

**Sociology of Work**  
SOCL 307 Fall 2012

Dr. Tricia McTague  
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**Course Description:**

Work occupies our best waking hours and the nature of our work is the most significant determinant of the quality of our daily lives. Using a sociological perspective, we will critically examine the structure of work, major economic changes, and concerns of workers such as earnings, promotions, unemployment and the balance between work and family. In an effort to understand many of the inequalities related to work, we will challenge both the structure of our society as well as many of our commonly held unquestioned beliefs.

**Course Objectives**

Knowledge

- To acquire a basic understanding of a sociological perspective of work—paid, unpaid, and marginal.
- To examine the influences of gender, race/ethnicity, social class, age, citizenship, and sexuality in the structuring of opportunities to work and the rewards of work.
- To understand the background in classical theories of work as well as the current trends in the organization of work.
- To see connections between past and present, local and global.

Skills

- To develop students' abilities to engage in critical thinking concerning both theoretical and empirical research, to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses, and to communicate that knowledge in both oral and written forms.
- To gain knowledge about the process of sociological research through engaging in it and to put that research to use by implementing action toward justice.
- To cultivate "habits of mind" (Dewey 1929) or ways of being sensitive to the world that enable discovery and sharpen citizenship skills.
- To take responsibility for your own learning by formulating your own questions, identifying problems, and devising solutions.
- To develop critical thinking skills through mindful skepticism of data sources, community engagement, and by reflecting on service experiences.
- To facilitate cultural competency through direct interaction with people who are different from you in some way.
- To encourage ethical leadership, by gathering and reflecting on relevant evidence and experience in order to articulate your own informed set of values and morals.

**Academic Service-Learning Integrated Course:** This is an integrated service-learning course. It incorporates a community service experience with classroom instruction and provides a community-based learning experience. **This course requires a minimum of 15 hours of unpaid service to a not-for profit community organization.** The community service placement will relate to the course learning objectives as outlined in this syllabus. Additionally, this course provides students with real world experience that can be included on resumes, offers the ability to test career choices, to apply methods and concepts learned in class, and the opportunity to have a positive impact in our community.

**Learning Beyond the Classroom Course:** The LBC general education requirement is intended to provide experiences, which extend beyond the traditional classroom space. The spirit of LBC is to provide students with exposure to university

and community programs, people, departments, experiences, and events, which reinforce both course objectives and LBC outcomes. Each course approved for LBC credit, regardless of category, must meet stated outcomes for the designated LBC category, and must demonstrate substantial beyond the classroom activity. The Gen Ed LBC subcommittee suggests a minimum of 15 contact hours or the equivalent to one credit hour, of beyond the classroom experiential activity. By the end of the course, students who complete experiences in the Community Service, Citizenship, and Leadership area will...

- Participate in the development, maintenance, and/or change of community standards and norms.
- Participate in service/volunteer activities.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Develop skills and habits that aid in future life and career pursuits.
- Develop and practice empathy for others.
- Acquire skills for working cooperatively with others.

### **Willingness to Try On New Lenses:**

This sociology course will require you to take on a range of perspectives in thinking about jobs and work. Many of these ways of thinking may be new to you. They may even clash with some ideas that you hold and have internalized. It is a requirement of this course that you “try on new lenses.” If you are not receiving any tools for looking at the world differently in your college career, then you are not receiving a quality education. Whether or not you choose to adopt a sociological perspective at the end of the semester (or when you walk out of the classroom) is entirely up to you. I hope I can convince you of the utility of such a perspective.

**My responsibilities:** As your teacher, my responsibility is to be prepared for class, return your grading within a reasonable timeframe, and to be available for questions, concerns, and conversations related to this course. Your most important responsibility is to ask questions—this can’t be emphasized enough. I believe each of you will have something to contribute to the course. I will do some lecturing, but much of the learning will take place in the form of class discussion. Active participation on your part will make the class much more interesting for all of us.

### **Your responsibilities:**

- Show up everyday
- Be genuinely engaged and talk in class
- Be respectful to me, your classmates, members in society, and yourself
- Take on the challenge of learning—do not be a passive student
- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Think like a sociologist
- Be prepared for class—read, think, and write about each reading
- See college as an opportunity to learn a lot of fascinating things you will take with you for life – not just a place you have to go to get a degree
- Read, write, research, think, and work like a sociologist.

**Active learning:** Being an active learner includes attending every class ready to learn, equipped with your notes and other materials, as well as with an open mind and a willingness to discuss subject matter. Active learners also come prepared with questions. You are expected to read all the assigned readings before class and be ready to contribute to the conversation. If you are having trouble with any of the material, assignments, etc. do not hesitate to ask me for help. Sooner is better than later. The quality and depth of our learning community is contingent upon the amount of effort all members put forth. Class participation is a large part of learning sociology (and your grade). Participation by EVERYONE is essential to creating a successful and fruitful learning community. This is not the type of class where you can sit in the back and take it all in. You MUST be engaged actively. Your knowledge and your grade depend on this.

