

# Course Syllabus

## CRD 162 - PEOPLE, WORK, AND TECHNOLOGY

Department of Human Ecology - Community and Regional Development

### Winter 2024

*“History is vital or dead.... according as it is or is not presented. When treated simply as a record of what has passed and gone, there is no motive for attending to it. The ethical value of history teaching will be measured by the extent to which it is treated as a matter of analysis of existing social relations-- that is to say as affording insight into what makes up the structure and working of society...Only a mind trained to grasp social situations, can get a sufficient hold on the realities of this life to see what sort of action, critical and constructive, it really demands. - John Dewey*

**Instructor:** Dr. M. Anne Visser

**Email:** [mavisser@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mavisser@ucdavis.edu)

**Lecture Classroom:** Teaching and Learning Complex 2218

**Office Hours:** Office Hours Will be held Tuesdays from 2:00-3:30 via zoom. \*Sign up at <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/urtwq>

[Links to an external site.](#)to schedule a meeting during office hours. Office hours are held by sign up only. All sign-ups will close by 1PM the Monday for each week of scheduled office hours.

**TA: Julia Marhenke- Discussion Section Monday 5:10- 6PM**

**Email:** [jmarhenke@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jmarhenke@ucdavis.edu)

**Office Hours:** Thursdays 12:30-2:30

zoom link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71294087484?pwd=IHtvE8MKz5pg1dZTnCHNutKLpLIK31.1>

[Links to an external site.](#)

**TA: Gwen Scott - Discussion Section Wednesday 6:10-7PM**

**Email: [gwscott@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gwscott@ucdavis.edu)**

**Office Hours: Mondays 4:00-6:00PM**

**In-Person and on Zoom:**

**<https://ucdavis.zoom.us/j/93478228768?pwd=ZzJaa1JBckIwOVpBSFEzcVNvaFBBUT09>**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces and examines the relationships that exist between work, technology, and the human experience. In doing so, the primary objective is to provide a venue for students to critically engage and assess comparative, historical, and theoretical perspectives to understand the contemporary transformations of work and employment in the "new economy". While work has always been with us, its social organization and technological content have varied widely across time, space, industry, and economic system. At the same time, employment (or paid work) is inherently a socially constructed notion that is both institutionally and culturally defined and bounded by time and space. These boundaries are in constant renegotiation responding to a variety of pressures- from globalization, the rise of employer flexibility, technological innovations, demographic trends, and changing social and familial structures. As these labor relations and modes of production have and continue to constantly evolve, so do their effects on human and social aspects of life including standard of living, community structure, as well as individual familial and social roles and positions.

My goal is to encourage you to think critically about the ways in which labor relations, systems, and modes of production have evolved over time to intersect and shape opportunity structures afforded in modern society. Students will gain an understanding of the economic, political, and social dynamics of economic change, the intersections between power and work in society, how various aspects of social location (i.e. race, ethnicity, class gender, and citizenship status) impact employment and economic opportunities, and the responses of workers, communities, and policymakers to workplace changes. The course is organized into four parts: a consideration of the links among work, technology, and the human experience; an examination of the causes of 20th century changes in the world of work and an in-depth exploration of the impact these changes have had on life quality; and an inquiry into the ways that workers, communities, and policymakers can respond to contemporary changes in work and employment.

## **READINGS**

Readings are important components to the course and are required. They are the necessary background for discussion. Participation in lectures is important and students are expected to be prepared to discuss readings in class. I will call on you randomly by name. Additional or alternate readings may be assigned throughout the course as directed by the instructor. Students

are expected to complete all readings to effectively participate in the discussion. Some of the readings assigned in this course include applications of structural equation models, categorical data analysis, and econometric methods. Some class time will be devoted to understanding methodological issues. However, students are expected and encouraged to do independent work to assist in grasping these issues and consult with the TA and instructor if they have difficulty in understanding the work.

I would like you to keep in mind the entire quarter that articles read in this class are written by individuals with their own perspective and agendas. My objective is that by the end of this course you will be able to think more critically and get better insight into understanding the contemporary transformations of work and employment in the "new economy". **All readings are posted online in the canvas course website under the Files tab.**

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Course grades are based upon the following:

<b>Quizzes</b>	30%
<b>Term Paper</b>	40%
<b>Midterm</b>	20%
<b>Short Assignments</b>	10%

**AN IMPORTANT WORD ABOUT GRADING:** Grades are earned, not given. Simply completing the course requirements does not entitle a student to a grade of A or B. "A" grades are earned for exceptional work. Requests for reconsideration of grades will be accepted only in writing with a clear statement of what the student believes has been mis-graded within one week of receiving the graded material. Please submit your original full assignment along with your request for grade reconsideration. Important: In reviewing the requested assignment for grade reconsideration, grades may be revised up or down depending upon the reassessment of the graded material.

