

SOCIOLOGY 2V06

Winter, 2015
TU, 1:30-2:20; TH: 12:30-1:20
BSB/119

Instructor: Prof. Budros
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Given the state of the world economy, it is never too early for students to think about their future careers. This course will help students to ponder this issue through reference to the sociology of occupations and professions. During Term I, we will cover two topics. First is the control of work, which will be addressed through examination of two occupations: One of them—fast food work—is an occupation that all of you know well and that many of you have held; the other one—life insurance agent—is an occupation that some of you may hold in the future. The key question to be considered is: How are these two types of employees controlled, and why? Second is gender. Here we ask: What kinds of experiences and problems do women and men have while on the job? Is it easier for men or women to move up the job ladder? If women or men have an advantage, then why?

During Term II, we will tackle up to three issues. First is inequality more generally, which raises such questions as: How do individuals get jobs and what factors allow them to get ahead? To what extent do human capital, social capital, and cultural capital affect individuals' careers? Second is occupational and professional ethics. Here we ask: What moral dilemmas do employees face in pursuing their careers? And what are the personal and professional consequences of doing the right or wrong thing? Third is downsizing, about which we pose three questions: Why do employers discharge competent employees? How are downsizings executed? And what are the personal and organizational effects of these events? The general aim is to use cutting-edge sociological research on occupations and professions to help you understand what your future careers will be like.

TEXTS

*Granovetter, Mark. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78. This article can be downloaded through Mills Library. Select "journal title," type "*American Journal of Sociology*," etc. If you do not know how to download articles, please consult a reference librarian.

*Jackall, Robert. 1988. Moral Mazes.

*Kanter, Rosabeth. 1977. Men and Women of the Corporation.

*Leidner, Robin. 1993. Fast Food, Fast Talk.

*McKinley, William, Carol Sanchez, and Allen Schick. 1995. "Organizational Downsizing." *Academy of Management Executive* 9. Download through Mills Library.

*Rivera, Lauren. 2012. "Hiring as Cultural Matching." *American Sociological Review* 77 (Dec.): 999-1022. This article can be downloaded through Mills Library.

*Other readings are in Custom Courseware.

REQUIREMENTS

Examinations. All of the exams will be essay exams. The first one will be given on October 23 (This date is *tentative*; see Extra credit: Class presentations below) (20% of the final mark). The second exam on January 27 will cover material introduced after the first exam (30% of the final mark). The third exam on March 10 will cover material presented after the second exam (30% of the final mark). I will discuss the final exam (20% of the final mark) during Term II. We will discuss all of the exams in greater detail at the appropriate time. Test dates are firm (unless I announce a change).

Students with special needs: Students with special needs must notify the instructor by the second class. This notification must be accompanied by evidence to substantiate the request for special provisions. Special needs students must arrange to take the exams on the same days and times for which these exams are scheduled. Those who fail to do so will take deferred exams.

Deferred exams: Follow McMaster policy in obtaining permission for taking a deferred exam, noting that the second (and third) exam is worth 30% of the total mark. Note that, if students submit an “automatic” absence form for the second (or third) exam—meaning that they have not visited the associate dean and incorrectly have indicated on the form that the exam is worth less than 30% of the overall mark (or have not specified any percentage at all)—they will not be permitted to take the deferred exam. It is your responsibility to know that this is the incorrect procedure and the professor will not intervene to correct the situation. Students are responsible for securing information on this policy and for conforming to it. Please do not contact the professor, asking for assistance in following the policy. Instead, consult the dean’s office. There will be only one deferred exam and the date and time of the exam will be announced in class, usually within a week, after the regularly scheduled mid-term. Come to class to secure the details and clear your schedule so that you can take the exam. Even if university documentation recommends that students send the professor emails to obtain information on the deferred exam, do not do so. The relevant information is included here. Time constraints will prevent me from responding. Contact the professor only if you have key questions that are not addressed above.

Exam content: The exams cover material from lecture only, from the text only, and from both sources. Information (e.g., [re]scheduling) and feedback (e.g., marks) on exams are not available through email. Exams are returned to students in class. Any students who are absent on that day can pick up their exams during my office hours. If your performance on an exam is subpar, please do not contact the professor to ask if an adjustment can be made (e.g., double weighting of a subsequent exam; special assignment). This is not an option.

Marking adjustments: Students wishing to discuss their marks on the midterm have two weeks to do so (Note: If you are absent on the day I return the exams in class, the clock still has started to tick). Generate type-written material summarizing what was expected on a particular question and then explain why you deserve more marks. Present this material to your TA for discussion. If you cannot resolve the issue with the TA, then bring the issue to me (Note: Students have three weeks to discuss their marks with me).