**Classroom Environment:** In order for learning to occur, we must exist in an environment where all of us feel safe and respected. Some of the material that we will be discussing may be difficult to talk about. Some of the issues may be personally sensitive and may make you feel uncomfortable. Some emotional engagement or discomfort is to be

expected, even encouraged, when thinking and talking sociologically about the social world. Such things challenge us – they make us take responsibility for our thoughts, beliefs, and actions. However, at no time should the classroom become a hostile environment. Personal attacks, disrespectful comments, or harassment of any kind (racial, sexual, etc.) will not be tolerated.

**Classroom Management:** Students are expected to abide by the **Student Conduct Code** and assist in creating an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the rights of all members of the University Community. Incivility and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in a request to leave class and referral to the Office of Student Judicial Services (SJS) for discipline. Examples of inappropriate classroom conduct include repeatedly arriving late to class, using a mobile /cellular phone while in the class session, or talking while others are speaking. You may access the **Code** and other helpful resources online at: [www.emich.edu/sjs](http://www.emich.edu/sjs).

#### **Required Text:**

1. Wharton, Amy (editor). 2006. *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*. **Third edition**. New York: McGraw Hill.  
\* You must have the **third edition** of this text. Only the **third edition** will be acceptable for this class.
2. Various articles available on the EMU Online class website: **Students are responsible for downloading and printing readings two days prior to the day we are scheduled to discuss them.**

**EMU Online Required Readings:** Various articles available at the EMU Online class website. **You are responsible for accessing readings two days prior to the day we are scheduled to discuss them.** If you are unfamiliar with EMU Online, you can acquaint yourself with this program through various online tutorials found there. Technical support for EMU-Online/eCompanion users is available 24/7 by phone, email or chat. Please contact 888.538.0515 or [helpdesk@emuonline.edu](mailto:helpdesk@emuonline.edu). The chat feature can be accessed by clicking the 'Chat with a Help Desk consultant' on your EMU-Online user page (available after logging into EMU-Online).

#### **Films**

*1924-On the Line* (1998) 56 mins  
*Mardi Gras: Made in China* (2005) 72 mins  
*Where Do You Stand?: Stories From an American Mill* (2004) 60 mins  
*Modern Times* (1936) 82 mins

#### **Course Requirements:**

1. *Two Exams: 30% of your final grade:* There will be two exams each worth 15% of your final grade. Make-up exams will not be allowed without proper university-approved documentation and timely notice.
2. *Qualitative Research and Service Learning Project: 50% of your total grade:* You will be responsible for completing an ethnographic project that **will require 15 hours of fieldwork/service with a community partner**. Handouts with specific instructions and grading rubrics will be provided further into the semester. There will be two service-learning related assignments.
  - Reflective Journal: Students are required to submit at least 7 reflective journal entries throughout the semester. Your first entry will be a *letter to myself*: write a letter to yourself describing your expectations, assumptions, and learning goals. The intermediate entries will be based on your response to the prompts I've provided (see handout). For the last entry, please review your initial "letter to myself" and subsequent reflective journal entries. Analyze your learning process, intellectual growth, shifts in standpoint, and future actions.
  - All of a Sudden essay: Students will demonstrate knowledge, comprehension, application, and evaluation of at least two course concepts. These concepts will be used as tools to help you make sense of an observation or experience at your service-learning field site.

3. **Participation and Preparation Assessment: 20% of your total grade:** Attendance and active participation in class are absolute requirements. On unannounced days you will be required to complete one of three types of assignments designed to measure student participation and preparedness for class: (1) quizzes, (2) in-class group work, reflections, or worksheets (3) out-of-class homework. Given the varied structure of this class, even shy students will have plenty of opportunities to contribute to this learning community.

If you are absent or late you will not be permitted to make-up the assignment. No exceptions. If you provide documentation for an excused absence, I will drop the grade. At the end of the semester, I will drop your two lowest participation and preparation assessment grades. In other words, you are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty.

**Grading policy:** In order to give students appropriate credit for their work, grades will be reported with pluses and minuses at the end of the semester. Your overall numerical score in the class will be converted to a letter grade on the basis of the following chart.