**Quizzes:** There will be four quizzes, each worth 10% of the class grade. The lowest score will be dropped for the course (so total is 30%). There will be no make ups. Quizzes will be available online - one for each of the first 4 weeks of classes through canvas. Students will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz. Quizzes will cover the last few days of readings, including those for the day of the quiz and the last couple of lectures. They are short and are designed to encourage you to do the readings. Missed quizzes cannot be made-up. There will be no

exceptions. However, the lowest scoring quiz will be dropped. The quiz can be given at any time during the quarter.

**Take Home Midterm Examination:** The midterm exam will be a take home short essay exam. You are encouraged to use the Student Academic Success Center to improve your writing. Exams turned in beyond the scheduled deadline will automatically receive a full grade deduction for every day the exam is late. After 5 days, students will be unable to submit the assignment.

**Short Response Assignments:** There will be three homework assignments worth 10% of your class grade. These short assignments are meant to help you synthesize the vast majority of the material covered in the module with the theoretical frameworks learned in weeks 1-4. These homework assignments are due by the specified dates.

**Term Paper:** You will identify a problem in the contemporary world of work and develop and defend a means of addressing at least some aspects of this problem. The problem can be a problem for workers- or certain populations, categories of them (i.e. women, union members). The problem may also be one for local communities, for businesses, or for the nation. Students will be required to describe the problem, its causes, character, dimensions, and demonstrate why the problem chosen is worthy of public and scholarly concern. You will propose and defend an approach for addressing this problem, show clearly how and to what extent your proposal for change addresses the causes of the problem and evaluate your proposed solution. You will justify your position using concepts and theories learned in class and evaluate your proposal for change by identifying what it does, what it leaves undone, what existing evidence suggests that your proposal for change might work, and what barriers to implementing it you might anticipate.

Data collection for the paper should be based on: scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines, congressional testimonies, archival material, planning department documents, government reports and analyses, census data, and other governmental data sources.

Examples of potential topics include (but are not limited to):

- Decline of unions and strategies of new community organizing
- Growing Job Polarization and implications for the middle class, economic mobility, etc.
- Inequities in employment faced by women, men, immigrant, and minority working populations
- Job redesign, workplace democratization/worker owned firms as solutions to problems in the work of work
- State and local policy approaches to securing labor rights, promoting economic justice (i.e. living wage ordinances, prohibitions on the use of public funds to influence employees about unionization, responsible contracting policies)
- National level policy approaches to alleviating the negative impacts of economic restructuring and redressing inequalities stemming from work and employment.
- Addressing the dilemma of subcontracting work and the rise of informal employmen

The paper shall be 12 pages in length not counting references, footnotes, and tables. Do not exceed this length. Time in Discussion and dedicated time in Lecture will be devoted to helping you develop the term paper.

**IT IS VITAL THAT YOU USE THE READINGS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. IF A STUDENT FAILS TO USE THE READINGS, THE HIGHEST GRADE THAT WILL BE OFFERED TO THE STUDENT WILL BE A “C” FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.**

All papers must use citations in the text (ex. Visser, 2023) and then have the full citation in a bibliography. at the end. Students are expected to follow APA citation format. Term papers must be submitted online via Canvas in Microsoft word or PDF form. Please use Times New Roman size 12 font. Title your attachments in the following way: lastnameCRD162Winter2024 (i.e. VisserCRD162Winter2024).

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

All communication related to the course will be delivered through the official university email system. Each student is responsible for the information sent and received from the instructor via the university email account and is expected to check their email account on a regular and consistent basis. Students are required to utilize the university email account when communicating about coursework. I will not respond to emails sent from personal accounts.

**IMPORTANT:** Allow up to 48 hours for an email response – even to urgent emails from the instructor or the TA. Any emails received after 5PM on Friday will likely not be responded to until the following Monday.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

All students should be familiar with the Student Code of Academic Conduct that is located here: <http://xia.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>. Please review this carefully and ask the instructor, if you have any questions. The instructor is obliged to refer you to Student Judicial Affairs in all cases of violation or suspected violation. In addition to plagiarism and cheating on examinations, it is also a violation of the Student Code of Academic Conduct to use your own written materials prepared for other classes unless you take the following points into consideration:

It is permissible to use materials and texts from other class projects, **within CRD or in other departments**, under these conditions:

- You inform the instructor
- You clearly identify the portions where you quote yourself (or collaborative work) within the written
- You provide a copy of the previous work you have submitted in the other class to the

- To ensure that you receive a good grade the material must fit seamlessly into the assignment for

**THIS** class.

- If you have any doubts about the extent to which you can use previously written materials, talk to the instructor prior to making any

## **COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

### **Monday, 1/8: Orientation**

Introduction and Class Orientation

### **Wednesday, 1/10: The Social Meaning of Work**

Chapter 1- The State of Working America. 12th edition. Economic Policy Institute.

