Course Outline

Instructor: Dr. Alan Hall

Office Hours: Monday 9:00-11:00 Tuesday 1:30-2:30 or by appointment

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e-mail: hall4@uwindsor.ca

Required Textbooks:
Courseware pack is available for sale at the Document Imaging Centre, CHT Basement.

Course Description:

We begin with an overview of the historical development of occupations, occupational structures, and the labour market in Canada, identifying some key trends in the rise and decline of major occupational groups and major changes in the nature of the employment relationship. We consider different theoretical perspectives on these trends, paying particular attention to the contrasting claims of improvements vs. declines in the quality of employment and work. We also seek to understand from a sociological perspective how and why labour markets operate and why they are changing. This includes an examination of the causes of unemployment and the growth of part-time and temporary employment. We place considerable emphasis on understanding the significance of class, gender and race in shaping employment opportunities, experiences and attainment. We also consider the role of the state and labour unions and associations in the development of labour markets and the experience of labour markets by workers. We also look at changes in specific occupations with an emphasis on professions and other service occupations.

Instructional Format:

Each class will begin with a lecture which will include full class discussion, followed by a quickwrite, class discussion of the readings, films, small group discussions/exercises, or guest speakers. There will be a ten minute break half-way through each class.

Content Objectives:
1) To understand the different theoretical perspectives on recent trends in work, employment and labour markets.
2) To identify the sociological factors which influence labour market developments and individual and group access to employment and good jobs.
3) To appreciate ways of comparing and understanding different occupations with reference to the quality and nature of the work, the employment relationship, and their rewards and costs.

Skill Objectives:
1) To understand labour market terms, and be able to interpret data and sociological analyses
pertaining to those terms
2) To be able to carry out library research on labour market issues and occupations
3) To be able to critically assess evidence and argumentation regarding employment and work
4) To be able to present ideas and evidence in a clear and concise fashion in writing
5) To be able to ask and respond to relevant questions pertaining to labour market and work issues.

Student Evaluation:

1) In-class Quick Writes: Best 7 of 9 25%

Quickwrites consist of one or two questions on a reading for a particular week (Quickwrite readings have asterisks beside them*). You have 10 minutes to respond to questions that will be handed out at the class. Each Quickwrite will marked out of five and total scores will then be converted at the end into 25% of the grade. You must do seven of the nine and you will receive best of nine if you do more than seven. Two exam booklets for each student will be used and reused so hang onto those booklets and bring them to subsequent Quickwrites.

2) a) Research Paper: 30%

A. Select a career that interests you (police officer, teacher, professor, social worker, human resources management, union leader, etc.).
B. Conduct library research on the occupation or profession in question with an emphasis on identifying, understanding and explaining changes currently taking place in the nature of the work, the employment relationship, the structure of the occupation or profession, its status or power within society.
C. Papers must be a critical analysis which attempts to explain as well as describe the changes and their implications.
D. Papers should be structured with an introduction and conclusion. The conclusion should also reflect on what you’ve learned from the research and whether this has changed how you view the occupation as prospective career.
E. Research must include at least five academic sources (books, edited articles, refereed journal articles); additional relevant sources include government documents, statistics, research institute publications. Check with instructor if uncertain.
F. Papers must be 10 pages minimum plus references.

b) Proposal (one page) due October 11 5%

Proposal should identify the chosen career, specify at least three questions being asked about the kinds of changes under investigation, and outline your research strategy (identify government documents, journals, books that you are or will be using and specify a preliminary list of at least five articles)

c) Short Summary Presentation of Main Findings: Nov. 15 and 22 5%

One page written summary outlining the main changes and implications for your career should be included with your paper

3) Final Exam 35%
Essay and short answer questions; Three hours during formal exam period.

**Please note:**
* Students are responsible for notifying the instructor in advance if they are unable to write an exam or a quickwrite, participate in a presentation, or complete a paper on the scheduled date. Permission will be granted in cases involving student illness or a death in the family. Documentation must be available on request.  
* Students are responsible for doing the readings and coming to class with comments and questions.

**Determination of Total Marks and Final Grades**

Total marks will be the sum of the grades from the above components of the student evaluation. Final grades will conform to the mark ranges shown below.

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**Course Schedule:**

**Sept. 13:** Introduction: Review of the course requirements and objectives.

* Overview of Key Concepts and Contrasting Sociological Perspectives
* What is work? What are occupations? What are labour markets?
* Capitalism, the Division of Labour and the Creation of Occupations and Labour Markets
* Discussion of Students’ Occupational Experiences, Career Expectations, and an understanding of Occupational Attainment

**Group Class Exercise 1:** What’s my career?

a) What career do I aspire to? Why?
b) What is needed to get the job? to be successful?
c) What do I know about the job?

