UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

COURSE OUTLINE (DRAFT ONLY)

SOCIOLOGY 9151B / CSTC 9449 (POST-WORK)

TERM:	Winter Term 2019
INSTRUCTOR	Dr. Michael E. Gardiner
OFFICE:	SSC 5424 (661-2111, ex. 85139; e-mail: megardin@uwo.ca)
CLASS TIME & LOCATION	Tues 1:30-4:30 (SSC 5406)
OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has a dual aim. The first is to chart radical transformations in the nature of work, especially in the Global North, over the last forty years, including: the globalization of capital and attendant 'offshoring' of jobs; intensifying occupational and existential 'precarity'; the effects of rapid automation and computerization; the growing ubiquity of so-called 'immaterial' and 'affective' labour; and the oft-hidden 'auto-exploitation' of labouring subjects, via the omnipresence of neoliberal mechanisms of financialization, value-capture, and marketization. Our second goal is to ascertain socioeconomic trends and potentialities in the development of 21st-century capitalism that indicate the emergence of a very different, *post*-capitalist society, marked by such things as dramatically-reduced labour time (or even the end of 'work' as currently understood); a baseline measure of material and symbolic-cultural abundance for all; and the radically democratic organization and management of both *polis* and economy.

COURSE OUTCOMES

*If you attend to your responsibilities in this course, you will be able to do the following:

*Understand some of the key theoretical texts in work and post-work debates and how they influence the sociological and theoretical work we do.

*Develop clear, well-thought, and increasingly sophisticated responses to questions posed about contemporary society.

*Display facility in and fluency with core theoretical concepts and utilize them in the development of oral and written arguments.

REQUIRED TEXTS

TBA

METHODS OF EVALUATION

This course is seminar-based, and hence reading and writing intensive. The required readings are intended to give students as broad a comprehension of the key debates and issues in each area of social theory as possible. Each student will be expected to give one oral presentation based on class readings, and submit in written form a week after the presentation (2000-2200 words; 8-10 pages, double-spaced, 12-scale font), worth 25% of the final grade. Students will also be expected to write one term paper (20-25 pages, 5-6000 words, double-spaced, 12-scale font), worth 60% of the total grade, which will be due Wednesday April 17th by 12 noon. Students are advised to develop a term paper outline by around mid-term and discuss it with the instructor. The remaining 15% is awarded for class participation. (Students missing more than three seminars without legitimate and documentable reasons run the risk of failing the course outright.) All papers submitted may be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to licensing agreement, currently between the University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com). (The only acceptable excuses for missed deadlines will be for documented medical reasons or family bereavement/illness; late papers will otherwise be docked 5% per day.)

EVALUATION BREAKDOWN:

Oral presentation:	25%
Participation:	15%
Final paper:	60%
Total:	**100%**

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1 - Jan. 8th – Orientation

Part 1 – Work Today

Week Two - 1. Concepts, Definitions, Origins (Jan. 15th)

01. Ben Reynolds, 'Glossary', *The Coming Revolution: Capitalism in the 21st Century* (Alresford: Zero Books, 2018), 309-14 (6).

02. Lars Svendsen, 'From Curse to Vocation: A Brief History of the Philosophy of Work', *Work* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008), 13-29 (16).

03. Kathi Weeks, 'Introduction: The Problem with Work', *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 1-36 (37).

04. Kathi Weeks, 'Mapping the Work Ethic', *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), 37-78 (42).

Week Three - 2. (Bull)shit Work (Jan. 22nd)

05. Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval, 'Manufacturing the Neo-Liberal Subject', *The New Way of the World: On Neo-Liberal Society* (London and New York: Verso, 2013), 255-99. (45)

06. Nick Dyer-Witheford, 'Mobile', *Cyber-Proletariat: Global Labour in the Digital Vortex* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), 102-23 (22).

07. David Graeber, 'On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs', *Abolish Work: A Lazy Exposition of Philosophical Ergophobia*, edited by Nick Ford (Berkeley: LBC Books, 2016), 39-46 (8).

08. Sebastian Olma, 'Never Mind the Sharing Economy: Here's Platform Capitalism', *Serendipity: For a Radical Politics of Innovation* (London: Repeater Books, 2016), 163-82 (20).

09. Roland Paulsen, 'Mapping out Empty Labor', *Empty Labor: Idleness and Workplace Resistance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 57-71 (15).

Week Four - 3. 'Invisible' Work (Jan. 29th)

10. Tithi Bhattacharya, 'How Not to Skip Class: Social Reproduction of Labor and the Global Working Class', *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*, edited by Tithi Bhattacharya (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 68-93 (26).

11. Christian Fuchs, 'Theorizing Digital Labour on Social Media', in *Digital Labour and Karl Marx*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 243-82 (40).

