

**The Changing American Job  
First Year Seminar, Fall 2017**

Fall 2017  
Time: T/TH 11-12:15  
Room: Dey 307  
Office hours: immediately after class or by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

What will the U.S. labor market look like four years from now when you graduate from UNC? How will employment opportunities and employers' skills requirements differ from those facing your parents and family members a generation or two ago, or even those of recent college graduates? What types of job-seeking support and assistance will you likely need to enter and navigate this fast-changing labor market environment?

This seminar contextualizes these questions by looking at the changing nature of the American job and the transformative forces—from global trade and corporate restructuring to automation and the rise of the 'sharing' economy—that have influenced this change in recent decades and have added to economic insecurity in recent years and in the aftermath of the "Great Recession." We will consider how these forces and others are experienced differently by urban and rural residents, by men and women, and by members of different socio-economic and ethnic groups, including native-born and immigrant workers. We will also consider local and regional strategies for helping today's workers respond to this changing economic environment, such as efforts to link competitiveness-enhancing retraining and industrial upgrading programs; the creation of new partnerships between employers and labor market intermediaries, such as staffing agencies, labor unions and non-profits; and finally, new forms of labor and community organizing to improve job quality and workplace justice. This seminar will not only help you think about the larger economic and policy implications of U.S. labor market restructuring, but also consider how the forces behind this change, and responses to it, potentially affect your own job prospects and career advancement opportunities.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

I use three main teaching formats in this seminar: (1) class discussions and in-class activities that focus on required readings and related themes; (2) reflective and research-based student writing and journaling; (3) guest seminars by workforce experts that will help you understand labor market dynamics and learn about innovative strategies to improve job quality.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

### **Jobs Journals (50 percent)**

Think about your ideal post-graduation job. You will complete **3** in-depth journal entries that will allow you to reflect on how specific transformative forces or employment strategies might affect your own career goals, job search strategies and advancement opportunities. For one journal entry, you will receive training from a Davis data librarian on regional and national employment data sources. For another, you will conduct an in-depth informational interview with a UNC alum that has 5 or more years of work experience in your ideal occupation or profession.

Each journal entry **must** be written in **formal prose**, structured as an organized and cohesive essay and with each paragraph anchored to a clear thesis or organizing theme. Your grade will reflect quality writing and content. **PLEASE SEND AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF YOUR JOURNAL ENTRY BY THE START OF THE CLASS SESSION WHEN IT IS DUE.**

**NOTE: each journal entry is a different length: please see description of assignment for details. (First journal, 3 pages (15 point scale); second 3 (15 point scale); third 3-4 pages (20 point scale).**

Journal grading: I will return the first entry for Jobs Journal 1 with extensive comments and/or some suggested edits that can be used to help improve your writing quality. **For this first entry, I will base your grade entirely on the quality of the second, edited draft. The grades for the remaining two journal entries will be based on the first submission. In other words, there is no option to rewrite your second two entries for a higher grade.**

I encourage students to work closely with the UNC writing center and ask that you try to use the writing center's on-line or in person tutoring resources **at least once** during the semester. Information on the UNC writing center and tutoring services is available at:  
<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/>

Additionally, I will assign you a "feedback partner" from the class for the entire semester who will be a resource for early feedback on your assignments and writings prior to the assignment due date. Be respectful of each others' busy schedules! You will not be graded on your use of this partnership, though quality feedback from a partner is likely to reflect in your final writing grade. You should view this as a resource and relationship that you can tap not only for this class, but also possibly others throughout your academic years. I will provide some in-class time to meet with your feedback partner. However, you should also schedule time to meet with or interact (by email or phone) with this person outside of normal class hours.

### **Jobs Journal Presentation and One-page Handout (15 percent)**

At the end of the course, you will be expected to give a brief, but structured **5 minute** presentation on your ideal occupation and the most interesting thing you learned during the

course of Jobs Journal research and writing. While this is a brief and concise presentation, I still expect it to be of high quality and well structured—note however that you do not need to use PowerPoint. Rather you will be expected to generate a **one page informational handout** that you must give to me at the beginning of the presentation and also post to Sakai (this will likely contain more information than you will cover during the presentation). The goal of the handout is to share your working knowledge of this ideal occupation with your classmates so they can use this information should they decide to change careers at a later point. You will be graded on the clarity and content of your presentation and handout. Note: I will stop you at the 5 minute mark, so make sure you practice your presentation well in advance and stay on message! With that in mind, I would strongly encourage you to do a practice run or two before your “feedback partner.”