93 – 100 = A	90 – 92 = A-	87 – 89 = B+
83 – 86 = B	80 – 82 = B-	77 – 79 = C+
73 – 76 = C	70 – 72 = C-	67 – 69 = D+
60 – 66 = D		

<u>Grading</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Participation and Preparation Assessment	20
Qualitative Study	50
Two Exams (15% each)	<u>30</u>
	100%

**Attendance policy:** Regular attendance is expected of all students. Simply put, those who do not attend usually do not do well in this course. Many important skills that you will develop and practice in this course require class attendance. You are allowed two *unexcused* absences in case something weird happens in your life. An absence is *excused* when it results from: 1) participation in University-sanctioned activities and programs; 2) personal illness; or 3) family and/or other compelling circumstances. All of these excused absences REQUIRE DOCUMENTATION of some kind. Excessive absence, lateness, or leaving early will result in point deduction.

**Incomplete Work and Late Assignments:** Participation and preparation assessments will NOT be accepted late. Late writing assignments will be penalized a letter grade (10 points) each day past the due date. Assignments are considered late if they are turned in after the beginning of class. For example, if class begins at 3:30pm and you walk into class at 4:30pm to turn in your paper, then it is considered late and your grade drops 10 points. If the assignment is due on Thursday at the beginning of class, and you turn in a paper on Tuesday at the beginning of class, then you will be penalized 50 points. Saturday and Sunday incur the same penalties as weekdays. I do not accept any assignments one week after the due date.

Do not plan travel or other engagements on exam days. Make-up exams are not allowed unless you provide documentation of an excused absence. If you miss an exam without documentation of an excused absence, you will receive a zero. If you intend to submit an assignment via email, please see the email policy below.

**Email policy:** You may contact me via email at [tmctague@emich.edu](mailto:tmctague@emich.edu). Through email, I will answer administrative questions (e.g. May I schedule an appointment on Tuesday to discuss the social construction of knowledge?), but not substantive questions (e.g. “What is the social construction of knowledge?”). Do not send any assignments to me over email unless we have talked about it and I have explicitly given my permission to do so. Do not assume that I have received any communication from you unless you receive a return confirmation email from me. I do not check email on Saturday or Sunday. Please allow 48 hours for a reply. In all email communications, be sure to include a greeting (e.g. Dear Dr. McTague), your name, and course section information.

**Cell phone policy:** As a member of the learning community, each student has a responsibility to other students who are members of the community. When cell phones or pagers ring and students respond in class or leave class to respond, it disrupts the class. Therefore, the use by students of cell phones, pagers, PDAs, or similar communication devices during scheduled classes is prohibited. All such devices must be turned off or put in a silent (vibrate) mode and ordinarily should not be taken out during class. Given the fact that these same communication devices are an integral part of the University's emergency notification system, an exception to this policy would occur when numerous devices activate simultaneously. When this occurs, students may consult their devices to determine if a university emergency exists. If that is not the case, the devices should be immediately returned to silent mode and put away.

**Religious Holidays University Policy:** Eastern Michigan University recognizes the rights of students to observe religious holidays without penalty to the student. Students will provide advance notice to their instructors in order to make up work, including examinations that they miss as a result of their absence from class due to observance of religious holidays. If satisfactory arrangements cannot be made with the appropriate instructor(s), students may appeal to the head(s) of the department(s) in which the course(s) is/are offered.

There are many resources on line regarding the observance of religious holidays; here is one site with an extensive listing of holiday dates: <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/2010.htm>.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating, falsification, and/or plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this course. Penalties for an act of academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade for a particular assignment to receiving a failing grade for the entire course. In addition, you may be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Services for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal. The Student Conduct Code contains detailed definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty but if you are not sure about whether something you are doing would be considered academic dishonesty, consult with the course instructor. You may access the Code and other helpful resources online at [www.emich.edu/sjs](http://www.emich.edu/sjs).

**Course Accessibility and Disability Statement:** It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities that may impact learning in this class. If anyone believes s/he may have trouble participating or effectively demonstrating learning in this course, please meet with me (with or without a Disability Resource Center (DRC) accommodation letter) to discuss reasonable options or adjustments. During our discussion, I may suggest the possibility/necessity of your contacting the DRC (240 Student Center; 734-487-2470; [drc@emich.edu](mailto:drc@emich.edu)) to talk about academic accommodations. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about such issues, but it is always best if we can talk at least one week prior to the need for any modifications.

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a Federal law designated to protect the privacy of a student's education records and academic work. The law applies to all schools and universities which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education and is applicable to students at EMU. All files, records, and academic work completed within this course are considered educational records and are protected under FERPA. It is your right as a student in this course to expect that any materials you submit in this course, as well as your name and other identifying information, will not be viewable by guests or other individuals permitted access to the course. The exception will be only when you have given explicit, written, signed consent. Verbal consent or email is insufficient.

### **EMU Writing Support**

*The University Writing Center* (115 Halle Library) offers one-to-one writing consulting for both undergraduate and graduate students. Students can make appointments or drop in between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays. Students should bring a draft of what they're working on and their assignment. The UWC opens for the Fall 2011 semester on Wednesday, Sept. 7 and will close on Monday, Dec. 12, 2011.