Extra credit: Class presentations. Leidner’s book analyzes McDonald’s workers. Assuming that many students have been fast food employees, I would like to give students the opportunity to share

their experiences, and to compare them to the employees in Leidner's book, by giving group presentations in class. The key will be to perform Leidner-like analysis by linking your experiences to Leidner's concepts and theories. Students unfamiliar with fast food employment can participate by focusing on Leidner's ideas and/or by linking students' experiences to these ideas. Interested students must contact the professor during the initial weeks of the course to make arrangements for the presentations. At that time, each group must submit to the professor the names and student numbers of those in the group (typed, please). At the time each presentation is made, each group must submit to the professor the names and student numbers of group members, along with a summary of each student's contribution to the overall group presentation (typed, please). Participants can add up to five percentage points to their overall grades. I also will provide students with another opportunity to participate in group presentations during Term II (to be discussed in greater detail during Term II). Hence, students who participate in both class presentations can raise their overall marks by an entire letter grade.

NOTES

Reading the syllabus: Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the syllabus. Keep a copy of the syllabus in your possession, and refer to it before asking questions about course issues.

Availability of lecture notes/overheads. Overheads are not available in the library. If you miss a lecture for any reason, please ask a student in the course if you can copy her/his notes. These notes will be far more detailed than the overheads. I do not provide students with lecture notes.

Emailing: Almost always, the questions students ask (usually through email) are answered in this document. Before emailing the professor to ask a question (Monday-Friday), please consult the syllabus to determine whether it answers your question. Let's make an agreement: Due to time constraints, if a student asks the professor a question by email that is answered in the syllabus, the professor will be unable to respond.

Classroom Etiquette.

1. If you need to arrive late to class or to leave early, please sit in an area close to the exit so that students will not be distracted.
2. Please do not read materials (including the text), talk, eat, or sleep during lectures.
3. Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial. Also, text messaging will not be allowed during lectures or tutorials.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically

Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Departmental Policies: Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 5 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 5 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, balloting, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

E-mail forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link.

READINGS

Term I

Control of work:

Week 1 (9/4): No assignments.

Week 2 (9/9-11): Scott, Ch. 2 (Courseware).

Week 3 (9/16-18): Taylor, Braverman (Courseware).

Week 4 (9/23-25): Leidner, Chs. 1-2.

Week 5 (9/30-10/2): Leidner, Chs. 3-4.

Week 6 (10/7-9): Leidner, Chs. 5-7 (exclude pp. 194-211).

Week 7 (10/14-16): Class presentations start on Oct. 14 (**Note:** This date is tentative; see Extra credit: Class presentations above).

Week 8 (10/21-23): Tie-up loose ends; review for exam; exam: 10/23 (**Note:** This exam date is tentative; see Extra credit: Class presentations above).

Gender:

Week 9 (10/28-30): Scott, Ch. 3; Roethlisberger & Dickson (Courseware).

Week 10 (11/4-6): Leidner, Pp. 194-211; Kanter, Chs. 1-2.

Week 11 (11/11-13): Kanter, Chs. 3, 8.

Week 12 (11/18-20): Kanter, Chs. 4, 9, 10.

Week 13 (11/25-27): Wright et al. (Courseware).

Week 14 (12/4): Tie-up loose ends.

Term II

Gender (con't):

Week 1 (1/6-8): Introduction; Kanter, Ch. 8 (continued).

Week 2 (1/13-15): Wright et al. (Courseware); Kay & Hagan (Courseware).

Week 3 (1/20-22): Review for exam; Kanter, chs. 9-10.

Careers and morality:

Week 4 (1/27-29): Exam (January 27); Granovetter (the "getting a job" material);

Week 5 (2/3-5): Fernandez et al. (Courseware).

Week 6 (2/10-12): Jackall, Introduction, Chs. 1-3.

Week 7 (2/24-26): Jackall, Chs. 4-5; Babaracco & Webb.

Week 8 (3/3-5): Jackall, Chs. 6-8. Review for exam.

Week 9 (3/10-12): Exam (March 10); student presentations.

Week 10 (3/17-19): Student presentations.

Week 11 (3/24-26): Student presentations.

Note: Break during February 16-19.

Downsizing:

Week 12 (3/31/4-2): McKinley et al.

Week 13 (4/7): Tie up loose ends.

