposal should engage with theories and concepts derived from the reading materials.

The proposal should have the following structure.

- a) Clearly state your topic and explicitly discuss its relevance to the sociology of work, occupations, and labor markets. How does it move the field forward, which gaps does it fill, what puzzle does it solve? Why should we care about this topic at all? (3 pages)
- b) Discuss 6-10 relevant articles and/or books that inform your topic of inquiry. You may use readings that we cover or come up with materials on your own. This section should explicitly address what the limitations of the readings are? Which aspects remain undertheorized? What is gained by addressing these gaps? What are your research question(s) and your contributions? (8-10 pages)
- c) Explain the method that you'll use to address your research question – i.e. interviews, focus groups, survey methods, content analysis, ethnography, etc. Explain how you will execute the project. I will be extremely impressed if you can identify a realistic funding source for your project (4 pages)
- d) Provide a reference list at the end of your proposal.

Overall, the final product will be about 15-18 pages in length.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I follow the Rutgers University's policy on academic integrity. Please explore the website indicated below to become more familiar with this policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or citation of the source. My policy on plagiarism is to award an F for the course.

DISABILITIES

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where they are officially enrolled, participate in an intake meeting, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/applying-for-services>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with me as soon as possible, and discuss the accommodations with me as early as possible.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

CLASS & READING SCHEDULE

I. Classical Perspectives On Work

Week 1: September 3- Work, Concepts, and Theories

Kalleberg, Arne and Ivar Berg. 1987. *Work and Industry: Structures, Markets, and Processes*. New York: Plenum Press. 1-47.

Whetten, David A. 1989. "What constitutes a theoretical contribution?" *Academy of Management Review* 14(4) : 490-495.

Bacharach, Samuel B. 1989. "Organizational theories: Some criteria for evaluation." *Academy of Management Review* 14(4): 496-515.

Hirsch, Paul, Stuart Michaels and Ray Friedman (1987). "Dirty Hands" versus "Clean Models": Is Sociology in Danger of Being Seduced by Economics? *Theory and Society* 16(3): 317-336.

Week 2: September 10- Conceptual Foundations

Marx, Karl. *Alienated Labor*

Weber, M. *Bureaucracy*

Taylor, F. *Fundamentals of Scientific Management*

Braverman, H. *The Division of Labor*

All readings in Wharton, A. 2015. *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change in a New Economic Era*. 4th edition. Routledge. [Link](#)

II. The Changing Nature of The Labor Market

Week 3: September 17 – Occupational Differentiation

Margo Anderson. 1994. "(Only) White Men Have Class: Reflections on Early 19th Century Occupational Classification Systems." *Work and Occupations* 21:5-32

Ian D. Wyatt and Daniel E. Hecker. 2006. "Occupational Changes During the 20th Century." *Monthly Labor Review* 129: 35-57.

Andrew Hogan and Brian Roberts. 2015. "Occupational Employment Projections to 2024." *Monthly Labor Review* 138: 1-42.

Amanda Kidd Damarin. 2006. "Rethinking Occupational Structure: The Case of Web Site Production Work." *Work and Occupations* 22 (2): 429-463.

Mullan, Killian, and Judy Wajcman. 2019. "Have mobile devices changed working patterns in the 21st century? A time-diary analysis of work extension in the UK." *Work, Employment and Society* 33(1): 3-20.

Recommended:

Committee on Techniques for the Enhancement of Human Performance: Occupational Analysis, "Implications for Occupational Analysis Systems," Pp. 164-215 (Chapter 5) in *The Changing Nature of Work: Implications for Occupational Analysis*. (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1999). [Link](#)

Week 4: September 24 – Good jobs & bad jobs

Kalleberg, Arne L. 2011. *Good jobs, bad jobs: The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 1, 4, 6 [Link](#)

Weeden, Kim A. 2002. "Why do some occupations pay more than others? Social closure and earnings inequality in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 108 (1): 55-101.

Fernández-Macías, Enrique. 2012. "Job polarization in Europe? Changes in the employment structure and job quality, 1995-2007." *Work and Occupations* 39 (2): 157-182.

Week 5: October 1 – No Job

Sharone, Ofer. 2013. "Why do unemployed Americans blame themselves while Israelis blame the system?." *Social Forces* 91(4): 1429-1450.

Kroft, Kory, Fabian Lange, and Matthew J. Notowidigdo. 2013. "Duration dependence and labor market conditions: Evidence from a field experiment." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 128(3): 1123-1167.

