

SOCIOLOGY 4V03: WORK STRESS AND HEALTH IN THE NEW ECONOMY
FALL 2015

Wednesday 2:30-5:20pm MDCL 1008

Instructor: Dr. Paul Glavin
Office: KTH 635

Office Hours: by appointment
EXT: 24427

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is work stress? Are we exposed to more work stress than previous generations of workers, and if so, why? How can organizations and workers better deal with work stress? Throughout this course, we will seek to answer these questions by examining the different sources and consequences of work stress in the contemporary Canadian economy. We will first ask what constitutes an unhealthy work experience and review the dominant social-psychological theories of work stress. We then move beyond these explanations and consider how stressful work experiences are created not solely by the characteristics of jobs, but also by workers' occupations, the organizations in which they work, their positioning in different labour markets, and the health of the overall economy. In the second part of the course we will engage with several ongoing debates about work stress, including: the deleterious effects of precarious employment, migrant worker exploitation, and job intensification.

This course has several objectives. By the end of the course, you will:

- understand the historical labour market trends that have shaped contemporary Canadians' exposure to work stress.
- evaluate and critique the major theoretical perspectives on stress and work stress.
- investigate the influence of gender, race, and class in shaping Canadians' exposure to unhealthy work experiences.
- apply empirical and theoretical research from the sociology of work and organizations in order to devise solutions for alleviating work stress.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grade Breakdown:

Participation	20%
Weekly summaries	20%
Movie response paper	20%
Final written exam or Research Paper	40%

Weekly summaries (20%) and participation (20%): Students are expected to attend every class meeting having thoughtfully completed the readings and be prepared to participate actively in discussion. Every week, each student must come prepared with a brief summary of the readings (~1 page, double-spaced) including questions/topics to discuss. Summaries should be submitted

on the avenue to learn course website no later than Wednesday 9am each week. I will accept one summary after an absence that can be turned in the following week.

Movie Response Paper (20%): You will write a short analysis of a contemporary film that deals with some aspect of work and health as covered in this course. You will be given a choice from a preset selection of films that you can analyze.

Research Paper (40%): The research paper is an opportunity to write a research proposal on some aspect of work and health that interests you. The research paper must be 10-12 pages in length, double-spaced, and typed in 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides. Further guidelines will be distributed at a later date.

Research papers are due in-class on **Wednesday, December 2nd**. They may not be faxed or sent as an e-mail attachment. Late submissions will result in a 10% reduction per day past the due date. Please note that late penalties will not be waived unless relevant medical or other appropriate documentation is provided to the Associate Dean's office.

**** Alternate Assignment (40%): Written exam** (during final exam period). Students will be given the option of writing a sit-down exam, in lieu of the research paper. The exam will be essay-format and cover course material from readings and lecture.

Required Readings

The following are the required readings for the course:

- 1) Sociology 4J03 - Custom Courseware Book
- 2) Required on-line readings as indicated below
- 3) All lecture content and films presented in class or posted on Avenue to Learn

COURSE POLICIES

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.

Late Assignments: 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 3 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. In the absence of a vetted excuse, late assignments will be marked down 5 percentage points for each day late.

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/univsec/policy/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 (not giving proper credit to your sources).
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Departmental/ University 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.

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 (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

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.

Effective September 1, 2010, 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.

Email 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

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1) Introduction (Sept 9th)

Introduction to content and structure of course.

2) Work and the Individual (Sept 16th)

- a) NYT article: Inside Amazon: Wrestling Big Ideas in a Bruising Workplace
- b) Unhealthy Work. Chapter 2: Economic Globalization and Its Effect on Labor.

3) Theories of Stress (Sept 23rd)

- a) Wheaton, B., Young, M., Montazer, S., & Stuart-Lahman, K. (2013). Social Stress in the Twenty-First Century. *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health*, 299-308.
- b) Work and Mental Health in Social Context. Chapter 2. Job Structures, Job Stress and Mental Health.
- c) Workplace Stressors and Health Outcomes: Health Policy for the Workplace
<https://behavioralpolicy.org/article/workplace-stressors-health-outcomes/>

4) Technology and Organizational Change (Sept 30th)

- a) V. Shalla. 1997. Technology and the Deskilling of Work: The Case of Passenger Agents at Air Canada.
- b) Hodson, R. 1996. "Dignity in the workplace under participative management: Alienation and freedom revisited." *American Sociological Review* 719-738.

Podcast: The Future Of Work Looks Like A UPS Truck

5) Precarious work (Oct 7th)

- a) Rogers, J.K. 1995. "Just a temp: Experience and Structure of Alienation in Temporary Clerical Employment" *Work and Occupations* 22:137-166.
- b) Glavin, P. (2015). Perceived Job Insecurity and Health: Do Duration and Timing Matter? *The Sociological Quarterly*, 56(2), 300-328.
- c) NYT article: Uncertainty About Jobs Has a Ripple Effect

Podcast: The People Inside Your Machine

6) Service Work and Emotional Labour (Oct 21st)

- a) Arlie Hochschild, "Feeling Management: From Private to Commercial Uses." ppIn, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* Pp 89-136 (Berkeley 1983).
- b) Wharton, Amy. 1993. The Affective Consequences of Service Work. Managing Emotions on the Job." *Work and Occupations* 20:205-232.

7) Unemployment (Oct 28th)

- a) Ross, C.E. and J. Mirowsky. 1995. "Does employment affect health?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 36:230-243.
- b) Letkemann, Paul. 2002 "Unemployed professionals, stigma management and derivative stigma." *Work, Employment and Society* 16(3): 511-522.

Movie response paper question released (due: Nov 18th)

8) Movie response paper workshop (Nov 4th)

9) Migrant Workers (Nov 11th)

- a) Parreñas, R.S. 2000. "Migrant Filipina domestic workers and the international division of reproductive labor." *Gender & Society* 14:560-580.
- b) Basok, Tanya. 2002. Captive Labor. In *Tortillas and Tomatoes: Transmigrant Mexican Harvesters in Canada*, pp.106-128.

Documentaries: Chain of Love + El Contrato

10) Overwork (Nov 18th) Movie response paper due in class

- a) Schor, J. 1993. The Overworked American. Chapter 2: Time Squeeze: The Extra Month of Work. Basic Books.
- b) Jacobs, J. and K. Gerson. 2001. "Overworked individuals or overworked families?" *Work and Occupations* 28:40-63.
- c) Blair-Loy, Mary. 2009 "Work Without End? Scheduling Flexibility and Work-to-Family Conflict Among Stockbrokers." *Work and Occupations* 36:279-317.

Podcast: Why Do We Work So Hard?

11) Work and Family (Nov 25th)

- a) Simon, R.W. 1995. "Gender, multiple roles, role meaning, and mental health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 36:182-194.
- b) Glavin, Paul, Scott Schieman, and Sarah Reid. 2011 "Boundary-Spanning Work Demands and Their Consequences for Guilt and Psychological Distress." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 52:43-57.

12) The Future of Work (Dec 2nd) Research Paper Due

- a) Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 408–437.
- b) MacEachen, E., Polzer, J., and Clarke, J. (2008). "You are free to set your own hours': Governing worker productivity and health through flexibility and resilience." *Social Science and Medicine* 66:5 pp.1019-1033.

Podcast: Hard Work is Irrelevant