Course Description

This course serves as an engagement, education, and interaction on the topics of new technologies and the changing nature of work and employment. In this course, we will draw knowledge from multidisciplinary academic fields and explore a wide variety of topics related to technological innovations, labor markets, and the workforce. For example, we will discuss emerging issues such as automation and job loss, digital platforms and the gig economy, and algorithmic staffing. We will also discuss the implications of these changes for workers, employers, and the larger society.

Learning Goals

This course is designed to meet the following SMLR and LSER Learning Goals:

_School of Management and Labor Relations (SMLR):_

-- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)

_Labor Studies and Employment Relations (LSER) Department:_

-- Apply employment relations concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2).

Learning Materials

There is no required textbook for this class. Most course readings will be available via the course website. Readings will draw from academic articles, popular press articles, book excerpts, and business cases. Please check Canvas **at least twice a week.**

Student Responsibilities

1. **Individual assignments.** All students must read the articles and cases posted on Canvas, and be prepared to participate in class discussions. Unless you have written documentation of a University approved excuse, assignments and projects are due on the assigned date. Late submission will be penalized at 10% per day.

2. **Team case study.** The class will divide into groups of 2-3 students. Each group will be responsible for summarizing and leading a 40-min interactive discussion on the given case during class hours. **Students must turn in their presentation slides to the instructor by 10am, the day of the class. The case presentation will be evaluated by peer students and the**
slides will be graded by the instructor. In addition, each group member will be graded by their fellow group members on their overall contribution to the group presentation.

3. Tests. There are in-class exams on the textbook material and any material covered in class. These exams are opened-book and consist of a combination of multiple-choice items and short answer questions. Tests are not specifically cumulative.

4. Class participation. Attendance at every class is required. Absences for illness, religious holidays and other events recognized by Rutgers University will be excused. If you know you are going to miss a class because of a religious holiday, I would appreciate an email prior to the holiday.

Grading Policy

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class exams</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Weekly forum participation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>- Final reflection</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Team case study</td>
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<td>- Presentation and moderated discussion</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Presentation slides</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation and attendance</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total points</td>
<td>800</td>
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University Academic Support and Policies

- Course Tools Tutorials
- Rutgers Student Support Services
- Student Health & Wellness Services
- Rutgers Academic Integrity
- Turnitin For Canvas - For Students
- Technical Support
- Resources to Enhance Your Learning Experience
- Access to LinkedIn Learning
- University Software Portal - Free Access
- APA Formatting and Style Guide (OWL)
- Tools for your assignments and presentations
- Discussion Post Guidelines
Course Overview (Tentative)

Unit 1: Course Overview

Required readings:
1. The Jobs Americans Do.

Group discussion:
The importance of being human in a world of automation.

Unit 2: Technology and Workplace Transformation: What Do We Learn From Past Experiences?

Required readings:
1. Nye, David E. 2006. Can We Define "Technology"?
2. BLS Report: Major Economic Theories on New Technologies

Group discussion:
Kochan & Mindell Discussion on Industrial Revolutions and Work Automation threatens jobs. Can education create new ones?

Unit 3: Old And New Technologies, And Their Impact On Work

Required readings:
1. Elliott, S.W., 2018. Artificial Intelligence, Robots, and Work: Is This Time Different?
2. Top 10 Recent Advancements in Robotics
3. Furman. J. Automation and the Future of Work: Will This Time Be Different?

Group discussion:
The Most Common* Job In Each State 1978-2014
Tech forum: Autonomous Vehicles
Trucking and the Rise of Autonomous Vehicles (AV)

Unit 4: Technology, Skills, and Wages

Required readings:

Group discussion:
The digital future of work: What skills will be needed?

Tech forum: Automation
A Regional Reality Check: Mapping Automation-Proof Jobs and Skills

Unit 5: Task-based Models with Automation

Required readings:
Group discussion:
Fastest growing occupations: 2019-2029
Tech forum: Artificial Intelligence
Using AI for interviews

Unit 6: Technology and the Geography of Jobs
Required readings:
Group discussion:
Technology, Work, and Urban Ecosystems: How Should Cities and Regions Respond?
Tech forum: The Robot Revolution
The Case of Amazon Robotics

Unit 7: Technology, Globalization, and Work
Required readings:
Group discussion:
How smart, connected products are transforming competition
Tech forum: Internet of Things
If workers slack off, the wristband will know.

Unit 8: Rethinking skills and education
Required readings:
1. Models for Adapting Technology into the Workplace
Group discussion:
How technologies change your careers and competencies
Tech forum: Virtual Reality
What will future jobs look like?

Rutgers Spring Recess March 13-21 (No classes)

Unit 9: Digital labor platforms and crowdwork
Required readings:
Group discussion:
How to Thrive in the Gig Economy
Tech forum: How the Platform Ecosystem Works
PBS Video: With food-delivery apps like Uber Eats, who’s actually making money?

Unit 10: The Gig Economy and the Uberization of Work
Required readings:
1. BLS. Career Outlook. Working in a gig economy
2. Business perspective: Uber's plan to get more people into fewer cars | Travis Kalanick

Group discussion:
Is the 'gig' economy uprooting the American workforce?

Tech forum: The Economics of Uber
Nice Guys of the Gig Economy? The cases of Hello Alfred and Managed by Q

Unit 11 Algorithmic Management

Required readings:

Group discussion:
Workplace surveillance and algorithmic control

Tech focus: What's an algorithm?
On Amazon's Time

Unit 12 Re-imaging Worker Power

Required readings:
2. The latest frontier in worker activism: Zoom union organizing
3. Unions Need to Think Small to Get Big

Group discussion: New Models of Worker Voice and Advocacy
Example 1: Instacart shoppers and Gig Worker Collective
Example 2: Amazon warehouse workers walkouts (safety)
Example 3: Google Walkout (sexual harassment)
Example 4. Amazon software to track unions

Tech forum: Digital Organizing
The case of Coworker.org

Unit 13 Social implications

Required readings:
Weil, D., 2014. The fissured workplace. Chapter 8 Rethinking Responsibility and Chapter 9 Rethinking Enforcement

Group discussion: Finland's Universal Income Experiment

Unit 14 Final reflection