Oberholzer-Gee, Felix. 2008. "Nonemployment Stigma as Rational Herding: A Field Experiment." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 65(1):30-40.

Pedulla, David. 2018. "How Race and Unemployment Shape Labor Market Opportunities: Additive, Amplified, or Muted Effects?." *Social Forces* 96(4): 1477-1506.

Recommended:

Gangl, Markus. 2006. "Scar Effects of Unemployment: An Assessment of Institutional Complementarities." *American Sociological Review* 71(6):986-1013.

Week 6: October 8 – Working in the New Economy

Smith, Vicki. *Crossing the great divide: Worker risk and opportunity in the new economy*. Cornell University Press, 2002. Chapter 1 & 6 [Link](#)

Barley, Stephen R., and Gideon Kunda. *Gurus, hired guns, and warm bodies: Itinerant experts in a knowledge economy*. Princeton University Press, 2006. Chapter 1 & Chapter 13 [Link](#)

Vallas, Steven, and Angele Christin. 2018. "Work and Identity in an Era of Precarious Employment: How Workers Respond to "Personal Branding" Discourse". *Work and Occupations* 45(1). 3-37. [Link](#)

Recommended:

Occhiuto, Nicholas. 2017. "Investing in independent contract work: The significance of schedule control for taxi drivers." *Work and Occupations* 44(3): 268-295.

Osnowitz, Debra, and Kevin D. Henson. 2016. "Leveraging limits for contract professionals: Boundary work and control of working time." *Work and Occupations* 43(3): 326-360.

Week 7: October 15 – Consequences of Precarious Work

Yu, Wei-hsin. 2012. "Better off jobless? Scarring effects of contingent employment in Japan." *Social Forces* 90(3): 735-768.

Pedulla, David S. 2016. "Penalized or protected? Gender and the consequences of nonstandard and mismatched employment histories." *American Sociological Review* 81(2): 262-289.

Pedulla, David S. 2013. "The hidden costs of contingency: Employers' use of contingent workers and standard employees' outcomes." *Social Forces* 92(2): 691-722.

Schneider, Daniel, and Kristen Harknett. 2019. "Consequences of Routine Work-Schedule Instability for Worker Health and Well-Being." *American Sociological Review* 84(1): 82-114.

Recommended:

Glavin, Paul, and Scott Schieman. 2014. "Control in the face of uncertainty: is job insecurity a challenge to the mental health benefits of control beliefs?." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 77(4) : 319-343.

III. How Work and The Labor Markets Intersects with other Social Structures

Week 8: October 22 – Work and Social Class

Williams, Christine L., and Catherine Connell. 2010. "'Looking good and sounding right' aesthetic labor and social inequality in the retail industry." *Work and Occupations* 37(3): 349-377.

Rivera, Lauren A. 2012. "Hiring as cultural matching: The case of elite professional service firms." *American Sociological Review* 77(6): 999-1022.

Rivera, Lauren A., and András Tilcsik. 2016. "Class advantage, commitment penalty: The gendered effect of social class signals in an elite labor market." *American Sociological Review* 81(6): 1097-1131.

Thomas, Kyla. 2018. "The labor market value of taste: An experimental study of class Bias in US employment." *Sociological Science* 5: 562-595.

Recommended:

Koppman, Sharon. 2016. "Different like me: Why cultural omnivores get creative jobs." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 61(2): 291-331.

Week 9: October 29 – Work and Race/Ethnicity

Pager, Devah. 2003. "The mark of a criminal record." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(5): 937-975.

Pager, Devah, and Diana Karafin. 2009. "Bayesian bigot? Statistical discrimination, stereotypes, and employer decision making." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 621(1): 70-93.

Kang, Sonia K., et al. 2016. "Whitened resumes: Race and self-presentation in the labor market." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 61(3): 469-502.

Oreopoulos, Philip. 2011. "Why do skilled immigrants struggle in the labor market? A field experiment with thirteen thousand resumes." *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 3(4): 148-171.

Recommended:

Auer, Daniel, et al. 2019. "The matching hierarchies model: evidence from a survey experiment on employers' hiring intent regarding immigrant applicants." *International Migration Review* 53(1): 90-121.

Amanda Agan, Sonja Starr. 2018. "Ban the Box, Criminal Records, and Racial Discrimination: A Field Experiment." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 133(1): 191–235,

Rivera, Lauren A. 2012. "Diversity within reach: Recruitment versus hiring in elite firms." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 639(1): 71-90.