The UWC also offers small group workshops on various topics related to writing (e.g., Reading in College: Tips and Strategies; Incorporating Evidence; Revising Your Writing). Workshops are offered at various times Monday through Friday in the UWC. To register for a workshop, click the "Register" link from the UWC page at <http://www.emich.edu/english/writing-center>.

The UWC also has several satellite sites across campus—in Sill Hall for COT students; in Marshall for CHHS students; in Pray-Harrod for CAS students; in Porter for CHHS and COE students; and in Owen for COB students. The locations of these sites and their hours will be posted on the UWC web site <http://www.emich.edu/english/writing-center>.

*The Academic Projects Center* (116 Halle Library) offers one-to-one consulting for students on writing, research, or technology-related issues. No appointment is required – students can just drop in. The APC is open 11-5 Monday-Thursday. Additional information about the APC can be found at <http://www.emich.edu/apc>. Students visiting the Academic Projects Center should also bring with them a draft of what they're working on and their assignment sheet.

*International Student Resource Center* (200 Alexander Building)

<http://www.emich.edu/worldlanguages/esl/isrc.htm> is a service of the World Languages Department for EMU students who need help with their non-native English language for academic assignments. Help is provided for reading and comprehension, listening and note-taking, improvement of grammatical accuracy, compositions, study skills, and conversation. Note, this is not the Office of International Students.

### **F and J International Students**

The Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) requires F and J students to report the following to the *Office of International Students*, 229 King Hall, within ten (10) days of the event:

- Changes in your name, local address, major field of study, or source of funding.
- Changes in your degree-completion date.
- Changes in your degree-level (ex. Bachelors to Masters).
- Intent to transfer to another school.

Prior permission from OIS is needed for the following:

- Dropping ALL courses as well as carrying or dropping BELOW minimum credit hours.
- Employment on or off-campus.
- Registering for more than one ONLINE course per term (F-visa only).
- Endorsing I-20 or DS-2019 for re-entry into the USA.

Failure to report may result in the termination of your SEVIS record and even arrest and deportation. If you have questions, contact the *OIS* at 734.487.3116, not your professor.

**Weather:** If class session or laboratory is canceled due to bad weather or instructor absence, students are still responsible for all the readings and assignments listed on the syllabus.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>READING</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
What is sociology?	W 08/22			Who am I?
	M 08/27	Schwalbe, Chs 1-2 Online	Workplace Study Proposal Due	
History of Work	W 08/29	WIA#1 – Jacobs		
	M 09/03	Labor Day - No Class		
	W 09/05	WIA#2 - Crittenden		
Classical Theories on Work	M 09/10	WIA#4 – Marx	Fieldnotes Due	
	W 09/12	WIA#5 – Weber		
The Division of Labor	M 09/17	WIA#6 – Taylor WIA #7 - Braverman		Film: <i>1924-On the Line</i>
Emotional Labor & Interactive Service Work	W 09/19	WIA#8 - Hochschild	Fieldnotes Due	
	M 09/24	WIA#27 - Leidner		
*****	W 09/26	Exam I		
Occupational Gender Segregation	M 10/01	WIA #17 - Cotter et.al.	Fieldnotes Due	
	W 10/03	WIA#18 - Henson and Rogers		
Occupational Racial Segregation	M 10/08	Royster, Chs 4-5 Online		Midterm Course Evaluations
	W 10/10		Fieldnotes Due	Film: <i>Where Do You Stand?</i>
Immigration, Globalization, and Workplace Inequality	M 10/15	WIA#21 – Wells		
	W 10/17	WIA#22 - Bonancich & Appelbaum		
	M 10/22	WIA#23 - Hondagneu- Sotelo	Interview 1 Notes Due	
	W 10/24	WIA #37 - Hochschild		
*****	M 10/29	Exam II		
Occupational Injury	W 10/31	WIA#26 - Schlosser		
Professional and Managerial Work	M 11/05	WIA#30 – Pierce	Interview 2 Notes Due	
	W 11/07	WIA#31 - Jackall		
	M 11/12	WIA #32 - Collins		
Welfare and Work	W 11/14	WIA #36 - Hays	Analytic Memo Draft Due	
Balancing Work and Family	M 11/19	Schor (Parts 1 & 2) Online		
	W 11/21	No Class		
	M 11/26	WIA #41 – Garey	Final Analytic Memo Due	Present Workplace Study Findings
	W 11/28	WIA#40 – Hochschild		Present Workplace Study Findings
	M 12/03	WIA#42 - Jacobs et. al		
	W 12/05	No Reading		Course Evaluations
*****	M 12/17	Final Exam 1:00-4:00		