### **Reflective Essays (20 percent)**

Each student must write **3** brief (2-3 paragraph) reflective essays for **3** class sessions during the semester. I will send out information for the first reflective essay, due in class on October 3. For reflective essays 2 and 3 you can **pick two** of the “Policy Alternatives” classes (**SEE ASTERISK\* BY SELECT CLASSES**). These reflective essays are not meant to be a literature review, but rather a brief statement about something that interested you or resonated with you during your reading or as a result of an earlier, yet related class discussion. You must hand in a hard copy of each essay at the start of the class period. I reserve the option to call on students to share their reflections and as a means to facilitate class discussion.

### **Class Participation (15 percent)**

Each session is more effective as a class dialogue rather than lecture. Please complete all assigned readings before class and be prepared to participate in class discussion! You will have several opportunities to participate in structured class and group activities, including in-class debates. (Participation grade breakdown: class attendance, 5%; participation in class discussion and class activities, 10%.)

### **Other Academic Business**

**The Honor Code:** “The Honor Code represents UNC-Chapel Hill students’ commitment to maintain an environment in which students respect one another and are able to attain their educational goals. As a student at Carolina, you are entering a community in which integrity matters--integrity in the work you submit, and integrity in the manner in which you treat your fellow Carolina community members.”

I am committed to treating Honor Code violations seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms. If you have questions it is your responsibility to ask the professor about the Code’s application

**Contacting the professor:** I encourage you to talk to me before or after class. You can also email me to schedule a meeting in my office. I also encourage you to inform me beforehand, either in person or by email, if you are unable to attend class or fulfill an assignment rather than after the fact. I am more willing to make accommodations legitimate excuses if I am told

beforehand.

**Missing Class:** Students are permitted to miss class for EXCUSABLE absences only. For details about what an excused absence is, see UNC-Chapel Hill's attendance policy. On the first day of class, each student starts with a 100% or A for class attendance. Students are allowed one UNexcused absence without any questions from the instructor. If a student has two UNexcused absences, their attendance grade will be deducted by one letter grade (from an A to a B, for example). With each additional absence, a student's attendance grade will be deducted one letter grade per absence. I abide strictly by the university's attendance policy, so please be familiar with it.

**Laptops and cell phones: This class will be a laptop and cell phone free environment.** Unless you have a disability that requires usage of a laptop, there will be no need for a laptop in this course other than a few select class activities. At the end of the semester, I will ask you to bring your laptops to class to complete on-line course evaluations and there may be other instances when laptops may be needed. You will be notified in advance to bring your laptops to class in these instances. Please turn off cell phones before entering class.

**Disability:** If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you may need to contact the Academic Services office that houses the Academic Success Program for coordination in your academic accommodations. Please contact me to discuss any accommodations that may be required to satisfy your needs.

**Resources:** My purpose as a professor is to help you to excel in this learning environment. Should you need further assistance beyond the help of the professor, please consult the following on-campus resources:

*Academic Success Program* (for students with learning disabilities (LD) and/or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):  
<http://learningcenter.unc.edu/ldadhd-services/>

*Learning Center:* <http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/>

*Counseling and Wellness Services:* <http://campushealth.unc.edu>

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Class Schedule (Dates/Topics subject to change)

**PART 1.**

**INTRODUCTION**

1	Course Overview <b>Receive Jobs Journal question 1</b>	Aug 22
2	Work, Defined	Aug 24
3	A Good and Steady Job	Aug 29
4	Those Left Behind: Race and Gender	Aug 31
5	<i>John Quintero: State of Work in NC</i>	Sept 5
6	Work, Transformed <b>Jobs Journal 1 due by class</b> <b>Receive Jobs Journal question 2/3</b>	Sept 7

**PART 2.**

**BIG ISSUES/DEBATES**

7	Technology and the Future of Work <b>Jobs Journal 1 due by class</b> <b>Receive Jobs Journal question 2/3</b>	Sept 12
8	<i>Philip McDaniel-Library Data Session (Davis Library)</i>	Sept 14
9	<i>Amy Blackburn, Career Services (Hanes Hall 239A/B)</i>	Sept 19
10	Do Workers Share in the Sharing Economy?	Sept 21
11	Is Wal-Mart Good For America?	Sept 26
12	Immigration: Film: The Guest Worker	Sept 28
13	Is Education the Answer (I)? <b>Reflection Essay 1 due</b>	Oct 3
14	Is Education the Answer (II)? <b>Jobs Journal 2 due by class</b>	Oct 5

**PART 3. POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

***Reflection Essays 2 and 3: Pick two topics with \* to write on. Essays due before the class in which topic discussed***

15	Living Wages*	Oct 10
	No Class October 12: University Day	
16	<i>The Good Employer: Guest Speaker</i>	Oct 17
	No Class October 19: Fall Break	
17	The Carolina Inn Case	Oct 24
18	Workforce Intermediaries *	Oct 26
19	In class discussion of career interview findings (Optional: dress the part!)	Oct 31
20	The Case of Project Quest <b>Jobs Journal 3 due by class</b>	Nov 2
21	Sector Partnerships: The Case of Garments*	Nov 7
22	Community Benefits*	Nov 9
23	('Green Jobs') Clean Truck case	Nov 14
24	Next Generation Apprenticeship* <b>Rewrite of Jobs Journal 1 due by class</b>	Nov 16
25	Labor Organizing: Guest Speaker	Nov 21
	No Class Nov 23: Thanksgiving Break	
26	Jobs Journal Presentations	Nov 28
27	Jobs Journal Presentations	Nov 30
28	Class wrap-up	Dec 5

## **PART 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1 Course Overview**

### **2 Work, Defined**

C. Tilly and C. Tilly. "Worlds of Work," Work Under Capitalism. Westview Press. 1998.

### **3 A Good and Steady Job**

Uchitelle, Louis. 2006. "The Rise of Steady Work." In, the Disposable American: Layoffs and Their Consequences. New York: Knopf.

Weil, David. The Fissured Workplace. Chapter 2. Employment in a Pre-fissured World. Harvard University Press.

### **4 Those Left Behind: Race and Gender**

Honey, Michael Keith. 1999. Black Workers Remember. UC Press. Page 286-321 (all).

Jones, Jacqueline. 2000. Black Workers Remember. The American Prospect. <http://prospect.org/article/black-workers-remember>

**PICK ONE**

Honey, Michael Keith. 1999. Black Workers Remember. UC Press. Page 86-98.

Milkman, Ruth. 1987. Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex during WWII. Demobilization and the Reconstruction of "Women's Place" in Industry. University of Illinois Press.

### **5 Employment Today in North Carolina: Guest John Quinterno**

Quinterno, John. 2016. Few Signs Of A "Carolina Comeback". (READ the four issue briefs): <http://www.sbnstrategies.com/archives/14374>

### **6 Work, Transformed**

Osterman, Paul. 1999. "The Changing Structure of the American Labor Market." In, Securing Prosperity. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Weil, David. The Fissured Workplace. Chapter 1. Fissured Workplace and Its Consequences. Harvard University Press.

Hakim, Danny. 2005. "For a G.M. Family, The American Dream Vanishes." New York Times, November 19.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/19/business/businessspecial2/for-a-gm-family-the-american-dream-vanishes.html?mcubz=2>

Uchitelle, Louis. 2010. American Dream is Elusive for Next Generation. New York Times, July 19.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/07/business/economy/07generation.html?pagewanted=all&mcubz=2>

## **PART 2. BIG ISSUES/DEBATES**

### **7 Technology and the Future of Work**

Autor, David and David Dorn. 2013. How Technology Wrecks the Middle Class. The New York Times. Opinionator. August 29.

[http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/24/how-technology-wrecks-the-middle-class/?\\_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/24/how-technology-wrecks-the-middle-class/?_r=0)

Bernstein, Jared. 2014. Inequality's Roots: Beyond Technology. The New York Times. Economix. November 18.

[http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/18/inequalitys-roots-beyond-technology/?\\_r=0](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/18/inequalitys-roots-beyond-technology/?_r=0)

Levy, Frank and Richard Murnane. Dancing with Robots: Human Skills for Computerized Work. <http://content.thirdway.org/publications/714/Dancing-With-Robots.pdf>

Atkinson, Robert. 2017. Think technology is disrupting the job market like never before? Think again. <https://www.csmonitor.com/Technology/Breakthroughs-Voices/2017/0510/Think-technology-is-disrupting-the-job-market-like-never-before-Think-again>

Thompson, Derek. 2015. A World Without Work. The Atlantic Monthly.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/07/world-without-work/395294/>

Freedman, David. 2016. Basic Income: A Sellout. MIT Technology Review. Vol 119 : 4. <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/601499/basic-income-a-sellout-of-the-american-dream/>

### **10 Do Workers Share in the Sharing Economy?**

California Says Uber Drivers is an Employee.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/18/business/uber-contests-california-labor->



[ruling-that-says-drivers-should-be-employees.html](#)

In the Battle between Lyft and Uber, the Focus is on the Driver  
<http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/01/18/463473462/is-uber-good-to-drivers-it-s-relative>

Schor, Juliet. 2014. Debating the Sharing Economy. The Great Transformation Initiative. <http://www.greattransition.org/publication/debating-the-sharing-economy>

Rosenblat, Alex. 2016. What motivates Gig Economy Workers? Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-motivates-gig-economy-workers>

Kennedy, Joe. 2015. Labor Laws are a Mismatch with the Sharing Economy. ITIF. <https://itif.org/publications/2015/07/09/labor-laws-are-mismatch-sharing-economy>

## 11 **Is Wal-Mart Good for America (and its Workers)?**

Lichtenstein, Nelson. 2009. The Retail Revolution: How Wal-Mart Created a Brave New World of Business. Chapter 2, Supply and Command.

Bernstein, Jared. John Biven and Arindrajit Dube. 2006. Wrestling with Wal-Mart. Tradeoffs Between Profits, Prices and Wages. Economic Policy Institute Working Paper.  
<http://www.epi.org/publication/wp276/>

(watch one segment before class) PBS Frontline: Is Wal-Mart Good for America?  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/walmart/>

Irwin, Neil. 2016. How did WalMart Get Cleaner Stores and Higher Sales? It Paid its People More. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/upshot/how-did-walmart-get-cleaner-stores-and-higher-sales-it-paid-its-people-more.html>

## 13/14 **Is Education the Answer?**

*Activity (13):* Half class will focus on service work; other half on manual tasks/trade. Come prepared to talk about the skills of a worker you interviewed over the weekend. How did they develop their skill? Was it through the classroom? On-the-job? Through formal or informal training? Was there a social dimension to their learning process? Are these transferable skills? Are these hidden or tacit skills? If so, how do they demonstrate them?

(13) Crawford, Matthew. 2009. The Case for Working With Your Hands. New York

Times Magazine. May 21<sup>st</sup>.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/24/magazine/24labor-t.html?pagewanted=all>

(13) Semuels, Alana. 2016. Severe Inequality is Incompatible with the American Dream. The Atlantic Monthly.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/12/equality-of-opportunity/510227/>

(14) Davidson, Adam. 2012. Making it in America. Atlantic Monthly.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/print/2012/01/making-it-in-america/8844/>

(14) Osterman, Paul and Andrew Weaver. 2014. Why Claims of Skill Shortages in Manufacturing are Overblown. EPI Issue Brief #376.  
<http://s1.epi.org/files/2014/claims-of-manufacturing-skills-shortages.pdf>

(14) Cappelli, Peter. 2011. Why Companies Aren't Getting the Employees They Need. Wall Street Journal. October 24.  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204422404576596630897409182.html>

### **PART 3. POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

#### **15 Living Wage Campaigns\***

Making Low Wages Liveable. Room for Debate. New York Times. December 2013.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2013/12/04/making-low-wages-liveable>

Mankiw, Gregory. 2014. Help the Working Poor, but Share the Burden. January 4.  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/business/help-the-working-poor-but-share-the-burden.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/05/business/help-the-working-poor-but-share-the-burden.html?_r=0)

Dube, Arindrajit. 2013. The Minimum we can do. The New York Times. Opinionator. November 30. <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/30/the-minimum-we-can-do/>

Lester, T. William and Ken Jacobs. 2010. How Higher Wage Standards Affect Economic Development and Employment. Center for American Progress.  
[http://www.americanprogressaction.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/11/pdf/living\\_wage.pdf](http://www.americanprogressaction.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/11/pdf/living_wage.pdf)

#### **16 The Good Employer**

Florida, Richard and Jim Goodnight. 2005. "Managing for Creativity (SAS)." Harvard Business Review.

Greenhouse, Steven. 2009. The Big Squeeze: Tough Times for the American Worker. Chapter 9. "Taking the High Road"

Ton, Zeynep. 2013. TEDxCambridge. The Good Jobs Strategy. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD67LKqXGrg>

18 **Workforce Intermediaries\***

Giloth, Robert P. 1998. "Introduction: A Case for Workforce Intermediaries." In, Jobs and Economic Development. Robert Giloth (ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Conway, Maureen. 2014. "A Brief History of Sector Strategies". In Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies, Maureen Conway and Robert Giloth (ed.)

Lowe, Nichola. 2013. What is the Skills Problem in Manufacturing. Progressive Planning Magazine.

20 **The Case of Project Quest**

Lautsch, Brenda and Paul Osterman. 1998. "Changing the Constraints: A Successful Employment and Training Strategy." In, Jobs and Economic Development. Robert Giloth (ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

21 **Sectoral Partnerships: The Case of Garments\***

Conway, Maureen and Suzanne Loker. 1999. "The Garment Industry Development Corporation: A Case Study of a Sectoral Employment Development Approach." Washington D.C.: The Aspen Institute. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED466615.pdf>

Hum, Tarry. 2003. "Mapping Global Production in New York City's Garment Industry: The Role of Sunset Park, Brooklyn's Immigrant Economy." Economic Development Quarterly. 17 (3), 294-309.

Mead, Rebecca. 2013. The Garmento King: Can Andrew Rosen of Theory Keep Manhattan Humming with Sewing Machines. The New Yorker

22 **Community Benefits\***  
**REMINDER: LAST CLASS FOR REFLECTION ESSAY 2**

Harold Meyerson. 2006. No Justice, No Growth: How Los Angeles is making big-time developers create decent jobs. American Prospect.  
[http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=no\\_justice\\_no\\_growth](http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=no_justice_no_growth)

Range, Peter Ross. 2004. L.A. Confidential: How Community Activists Are Making Big Developers Their Partners in Fighting Poverty. Ford Foundation Report. 2004  
<http://www.laane.org/whats-new/2009/09/12/l-a-confidential/>

Laura Wolf-Powers. 2010. Community Benefits Agreements and Local Government: A Review of Recent Evidence. Journal of the American Planning Association. 76 (2). (who are the stakeholders and who benefits stress this)

### 23 **'Green Jobs' (Clean Trucks case)**

Campbell, S. 1996. "Green Cities, Growth Cities, Just Cities? Urban Planning and the Contradictions of Sustainable Development." *Journal of the American Planning Association*. Vol. 62. No. 3. Pp. 296-312.

Pollack, Ethan. 2012. Counting up to green: Assessing the green economy and its implications for growth and equity. EPI Briefing Paper. October.  
<http://www.epi.org/publication/bp349-assessing-the-green-economy/>

### 24 **Next Generation Apprenticeship\*** **REMINDER: LAST CLASS FOR REFLECTION ESSAY 3**

Lerman, Robert. 2010. Expanding Apprenticeship: A Way to Enhance Skills and Careers. Urban Institute.  
<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/901384-Expanding-Apprenticeship-A-Way-to-Enhance-Skills-and-Careers.PDF>

Wyman, Nicholas. 2015. "The Magic of Apprenticeships." In, *Job U: How to Find Wealth and Success by Developing the Skills Companies Actually Need*. Crown Business.

Jacoby, Tamara. 2014. Why Germany Is So Much Better at Training Its Workers. *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 6.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/10/why-germany-is-so-much-better-at-training-its-workers/381550/>

### 25 **New Approaches to Labor Organizing**

Meyerson, Harold. 2012. If Labor Dies What's Next? *The American Prospect*.  
<http://prospect.org/article/if-labor-dies-whats-next>

McMillan, MaryBe. 2012. Organize the South or Die. <http://aflcionc.org/organize->

the-south-or-die/

Gross, Neil. 2016. The Decline of Unions and the Rise of Trump. New York Times. August 12<sup>th</sup>. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/opinion/sunday/the-decline-of-unions-and-the-rise-of-trump.html>

Osterman, Paul et. Al. 2001. Working in America. Chapter 4. Extended Networks: A vision for Next-Generation Unionism

Joel Roger and Richard Freeman. 2002. A Proposal to American Labor. Let's create Open Source Unionism. <http://www.thenation.com/article/proposal-american-labor#>