**Required Readings:**
Sept. 20: The Broad Historical Trends: The Rise and Decline of Industries and Occupations

Understanding the Trends: The Post-Industrial Thesis
The Post Fordist Thesis
Neo-Fordism/Neo Taylorism

**Quickwrite #1** on Handel

Discussion of Quickwrite Questions

**Film:** Work and Jobs in Post Industrial World

**Required Readings:**

Sept. 27: Sociological Theories of Labour Markets, Employment Conditions and Job Opportunities


What determines compensation, other rewards and other employment conditions?

What is the significance of Education? Merit vs. credentialism

**Quickwrite #2** on Jackson

Discussion of Quickwrite Questions

**Group Class Exercise 2: Pricing Labour**

Imagine you want to set up a restaurant. Develop a plan which addresses the following questions: What jobs do you need to create? What will you pay these jobs, how will you recruit, on what basis will you hire, how will you define and organize the jobs, will they be permanent/part-time, and why? In making these decisions, also record how you would make them - that is, what relevant information or considerations would influence how much you would pay, how you would recruit, etc.?

Object of exercise: To realize that employers decide but in a broader labour market context; that profit considerations are also key but profit is earned in different ways (e.g. low wages vs. productive motivated people)
- Have to make up the jobs - what skills? what knowledge? what responsibility?
- what are other similar firms paying?
- do you want to keep workers - limit turnover - how important is quality - how important are good workers for quality

**Required Readings:**

**Oct. 4:** Skill and Knowledge: Assessing the Evidence

Is technological change leading to higher skill requirements for all blue and white collar workers?

How much knowledge is needed for the knowledge jobs?

Are firms consciously organizing the work to enhance skills and knowledge requirements?

Is there a shortage of skills and knowledge in the Canadian labour market? Are workers overqualified?

**Quickwrite #3** on Fleming et al.

**Discussion of Quickwrite Questions:**

**Visiting Speaker:** Hiring Decisions: Assessing Skills and Knowledge

What are human resources looking for? how important is education?

**Required Readings:**
Peter Fleming, Bill Harley and Graham Sewell A little knowledge is a dangerous thing: getting below the surface of the growth of ‘knowledge work’ in Australia. *Work, Employment and Society*, 18(4), 2004, 725-747.*

**Oct. 11:** Employee Empowerment: Assessing the Evidence

Are workers across industries and occupations gaining more control and autonomy?

Are firms consciously organizing jobs to enhance worker control and autonomy? If so, how?

Why teams?
Quickwrite # 4 on Yates et al.

Discussion of Quickwrite questions

Guest Speaker: The Union Perspective on Teams

Required Readings:

Oct 18: Employment Creation, Unemployment and Underemployment

How well has the Canadian economy performed in terms of employment creation and unemployment?
What kinds of jobs have been created? full-time, part-time and temporary employment?
Why the increase in part-time and temporary jobs? What are the effects?
What are the causes of unemployment? What are their effects? What can be done?

Quickwrite # 5 on Dex et. al.

Discussion of Quickwrite Questions

Film: Unemployment

Required Reading:

Recommended:
Garnett Picot and Andrew Heisz The performance of the 1990s: Canadian labour market. Canadian Public Policy, 26, Supplement 1, S7-S25, 2000.
Oct. 25: Access to Jobs and Occupational Segregation: Youth, Class and Race

What is happening to youth employment? Youth unemployment?
How is class related to employment and occupational attainment/mobility?
How is race related to employment and occupational attainment/mobility?

Quickwrite #6 on Strathdee

Discussion of Quickwrite Questions

Class Exercise #3: School to Work Transitions - The Significance of Social Networks in Student’s Experience.

Required Readings:
Rob Strathdee Changes in social capital and school to work transitions. Work, Employment and Society, 15(2), 311-326.*
Boris Palameta Low income among immigrants and visible minorities. Perspectives in Labour and Income April, 2004, 12-17.
Recommended:

Nov 1: Gender Segregation

Are men and women still segregated into different occupations?
What are the causes of segregation? different theories?
Is segregation changing? Why or why not?
What is wage gap and is this changing?

Quickwrite #7 on Skuratowicz and Hunter

Discussion of Quickwrite Questions

Class Debate: Resolved that job Discrimination against women is no longer a serious problem.

(Divide class into those who are for or against this position - form small debating groups then groups present their positions)

Required Readings:

Nov. 8: The role of unions and the state: The case of employment equity

What are the different ways that the state influences labour markets?
What are the different ways that unions influence labour markets?
What is employment vs. pay equity legislation? What is human rights legislation?
What is the impact of this legislation?  
What more is needed to address employment equity?

**Visiting Speakers:**
Panel Discussion Questions: Are we achieving employment equity for women in the academy? Why or why not? What is the role of employment equity programs? Are they working well? Why or why not? Other things the state can do? The role of faculty associations/unions?

**Required Readings:**

Nov. 15: Presentations and Class Discussion of Student Papers

Nov. 22: Presentations and Class Discussion of Student Papers

Nov. 29: Professions: Professionalization, Professional Socialization and Culture: Consent, Resistance and Learning to Work

What does it mean to be a profession?a professional?  
How are professionals professionalized? Socialized?  
How do occupations become professions? Professionalization?  
What changes are happening to professions in the 21st century?

Guest Speaker: Becoming and Being a Lawyer

**Required Readings:**

Dec. 6 Review for Exam
try to draw in class, gender and race in all discussions
try to draw in international comparisons
role of unions/ government

occupational structure; changes in the distribution of occupations within and across industries
reskilling/deskilling debate

labour markets, unemployment, contingent employment
occupational segmentation/ segregation
youth labour market - mcjobs, entry level positions
occupational aspirations, attainment and segregation

What are good jobs and bad jobs and what makes them good or bad? How/why do they become good vs. bad?

How do we assess good vs. bad?

Job satisfaction, stress
Health and Safety
Job Control (over own work)
Power and Authority (over others; over organization)

Job security
Income and Benefits
Status/Class

What makes some jobs/occupations good and others bad? why do Doctors get paid more than nurses? why are some factory workers paid better than others? better health and safety?

- the neo-classical view - labour as a commodity - the price is function of the demand

Exercise
Who gets access to good and bad jobs? what determines or shapes access?

** someone from law school and/or nursing - socialization??

Availability - labour markets
Meritocracy/Credentialism

(Hiring and promotion)

internal labour markets - movement, promotions, career ladders

Sept.
Readings:

Sept. 20:
Predictions regarding labour market? Regarding nature of work and class/power relations.

Movie

Class Exercise

Required Readings:


- Access to Jobs/Careers
The Post-Industrial vs. the Degradation/Proletarianization

The Post-Fordist Debate

Globalization

Neoliberalism

Key Issues/Key Predictions:

The Rise and Fall of Different Occupations

Worker Skill and Knowledge
Worker Empowerment
Stability of Employment
Wages and Benefits
Worker Satisfaction

An Historical Overview of the Growth and Decline in Occupations

Main Issues: The decline of agriculture, the rise and decline of blue-collar/manufacturing jobs, the growth of white-collar management/office and service sector occupations and professionals, the rise and decline of public sector jobs, the blurring of the blue collar/white collar distinction? How do we explain these changes? What are the implications for workers and society?

Sept. 27:
Required Readings:

Ross Finnie From school to work: the evolution of early labour market outcomes of Canadian post-secondary graduates. Canadian Public Policy, 26 (2), 2000, 198-223

Oct. 4: Skill and Knowledge: Assessing the Evidence
Required Readings:
Peter Fleming, Bill Harley and Graham Sewell A little knowledge is a dangerous thing: getting below the surface of the growth of ‘knowledge work’ in Australia. Work, Employment and Society, 18(4), 2004, 725-747.

Oct. 11: Empowerment: Assessing the Evidence

Required Readings:

Oct. 18: Employment Security: Unemployment and Marginal Employment:

Required Reading:

Oct. 25:

Good Jobs, Bad Jobs?
Who gets which jobs and why?
The role of education - Human Capital Theory

Required Readings:
Rob Strathdee Changes in social capital and school to work transitions. Work, Employment and Society, 15(2), 311-326.
Boris Palameta Low income among immigrants and visible minorities. Perspectives in Labour and Income April, 2004, 12-17.
Recommended:
youth?

Exercise: class discussion/film  Employment equity - what this is about, how it works

Krahn and Lowe chapter 3

Nov 1: Gender Segregation

Required Readings:


Nov. 8:

Required Readings
J. Helen Beck, Jeffrey Reitz, and Nan Weiner Addressing systemic racial discrimination in employment: the health canada case and legislative change. Canadian Public Policy, 28 (3), 373-394.

Major Issues and Concepts: the subjective experience of work, job satisfaction and worker motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, work autonomy or control, participative management and workplace democratization

Discussion: Team work

Nov. 15: Professions: Occupational Socialization and Culture: Consent, Resistance and Learning to Work

Mining and Manufacturing
Clerical and Sales
chapter 13 and p. 238
Service - Police, Hotels
Chapter 10
Professions and Professionalization
chapter 11
: Management
chapter 12

Occupational Attainment, Careers and Mobility within Organizations
Major Issues and Concepts: Hiring and promotional processes, socialization for work, career paths and structures, organizational barriers.
Main Issues: labour market segmentation, polarization into good and bad jobs, increasing female participation and segregation, changes in unemployment, rise and decline of job security and permanent employment relationship, increasing self-employment, increased mobility, increased casualization (part-time, home-based, and temporary employment)? How do we explain these changes? What are the implications for workers and society?
Duffy, pp. 16-32, 53-69, 166-184
Rothman, pp. 20-26

The Role of Unions and the State
Labour Law
Employment Equity
Employment Standards
chapter 6, chapter 16

Occupational Culture

January 22 - Quickwrite and Class Discussion: What are the costs associated with part-time
labour?

