Carleton University  
Summer 2018  
Political Economy

PECO 5501/PSCI 5501/SOCI 5504  
Socio-Geographic and Intersectional Perspectives on Work and Labour

Instructor: Mark Thomas  
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Seminar Times: Tuesday & Thursday, 17:35-20:25  
Seminar Location: 1524 Dunton Tower

Course Description  
Over the past several decades, work has been radically restructured socio-geographically, with the changing spatial distribution of work linked to changes in the social organization of labour processes and labour markets. At the same time, 'labour' - workers and unions - as agents in the 'new economy' are facing strategic and structural crises stemming from the reorganization of work, the hidden/invisible nature of new forms of work, and the absence of space for labour in public debates about solutions for economic recovery. This course develops a socio-geographic perspective to study the organization of work in contemporary labour markets in this context of crisis. With an intersectional lens, the course explores the ways in which workplaces and labour markets are organized through intersecting relations of class, race, gender, citizenship status, and ability, and are geographically contextualized by place, space and scale.

Organization of the Course  
Building on scholarship in labour geography and the sociology of work, the course begins by examining the organization of work in contemporary capitalism, focusing on the organization of labour processes, managerial strategies of control, connections between the workplace and the household, and patterns of labour market segmentation. The course also explores work and labour markets in a global context, examining themes of globalization, precarious employment, migrant labour, and the impacts of new technologies. Finally, the course considers the emergence of new forms of labour regulation and new workers' movements that aim to address current conditions of precariousness, insecurity, and crisis generated through the reorganization of work.

Required Reading  
Required readings are available through ARES.

Evaluation  
Research paper  50%  
Paper proposal  20%  
Seminar presentation  20%  
Seminar participation  10%
**Research Paper**
Students must prepare a research paper of approximately 5000 words related to the themes of the course. Topics may come directly from course readings and discussions, or they may be related to a student’s more specific research interests, so long as they are connected to the overall course themes.

*Submission:* The take home is due **June 25** and should be submitted electronically.

**Paper Proposal**
A proposal outlining the paper topic must be submitted by **May 31**. The proposal should be 500-750 words, plus a working bibliography.

**Presentation**
Each student must make a presentation and lead a seminar discussion based on course readings. Presentations should outline the contributions of the required texts to the class topic and the course overall, explore connections and/or tensions between the readings, and consider their application to issues related to work and labour. To assist the seminar group in preparing for the discussion, each presenter will submit 3-4 discussion questions the evening before the class in which they will present.

**Seminar Participation**
Students are expected to come to class having read all required material and prepared to participate in seminar discussions. To promote seminar participation, discussion questions will be circulated in advance of the class (as above).
May 8  Introduction - Studying Work

- Overview of course themes
- Discussion of reading materials, writing assignments, and organization of seminar time
- Presentations sign-up

**Recommended**


**Supplementary**


May 10 Work Under Capitalism - Divisions of Labours & the Labour Process


**Supplementary**

May 15 Labour Spaced Out – Global Divisions of Labour


Supplementary


May 17 Social Reproduction / Reproductive Labour


Supplementary


May 22Labour Markets & Precarious Work

Supplementary

May 24Regulating Work & Labour Markets

Supplementary

May 29 Postindustrial Work and Workers

Supplementary

May 31 Labour on the Move


**Supplementary**


**June 5**

**Labour and the City**


**Supplementary**


**June 7**

**Unions, the Crisis of Labour, and New Organizing**


Supplementary

June 12 Precarious Worker Organizing

Supplementary
• Parent, Marcel (2016)”Precarious Class Formations in the United States and South Africa.” International Labor and Working-Class History 89, 84-106.

June 14 The Future of Work?

Supplementary


June 19  Course Conclusion
• Presentation of term paper proposals