Week 10: November 5 – Work and Race/Ethnicity (Continued)

Tomaskovic-Devey, D., Zimmer, C., Stainback, K., Robinson, C., Taylor, T., & McTague, T. 2006. Documenting Desegregation: Segregation in American Workplaces by Race, Ethnicity, and Sex, 1966–2003. *American Sociological Review* 71(4): 565–588.

Donald Tomaskovic-Devey. 1993. "The Gender and Race Composition of Jobs and the Male/Female, White/Black Pay Gaps." *Social Forces* 72(1):45–76.

Matt L. Huffman and Philip N. Cohen. 2004. "Racial Wage Inequality: Job Segregation and Devaluation across U.S. Labor Markets," *American Journal of Sociology* 109(4): 902-936.

Day, J. C. (2015). "Transitions to the Top: Race, Segregation, and Promotions to Executive Positions in the College Football Coaching Profession." *Work and Occupations* 42(4): 408–446.

Week 11: November 12 – Work and Family, Gender, and Sexuality

Reskin, Barbara F., and Patricia A. Roos. 2009. *Job queues, gender queues: Explaining women's inroads into male occupations*. Temple University Press. Chapter 1-2

Quadlin, Natasha. 2018. "The mark of a woman's record: Gender and academic performance in hiring." *American Sociological Review* 83(2) : 331-360.

Haveman, Heather A., and Lauren S. Beresford. 2012. "If you're so smart, why aren't you the boss? Explaining the persistent vertical gender gap in management." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 639(1): 114-130.

Cohen, P. N., & Huffman, M. L. 2007. Working for the Woman? Female Managers and the Gender Wage Gap. *American Sociological Review* 72(5): 681–704.

Cohen, Lisa E., Joseph P. Broschak, and Heather A. Haveman. 1998. "And then there were more? The Effect of Organizational Sex Composition on the Hiring and Promotion of Managers." *American Sociological Review* 63(5): 711-27.

Recommended:

Turco, Catherine J. 2010. "Cultural foundations of tokenism: Evidence from the leveraged buyout industry." *American Sociological Review* 75(6): 894-913.

Week 12: November 19 – Work and Family, Gender, and Sexuality (Continued)

Tilcsik, András. "Pride and prejudice: Employment discrimination against openly gay men in the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 117.2 (2011): 586-626.

Schieman, Scott, and Paul Glavin. 2008. "Trouble at the border?: Gender, flexibility at work, and the work-home interface." *Social Problems* 55(4): 590-611

Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Benard, and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?." *American Journal of Sociology* 112(5): 1297-1338.

Weisshaar, Katherine. 2018. "From opt out to blocked out: The challenges for labor market re-entry after family-related employment lapses." *American Sociological Review* 83(1): 34-60.

Recommended:

Glauber, Rebecca. 2012. "Women's work and working conditions: Are mothers compensated for lost wages?." *Work and Occupations* 39(2): 115-138.

Week 13: November 26 – Work and Education

Peter Cappelli. *Why Good People Can't Get Jobs: The Skills Gap and What Companies Can Do About it*. Wharton Digital Press, 2012. Chapter 1 and 6. [Link](#)

Arne Kalleberg. 2008. "The Mismatched Worker: When People Don't Fit Their Jobs." *Academy of Management Perspective*, 22 (1): 24-40.

Gaddis, S. Michael. 2014. "Discrimination in the credential society: an audit study of race and college selectivity in the labor market." *Social Forces* 93(4): 1451-1479.

Bol, Thijs, and Herman G. Van de Werfhorst. 2011. "Signals and closure by degrees: The education effect across 15 European countries." *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 29(1): 119-132.

Recommended:

Castilla, Emilio J., and Ben A. Rissing. 2019. "Best in Class: The Returns on Application Endorsements in Higher Education." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 64(1): 230-270.

Week 14: December 3 – Work and Labor Unions

Michael Burawoy. 2008. "The Public Turn: From Labor Process to Labor Movement." *Work and Occupations* 35: 371-387.

Dan Clawson. *The Next Upsurge: Labor and the New Social Movements* Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 2003, pp. 13-26; 194-205.

Kalleberg, Arne L. 2011. *Good jobs, bad jobs: The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 1, 4, 6

Jake Rosenfeld. 2014. *What Unions No Longer Do*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 1-30; 182-199. [Link](#)

Week 15: December 10 – Oral presentation of research proposals.