**January 27, 29:** Unemployment and Contingent Employment

Main Issues: the rise and decline of unemployment, long term trends in structural unemployment, government policies on employment, the age of the unemployed, the impact and effect of unemployment on individuals, families and communities.

Reading for this week:
Duffy, pp.35-51,190-213
Rothman, pp. 176-191

Note: January 29: Group Project (30 minutes)

**January 29: Quickwrite and Class Discussion:** How have recent government policies influenced unemployment patterns?

**February 3, 5:** Gender and Racial Segregation

Major Issues: Changes in female participation, trends in segregation by gender and race, gender stratification within occupations, gender wage gaps, glass ceiling, employment and pay equity; how do we explain gender and racial segregation and wage differences?

Reading for this week:
Duffy, pp.144-162.
Rothman, pp.209-221.

**February 5: Quickwrite and Class Discussion:** Is gender segregation disappearing? Why or why not?

If time allows, time for group project on February 5.

**February 10, 12:**
Reading for this week:

**Group Proposal Due**

**February 12 - Quickwrite and Class Discussion:** What organizational factors block people from achieving their career aspirations and what can be done to overcome them?

**February 17:** Review for Mid-term Exam
February 19: Mid-term Exam

February 23-27: Reading Week - No classes

March 2, 4:

Reading for this week:
Duffy, pp.24-27.
Rothman, pp.27-42, 154-176

March 4: Quickwrite and Class Discussion: Which factors are most important to job satisfaction and why?

March 9, 11: Occupational Subculture and Prestige

Major Issues and Concepts: Occupational Roles, Occupational/Work Subcultures, Occupational Prestige, Occupational Hierarchy and Power, Occupational Autonomy and Control. How is worker/employer control tied to culture and prestige?

Reading for this week:
Rothman, pp.44-60, 192-208.

March 11: Quickwrite and Class Discussion: How are workers controlled through organizational and occupational subcultures?

March 16, 18: Blue Collar Occupations

Major Issues: What are the critical changes in working and employment conditions in these occupations; is there segmentation of these occupations into good and bad jobs, and who is working in these different segments? How much autonomy, skill, and control is exercised by people in these jobs? What’s happening to the credential and other entry requirements? Are the occupations being professionalized/deprofessionalized? Are the occupations unsafe/unhealthy and is this changing? What role does prestige play? How are the interests of these occupations represented or organized and what’s happening to their organizations? Gender and Ethnic concentration and segregation?

Reading for this week:
Rothman, pp. 113-132.

Student Presentations

March 23, 25: White Collar Occupations: Management, Clerical and Service

Major Issues: What are the critical changes in working and employment conditions in these occupations; Is there segmentation of these occupations into good and bad jobs, and who is working in these different segments? How much autonomy, skill, and control is exercised by people in these
jobs? What’s happening to the credential and other entry requirements? Are the occupations being professionalized/deprofessionalized? Are the occupations unsafe/unhealthy and is this changing? What role does prestige play? How are the interests of these occupations represented or organized and what’s happening to their organizations? Gender and ethnic concentration and segregation?

Reading for this week:
Rothman, pp.84-112, 134-152
Duffy, pp. 76-115

Class Discussion: The Cases of Passenger Agents and Teleworkers

Student Presentations

March 30, April 1: The Professions

Major Issues: What are the critical changes in working and employment conditions in these occupations; is there segmentation of these occupations into good and bad jobs, and who is working in these different segments? How much autonomy, skill, and control is exercised by people in these jobs? What’s happening to the credential and other entry requirements; Are the occupations being deprofessionalized? Are the occupations unsafe/unhealthy and is this changing? What role does prestige play? How are the interests of these occupations represented or organized and what’s happening to their organizations? Gender and ethnic concentration and segregation?

Reading for this and next class:
Rothman, pp.64-82
Duffy, pp.117-139.

Discussion: The Case of Health Care Professionals

Student Presentations

April 6, 8: Discussion of Solutions to Current Employment and Labour Market Conditions; Review for Exam.

Reading for this week:
Duffy, pp.240-243

Note: This schedule and readings may be changed or modified if circumstances dictate. Notice of changes will be given in class.

Main Issues:
How do we explain the major developments in Labour Markets and growth and decline of different groups of occupations? Improvements and declines in wages and working conditions? Inequalities in wages and working conditions?