Peck, J. (1996). *Work-place: The social regulation of labor markets*. Guilford Press. Chapter 1 & 2

### **Monday 1/15: No Class- University Holiday**

### **Wednesday 1/17: The Social Meaning of Technology (Asynchronous Class- Online Module)**

Sharp, L. (1952). Steel Axes for Stone Age Australians. *Human Organization* 11(2), pp 17-22.

Elliot, L. (2016). Robots will not lead to fewer jobs – but the hollowing out of the middle class. *The Guardian*

Vermeulen, B., Kesselhut, J., Pyka, A., & Saviotti, P. P. (2018). The Impact of Automation on Employment: Just the Usual Structural Change?. *Sustainability*, 10(5), 1661.

Vallas, S. (1998). Manufacturing Knowledge: Technology, Culture, and Social Inequality at Work. *Social Science Computer Review* (16) pp. 353-371.

### **Monday 1/22: Perspectives on the Study of Work**

Braverman, H. (1998), *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. NYU Press. "New Introduction, (pp. ix-xxiv) ; "Forward" (pp. xxv-xxvii); "Introduction" (pp. 3-28), Chs. 1-3, (pp. 31-58).

Weber, M. (2004). Bureaucracy. In Whimster, S. *The Essential Weber* (2004). New York: Routledge.

Smith, A. (1776). On the Division of Labor. in Shafritz, M., S. Ott, and Y. Jane *Classics of Organization Theory*.

### **Wednesday 1/24::The Development of Management Structures (Asynchronous Online Module)**

Freidman, A. (1977). Responsible Autonomy vs. Direct Control over the Labor Process. *Capital & Class*. 1(1) pp. 43-57.

Braverman, H. (1998), *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. NYU Press. Chs. 5, 6, 8 (pp. 86-106, 117-126).

### **Monday 1/29: Labor Market Segmentation Part 1**

\*Peck, J. (1996). *Work-place: The social regulation of labor markets*. Guilford Press. Chapter 3.

Hudson, K.(2007). The New Labor Market Segmentation: Labor Market Dualism in the New Economy

*Social Science Research*. 36(1): 286- 312.

### **Wednesday 1/31: Labor Market Segmentation Part 2 (Asynchronous Online Module)**

#### **Assignments: TERM PAPER TOPIC PERSPECTUS DUE and Midterm Distributed**

Peck, J. (1996). *Work-place: The social regulation of labor markets*. Guilford Press. Chapter 4.

Visser, M.A. (2016). Shedding Light on Economic Opportunity: Skin Tone and Job Quality during the Great Recession. Forthcoming in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

Tzannatos, S.(1999). Women and Labor Market Changes in the Global Economy: Growth Helps, Inequalities Hurt and Public Policy Matters. *World Development* .27(3): 551-69.

### **Monday 2/5: Economic Restructuring - Part 1**

Wood, S. (1989) The Transformation of Work. in Wood, S. (Ed.). *The transformation of work?: Skill, flexibility and the labour process*. Taylor & Francis pp. 1-43

Herod, A. (1997). From geography of labor to labor geography: labor's spatial fix and the geography of capitalism. *Antipode* 29: 1-31.

### **Wednesday 2/7: Economic Restructuring Part II (Asynchronous Class- Online Module)**

#### **Assignments: MIDTERM DUE**

Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (2002). Cities and the geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism". *Antipode*,34(3), 349-379.

Peck, J. (2002). Labor Zapped/Growth Restored? Three Moments of Neoliberal Restructuring in The American Labor Market. *Journal of Economic Geography*, 2(2), 179-220.

### **Monday 2/12: Causes and Consequences of Labor Market Restructuring -**

Vallas, S. P., & Beck, J. P. (1996). The Transformation of Work Revisited: The Limits Of Flexibility in American Manufacturing. *Social Problems*, 339-361.

Christopherson, S., & Lillie, N. (2005). Neither Global nor Standard: Corporate Strategies in the New Era of Labor Standards. *Environment and Planning*, 37, 1919-1938.

McDowell, L., Batnitzky, A., & Dyer, S. (2008). Internationalization and the Spaces of Temporary Labour: The Global Assembly of a Local Workforce. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*,46 (4), 750- 770.

