

Soc 159: Sociology of Work, Fall 2019

Tues/Thurs 12:10–1:30pm, Shields Library 167

Professor

Prof. Ryan Finnigan
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Office Hours

SS&H 2259
Tues./Thurs 10–11am, or by appointment

Teaching Assistant

Alana Stein
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Office Hours

SS&H 259
Tues. 1:45–3:45pm

Course Description

Most people in US society will spend a substantial fraction of their time working for most of their lives. Work structures many people's time, social lives, and economic well-being. Achieving a sociological understanding of US society thus requires a deep understanding of work. How do social factors like class, gender, and race shape who works, who does what kind of work, and how that work is valued? This course addresses these questions through reading sociological theories and research, case studies of particular groups of workers and kinds of jobs, and analysis of primary data on workers and workplaces.

Learning objectives include developing the following skills: sociological writing, literacy with peer-reviewed social science research, analysis of social scientific data, and familiarity with inequality and diversity in US society.

Required Text: Stephen Sweet and Peter Meiksins. 2017. *Changing Contours of Work: Jobs and Opportunities in the New Economy*, 3rd Edition. New York: Sage Publications.

Evaluation

Weekly Quizzes	15%
Paper Proposal	5%
Data Project 1	10%
Data Project 2	15%
Research Paper Draft	15%
Revised Research Paper	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%

Final Grades

A+	97-100%	B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9	D+	67-69.9	F	Below 60
A	93-96.9	B	83-86.9	C	73-76.9	D	63-66.9		
A-	90-92.9	B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9	D-	60-62.9		

Course Expectations

- **Attendance:** The lecture slides will be available on Canvas but can't cover all the relevant material. Take detailed notes from the lectures! The beginning of lecture includes regular announcements of course information, like assignment guidance and deadlines. Also, please don't listen headphones during lecture. It's weird and distracting, and I might ask you what you're listening to in front of the class.
- **Reading:** Required readings include the required textbook, as well as articles and book chapters posted on Canvas. The syllabus lists the required readings for each week and contains links for some online sources.
- **In-Class Discussion:** Please raise your hand before speaking in lecture, and be respectful of others even (or especially) when you disagree
- **Weekly Quizzes:** Short multiple-choice quizzes on Canvas will cover lectures and the assigned readings each week. The quizzes are available by Friday morning and are due by Monday at 6pm. You will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz once you begin. Late submissions are not allowed, but the lowest quiz score will be dropped to accommodate any problems that may arise (including computer issues).
- **Research Paper:** A major portion of the course work focuses on a cumulative research paper. The research paper will analyze primary data on workers and workplaces to identify how dynamics between workers and employers organize important characteristics of jobs, access to opportunity, and ultimately workers' well-being. The paper includes several components, each focusing on specific skills and providing opportunity for feedback. These components (proposal, data projects, paper drafts) are described in greater depth on the course Canvas page.

- **Re-Grading:** You may request re-evaluation on papers or exams within a week of receiving the grade. Please submit a written description of the reasons you believe should be re-evaluated to your grader. Based on the memo, the TA and/or I may re-grade the assignment or exam. Please be aware that a re-evaluation may also lead to a lower score.
- **Academic Integrity:** You are responsible for your own work. Group discussion of course topics and material is encouraged, but your work for course assignments and exams should be your own. Any instances of plagiarism (including the use of sources without appropriate citation) or other forms of cheating will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. More information is available [here](#). Please consult the [Code of Academic Conduct](#), your TA, or me with any uncertainties.
- **Student Accommodations:** Students with letters of accommodation from the Student Disability Center should contact me at the beginning of the class testing/quiz arrangements.
- **Communication:** Go to office hours and before it's too late! Please begin the subject line for all emails with "Soc 159:" to help me keep track. Email responses may take a couple days, especially on weekends. Feel free to follow up again if you haven't heard back by then. Please check the syllabus and other relevant course documents before emailing with questions that are already answered. In general, any question or concern requiring a reply longer than a couple sentences is best discussed in office hours.

Course Calendar

The course calendar and readings may be revised throughout the quarter.

Week 1 Sept. 26 <i>Reading:</i>	Why Study Work? Course Syllabus and Research Paper Materials
Week 2 Oct. 1 & 3 <i>Reading:</i>	Work and Social Structure Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 1 <i>Paper Proposal due Thursday, Oct. 3</i>
Week 3 Oct. 8 & 10 <i>Reading:</i>	Research Workshop; The “New Economy”? Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 2
Week 4 Oct. 15 & 17 <i>Reading:</i>	Work & Economic Inequality Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 3 <i>Data Project 1 due Thursday, Oct. 17</i>
Week 5 Oct. 22 & 24 <i>Reading:</i>	Research Workshop; Job Security Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 4
Week 6 Oct. 29 & 31 <i>Reading:</i>	Job Security (cont.); Midterm —
Week 7 Nov. 5 & 7 <i>Reading:</i>	Work Intensity & Scheduling Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 5 <i>Data Project 2 due 6pm Wednesday, Nov. 6</i>
Week 8 Nov. 12 & 14 <i>Reading:</i>	Paper Workshop; Gender Inequality at Work Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 6
Week 9 Nov. 19 & 21 <i>Reading:</i>	Gender Inequality (cont.); Racial/Ethnic Inequality at Work Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 7 <i>Research Paper Draft due 6pm Friday, Nov. 22</i>
Week 10 Nov. 26 <i>Reading:</i>	Racial/Ethnic Inequality, continued —
Week 11 Dec. 3 & 5 <i>Reading:</i>	Labor Unions, Activism, and Policy Sweet & Meiksins, Ch 8 <i>Final Research Paper due 6pm Friday, Dec. 6</i>

Final Exam

Tuesday, December 10, 1–3pm