12. Craig Lambert, 'Shadow Work in Restaurants, Travel, and Shopping', *Shadow Work: The Unpaid, Unseen Jobs that Fill your Day* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2015), 139-99 (61).

13. Maurizio Lazzarato, 'The American University: A Model of the Debt Society', *Governing by Debt* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2015) (61-90) (30).

Week Five - 4. Precarity (Feb. 5th)

14. Silvia Federici, 'Precarious Labor: A Feminist Viewpoint', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Protest* (2008), 1-9 (9).

15. Isabel I. Lorey, 'The Government of the Precarious: An Introduction', *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious* (London and New York: Verso, 2015), 1-15 (15).

16. Phoebe V. Moore, 'Precarity 4.0: A Political Economy of New Materialism and the Quantified Worker', *The Quantified Self in Precarity: Work, Technology and What Counts* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 79-139 (61).

17. Guy Standing, 'The Precariat', *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 1-25 (25).

Week Five - 6. Costs of Work (Feb. 12th)

18. Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, 'The Soul at Work', *The Soul at Work: From Alienation to Autonomy* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009), 74-105 (32).

19. Peter Fleming, 'The Theatre of Loss… Work', *The Death of Homo Economicus* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 130-71 (42).

20. Byung-Chul Han, *The Burnout Societ*y (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 1-51 (51).

Week Six – Reading Break (no classes) (Feb. 19th)

Week Seven - 7. Automation as Threat (Feb. 26th)

21. Nigel M. de S. Cameron, 'Non-Human Resources', *Will Robots Take Your Job?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017), 14-42 (29).

22. Adam Greenfield, 'Automation: The Annihilation of Work', *Radical Technologies: The Design of Everyday Life* (London and New York: Verso, 2017), 183-207 (25).

23. Ben Reynolds, 'Radical Automation', *The Coming Revolution: Capitalism in the 21st Century* (Alresford: Zero Books, 2018), 51-88 (38).

24. Nick Srnicek, 'Platform Capitalism', *Platform Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017), 36-92 (57).

25. Bernard Stiegler, 'Bernard Stiegler on Automatic Society, as Told to Anaïs Nony', *The Third Rail Quarterly*, 5, 2015, 16-17 (2).

Pt. 2 – Post-Work Strategies

Week Eight - 8. The Refusal of Work (March 5ᵗʰ)

26. Tim Christiaens, 'Neoliberalism and the Right to Be Lazy: Inactivity as Resistance in Lazzarato and Agamben', *Rethinking Marxism*, 30(2), 2018, 256-74 (19).

27. Roland Paulsen, 'How to Succeed at Work Without Really Trying', *Empty Labor: Idleness and Workplace Resistance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 72-99 (28).

28. Nicholas Thoburn, 'The Refusal of Work', *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* (London and New York, 2003), 103-38 (36).

29. Kathi Weeks, 'Marxism, Productivism, and the Refusal of Work', *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 79-111 (33).

Week Nine - 9. Alternative Pleasures (March 12ᵗʰ)

30. Roland Barthes, 'Dare to be Lazy', *The Grain of the Voice: Interviews 1962-1980* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 338-345 (8).

31. Ryan Calhoun, 'The Libertarian Virtue of Slack', *Abolish Work: A Lazy Exposition of Philosophical Ergophobia*, edited by Nick Ford (Berkeley: LBC Books, 2016), 217-21 (5).

32. Billy Ehn and Orvar Lofgren, 'Daydreaming', *The Secret World of Doing Nothing* (Berkely: The University of California Press), 123-206 (84).

33. David Frayne, 'Alternative Pleasures', *The Refusal of Work: The Theory and Practice of Resistance to Work*, London: Zed Books, 2015), 157-88

34. Grant A. Mincy, 'The Ecology of Play', *Abolish Work: A Lazy Exposition of Philosophical Ergophobia*, edited by Nick Ford (Berkeley: LBC Books, 2016), 138-46 (8).

35. Bertrand Russell, 'In Praise of Idleness', *Why Work? Arguments for the Leisure* Society, edited by Vernon Richards (London: Freedom Press, 1977), 25-34 (10).

Week Ten - 10. Universal Basic Income (March 19ᵗʰ)

36. Boris Frankel, 'Beyond Income Solutions', *Fictions of Sustainability: The Politics of Growth and Post-Capitalist Futures* (Melbourne: Greenmeadows, 2018), 231-74 (44).

37. Michael Hardt, 'Guaranteed Income, or, the Separation of Labor from Income', *Hybrid*, 5, 2000, 21-31 (11).

38. Kathi Weeks, 'Working Demands: From Wages for Housework to Basic Income', *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 113-50 (38).

39. Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, 'Postwork Imaginaries', *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World without Work* (London and New York: Verso, 2015), 107-127 (20).