### **Wednesday 2/14: Causes and Consequences of Economic Restructuring (Asynchronous Class Online Module)**

Kalleberg, A. L. (2011). *Good jobs, bad jobs: The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. Russell Sage Foundation. Chapters 2 & 3.

\*Peck, J. (1996). *Work-place: The social regulation of labor markets*. Gulliford Press. Chapters 6 & 7

**Visser, M.A.** (2018). Restructuring Opportunity: Employment Change and Job Quality in the US during

the Great Recession. *Socio-Economic Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwy002>

### **Monday 2/19: No Class- University Holiday**

### **Wednesday 2/21: The Causes and Consequences of Economic Restructuring**



## **ASSIGNMENT: Two Families Assignment Distributed**

### **No Assigned Readings**

## **Monday 2/26 - Emerging New Technologies and the Labor Market**

### **ASSIGNMENT: Two American Families Assignment Due**

Vallas, Steven, and Juliet B. Schor. "What do platforms do? Understanding the gig economy." *Annual Review of Sociology* 46 (2020): 273-294.

Raisch, Sebastian, and Sebastian Krakowski. "Artificial intelligence and management: The automation–augmentation paradox." *Academy of management review* 46.1 (2021): 192-210.

Dixon, Jay, Bryan Hong, and Lynn Wu. "The robot revolution: Managerial and employment consequences for firms." *Management Science* 67.9 (2021): 5586-5605.

Gallego, Aina, and Thomas Kurer. "Automation, digitalization, and artificial intelligence in the workplace: implications for political behavior." *Annual Review of Political Science* 25 (2022): 463-484.

## **Wednesday 2/28 - The Informal Economy ( Asynchronous/online)**

### **ASSIGNMENT: INITIAL TERM PAPER OUTLINE DUE**

Faruk T. (2000) "Introduction: Informalization and the Long Term," in Faruk Tabak and Michaeline A. Crichlow, eds., *Informalization: Process and Structure*, pp. 1-14. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

DeFilippis, J., N. Martin, A. Bernhardt, and S. McGrath (2009) "On the Character and Organization of Unregulated Work in the Cities of the United States," *Urban Geography* 30(1): 63-90.

## **Monday 3/4: The Precariat**

Standing, G. (2011). *The precariat: The new dangerous class*. Bloomsbury Press. pp. 1-58

Kalleberg, A. L. (2009). Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition. *American Sociological Review*,74(1), 1-22.

Goldring, L., & Landolt, P. (2011). Caught in the Work–Citizenship Matrix: The Lasting Effects of Precarious Legal Status on Work for Toronto Immigrants. *Globalizations*,8 (3), 325-341.

Thelen, Kathleen. "The American precariat: US capitalism in comparative perspective." *Perspectives on Politics* 17.1 (2019): 5-27.

### **Wednesday 3/6: Term Paper Working Day- No Lecture**

### **Monday 3/11: Options for Labor in the New Economy**

Visser, M.A. (2016). A Floor to Exploitation? Social Economy Organizations at the Edge of a Restructuring Economy. *Work Employment and Society* DOI:0.1177/0950017016638020

Fine, J., & Gordon, J. (2010). Strengthening Labor Standards Enforcement Through Partnerships with Workers' Organizations. *Politics & Society*, 38 (4), 552-585.

Cordero-Guzmán, H. R., Izvănariu, P. A., & Narro, V. (2013). The Development of Sectoral Worker Center Networks. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 647(1), 102- 123.

Kochan, T. A., Fine, J. R., Bronfenbrenner, K., Naidu, S., Barnes, J., Diaz-Linhart, Y., Kallas, J., Kim, J., Minster, A., Tong, D., Townsend, P., & Twiss, D. (2023). An Overview of US Workers' Current Organizing Efforts and Collective Actions. *Work and Occupations*, 50(3), 335-350.

### **Wednesday 3/13: Options for Policy in the New Economy**

Bernhardt, A. (2012). The Role of Labor Market Regulation in Rebuilding Economic Opportunity in the United States. *Work and Occupations*, 39(4), 354-375.

Kochan, T. A. (2013). The American Jobs Crisis and its Implication for the Future of Employment Policy: A Call for a New Jobs Compact. *Ind. & Lab. Rel. Rev.*, 66, 291-311.

Aghion, Philippe, Céline Antonin, and Simon Bunel. "Artificial intelligence, growth and employment: The role of policy." *Economie et Statistique/Economics and Statistics* 510-511-512 (2019): 150-164.

Economic Policy Institute. 2023. [A State Agenda for America's Workers: 18 Ways to Promote Good Jobs in the States | Economic Policy Institute \(epi.org\)](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

### **Monday 3/18: Final Papers Due on Canvas and in Hard Copy by 11:59 PM**