

**The Sociology of Work  
Fall 2009  
University of Montana**

Course Number: 74680 – Soc 306 -1  
Day: Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
Time: 11:10 am – 12:00 pm  
Class Location: GBB 108

Professor: Daisy Rooks  
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Office Location: Social Science 319

Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm  
Wednesdays 9:30 am – 10:30 am  
& by appointment

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**COURSE OVERVIEW**

**Course Description**

This course focuses on work, a basic human activity. The course starts by examining how work is organized, with attention to mechanization, industrialization, standardization and routinization. The course examines the implementation of, and resistance to, these approaches to work organization both in manufacturing and the service sector.

In recent years, globalization, deindustrialization, information technologies and the rise of the service sector have radically transformed the American economy. This course examines how these innovations have shaped the American workplace, as well as the political, economic and social climate in the U.S. The course also explores how these changes have shaped the lived experience of many American workers.

The course also explores individuals' and groups' experiences in the workplace, especially the unique experiences of women, youth and people of color. The course examines how workers form communities at work, and analyses the sometimes inclusive, sometimes exclusive nature of these communities. The course also explores the workplace as a location of conflict and resistance by examining reasons for conflict in the workplace, and the multitude of ways that workers resist at work.

The course ends with a discussion of the changing landscape of work in the U.S. In particular, it examines the causes and consequences of deindustrialization, globalization, labor law and other workplace policies.

## **Course Objectives**

In this course students will examine work, and the workplace, as distinctly social, political and economic phenomena. They will understand how work is organized and how this has changed over time. They will explore the role that employers, workers and the state have played in determining changes in the organization of work over time.

Students will understand how the workplace experiences of women, youth and people of color are different from and similar to that of other groups of workers. Students will also examine how and why some groups of workers' experiences at work have improved over time, while others' have not.

Students will explore the barriers to and possibilities for community and collective action at work. They will examine the role that labor unions and other worker organizations, play and have played, in both creating community and organizing collective resistance in the workplace. Finally, students will analyze a number of different policy proposals for reducing inequality at work, and improving workers' lives.

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## **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

### **Preparation**

*Be prepared for class.* Always read the assigned material before the class so that you can fully participate in class discussions. Bring the week's reading material to class with you so that you can refer to it during lectures and group discussions.

*Take careful lecture notes.* You should obtain lecture notes from another student if you are unable to attend class. Lecture notes and/or powerpoint slides are not provided by the instructor or teaching assistant.

### **Class Participation**

Class sessions will include a mixture of lectures and discussion. Students are required to participate actively during class discussions. When participating in discussions, try your best to explain your views using reasoned arguments, and provide evidence for assertions of fact.

*Respect others' views and listen.* You do not have to agree with your classmates, but you should try your best to give them your full attention and consideration.

*Texting, talking on your phone and emailing* should be done outside of class time. Students who repeatedly do these things during class time will forfeit a week's worth of participation points.

### **Communication**

Students should *maintain an email account* and check it regularly for class announcements. I will communicate regularly with students via email, and students are responsible for all information contained in these emails.

Feel free to contact me via email or come to my office hours, with any questions or concerns you have about the course. If you email me, I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. When emailing me, always include “sociology of work” or “soc 306” in the subject line of your email.

### **Academic Honesty**

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

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## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Written Assignments**

Students will write three short (2-3 pages) papers that use a combination of observations and course materials to analyze a workplace in Missoula. Students will select a workplace to write about in the beginning of the semester, and write all three papers about that workplace. While I prefer that students analyze a workplace that they are not intimately familiar with before the start of the course, students will not be penalized for writing about their own workplaces.

The written assignments will address three central topics in the sociology of work; routinization & mechanization, community at work, and resistance at work. The instructor will provide more details about each assignment during class.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be cumulative. It will cover major terms, concepts and theories from the course. Students will be responsible for all course materials (readings, lectures, discussions, movies, etc) on the exam.

### **Course Grade**

Students’ final grades will be based on the following components; class participation, three written assignments and a final exam. The weight of each component is as follows:

Class participation	20%
Written assignments (3)	45%
Final exam	35%

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## **COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Required Readings**

There are no books to buy for this course. Instead, all articles will be available as PDF documents on the course blackboard website.

Students are strongly encouraged to print out copies of each article and not try to read them all online. Lectures and class discussions will reference the readings frequently, and students who

do not have the readings in front of them will find themselves at a disadvantage during class. Students who decide not to print out the articles should plan on taking very detailed notes on the readings, so that they are prepared for class discussions, written assignments and the final exam.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**TOPIC:       WHAT IS WORK?**

**Week 1:       Introduction to Course & the Sociological Study of Work       Aug 31, Sept 2**

Read:       Garson               All the Livelong Day               (pp. 25-60)  
               Nasaw               Children of the City               (pp. 39-47)

*Exercise:     Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*

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Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>                               No Class                               Labor Day Holiday

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**TOPIC:       HOW WORK IS ORGANIZED**

**Week 2:       Industrialization & Mechanization                               Sept 4, 9, 11**

Read:       Meyer               “The Making of Ford’s Assembly Line”       (pp. 333–359)  
               Garson               All the Livelong Day               (pp. 3-24)

*Movie:       A Job at Ford’s*

**Week 3:       Routinization & Standardization                               Sept 14, 16, 18**

Read:       Leidner               Fast Food, Fast Talk (pp. 72-76, 82-85, 105-116, 120-124)

*Movie:       Modern Times*

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**TOPIC:       COMMUNITY AT WORK**

**Week 4:       Occupational Communities                               Sept 21, 23, 25**

Read:       Cobble               Dishing it Out               (pp. 51-58)  
               Nasaw               Children of the City               (pp. 24-38)  
               Newman               No Shame in My Game               (pp. 86–104)

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Monday September 21<sup>st</sup>                               Paper #1 Due                               Routinization & Mechanization

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**Week 5: Inter-Racial Communities** **Sept 28, 30, Oct 2**

Read: Korstad & Lichtenstein “Opportunities Found and Lost” (pp. 786-811)  
Bank-Munoz, Ochoa & Vazquez “Sewing it up at Hollander” (pp. 43-49)

Movie: *At the River I Stand*

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**TOPIC: RESISTANCE AT WORK**

**Week 6: Why Workers Resist** **Oct 5, 7, 9**

Read: Leidner Fast Food, Fast Talk (pp.50-54, 76-82, 102-105, 116-120)  
Sherman Class Acts (pp. 110-113)  
Ehernreich Nickel and Dimed (pp. 162-169, 176-191)

**Week 7: How Workers Resist: Games & Passive Resistance** **Oct 12, 14, 16**

Read: Sherman Class Acts (pp. 113-141, 151-153)

Movie: *Office Space (clips)*

**Week 8: How Workers Resist: Strikes & Collective Action** **Oct 19, 21, 23**

Read: Frank “Girl Strikers Occupy Chain Store, Win Big” (pp. 57-118)

Movie: *With Babies and Banners*

**Week 9: Management Responds to Resistance** **Oct 26, 28, 30**

Read: Jacoby Modern Manors (pp. 11-34)

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**TOPIC: GENDER AND WORK**

**Week 10: Inequality at Home** **Nov 2, 4, 6**

Read: Hondagneu-Sotelo Domestica (pp. 114-134)  
Hochschild The Second Shift (pp. 33-58)

Movie: *Chore Wars*

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Monday November 2<sup>nd</sup> Paper #2 Due Community at Work

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**Week 11: Women & the Professions** **Nov 9, 13, 16**

Read: Pierce "Emotional Labor Among Paralegals" (pp. 127-140)  
Valian Why So Slow? (pp. 125-144)

Movie: *Rosie the Riveter*

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Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup> No Class Veterans Day Holiday

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**TOPIC: THE CHANGING CONTOURS OF WORK IN THE U.S.**

**Week 11: Changing Employment Relationships & Deindustrialization** **Nov 18, 20, 23**

Read: Osterman Securing Prosperity (pp. 20-40, 54-60)

Movie: *Roger and Me*

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Wednesday November 25<sup>th</sup> No Class Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday November 27<sup>th</sup> No Class Thanksgiving Holiday

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**Week 14: Labor Unions and Employment Law** **Nov 30, Dec 2, 4**

Read: Garson All the Livelong Day (pp. 69-79)  
Metzgar Striking Steel (pp. 17-39)  
Osterman Securing Prosperity (pp. 63-67)

Exercise: *Collective Bargaining Simulation*

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Monday November 30<sup>th</sup> Paper #3 Due Resistance at Work

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**Week 15: Workplace Policy** **Dec 7, 9, 11**

Read: Lafer The Job Training Charade (pp. 108-111)  
Newman No Shame in My Game (pp. 268-274, 276-284)

Exercise: *Workplace Policy Debate*

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Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup> Final Exam 8:00am – 10:00am

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