Week Eleven - 11. Technology as Liberation (March 26th)

40. Aaron Bastani, 'Fully Automated Green Communism' (https://novaramedia.com/2017/11/19/fully-automated-green-communism/, 2017) (6).

41. Laboria Cuboniks, 'The Xenofeminist Manifesto' (https://laboriacuboniks.net, 2015) (10).

42. Mark Fisher and Judy Thorne, 'Luxury Communism: A Conversation between Mark Fisher and Judy Thorne', in *Futures and Fictions*, edited by Henriette Gunkel, Ayseha Hameed and Simon O'Sullivan (London: Repeater Books, 2017), 145-69 (25).

43. Boris Frankel, 'Technological Fantasists in the Realm of Scarcity', *Fictions of Sustainability: The Politics of Growth and Post-Capitalist Futures* (Melbourne: Greenmeadows, 2018), 153-78 (26).

44. Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, '#Accelerate: Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics', *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader*, edited by Robin Mackay and Armen Avanessian (Falmouth: Urbanomic Media Ltd., 2014), 347-62 (16).

Week Twelve - 12. The Common(s) (April 2nd)

45. Silvia Federici, 'Re-enchanting the World: Technology, the Body, and the Construction of the Commons', *Re-enchanting the World* (Oakland: PM Press, 2019), 188-197 (10).

46. Michael Hardt, 'The Common in Communism', *Rethinking Marxism*, 22, 2010, 346-56 (11).

47. Pieter Lemmens, 'The Conditions of the Common: A Stieglerian Critique of Hardt and Negri's Thesis on Cognitive Capitalism as a Prefiguration of Communism', *Perspectives on Commoning: Autonomist Principles and Practices*, edited by Guido Ruivenkamp and Andy Hilton (London: Zed Books, 2017), 169-212 (44).

48. Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, 'A New Common Sense', *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (London and New York: Verso, 2015), 129-54 (25).

Week Thirteen - 13. What is to be Done? (April 9th)

49. Massimo De Angelis, 'Towards Postcapitalism', *Omnia Sunt Communia: On the Commons and the Transformation to Postcapitalism* (London: Zed Books, 2017), 357-87 (31).

50. Ben Reynolds, 'What is to be Done?', *The Coming Revolution: Capitalism in the 21st Century* (Alresford: Zero Books, 2018), 236-68 (32).

51. Kathi Weeks, 'The Future Is Now: Utopian Demands and the Temporalities of Hope', *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 175-226 (52).

IMPORTANT POLICIES

Laptop Policy

The use of laptops and similar devices (tablet computers, smart phones) is solely permitted for read-only documents.

A Note on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence. See Scholastic Offences (below) for the link to Scholastic Discipline regulations.

Plagiarism Checking

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com: *http://www.turnitin.com*

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Accommodation

Only in exceptional circumstances may a student be provided special accommodation in the completion of a course requirement (i.e., exams, papers). To request a one-time

accommodation (brief illness, family emergency), the student should inform the professor when they are able so accommodation can be made. To request other accommodation(s), the student must first meet with the Graduate Chair to discuss options. Medical documentation, where required, will be kept on file in the Sociology graduate program office.

Completion of Course Requirements

Course requirements must be completed by the end of the term in which the course is offered (Fall-December 31; Winter-April 30, Summer-August 31). Only in exceptional circumstances may a student take additional time to complete the course requirements. In such a case, the student must first meet with the Graduate Chair to request permission to carry the incomplete. Medical documentation, where required, will be kept on file in the Sociology graduate program office. More details regarding incompletes are outlined in the Graduate Handbook: http://www.sociology.uwo.ca/graduate_handbook/course_information.html

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness Western for a complete list of options to obtain help: http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Health and Wellness

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. The Wellness Education Centre (lower level UCC) assists students in finding mental health and other related resources best suited to their needs: http://se.uwo.ca/wec.html Western's School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' Living Well website provides tips for thriving at grad school and other helpful information: http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/living_well/index.html

Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre: http://www.westernmustangs.ca/index.aspx?path=ims# Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Also, we encourage you to check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca/, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/.

Standards of Professional Behaviour

It is the responsibility of all members of the Department of Sociology to adhere to and promote standards of professional behaviour that support an effective learning environment. These include:

- Respect for others both in and out of the classroom through words and actions (be professional, fair, and respectful in interactions with people on-line and in-person; understand and respect differences among classmates and colleagues; avoid disrupting the learning environment; respect others' expectations of confidentiality and privacy)

- Active engagement in learning and commitment to quality (being prepared for classes; participating and listening actively to other; using technology and social media appropriately, striving to do your best)

- Personal integrity (following through on commitments; doing own work)

Students should also be aware of the UWO Student Code of Conduct found at
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf