

SOCI 321¹ Work, Employment and Society



Image: [Starbucks Workers United](#), 2022.

Course Description

Why do many people commit decades of their lives to working in jobs that are precarious, inadequately remunerated, and unsatisfying? What does the future hold for more dignified work, particularly given the climate crisis? How do workers build working-class power to establish greater democracy in the workplace?

In this course, we will explore the sociology of work and employment, with a focus on the relationship between labour under capitalism and social inequalities. In addition to investigating labour history, we will attend to current trends in the world of work including labour militancy, union and “alt-labour” organizing, racism, patriarchy, and government responses. This course will give students tools to make more informed decisions about their personal career trajectories and opportunities for collective action.

Instructor

Professor Anelyse Weiler

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Office hours TBD.

¹ This outline is only intended to give students a general sense of the course, and course details may change. Detailed course syllabi will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those syllabi are considered official.

Format

Unless the University of Victoria specifies otherwise, this class will be offered in person on **Mondays and Thursdays from 2:30-3:45pm**. Classes will include a combination of lectures and guest lectures, multimedia, along with small-group and class-wide discussion.

This class will not be recorded; in-person attendance is expected and valued.

Course Objectives

The objectives are to:

1. Describe some of the key concepts, theories, and debates in the sociology of work and labour movements.
2. Apply key insights from the course to a real-world policy issue, career field, or community service-learning.
3. Diagnose emerging and ongoing issues of worker inequality and identify evidence-based solutions.
4. Critically reflect on issues related to work, labour, and globalization as they relate to your own experiences and career aspirations.

Course Pre/Co-requisites

SOCI 100A and 100B are pre-requisites. SOCI 215 is recommended.

Topics May Include

Sex Work; Precarious Work; Climate Change and Green Jobs; Gig Economy; Emotional Labour; Care Work; Trade Union and Alt-Labour Organizing; Service and Retail Work; Racialized Labour Markets; Food Chain Workers; Worker-Owned Cooperatives.

Required Textbook/Readings

There is no textbook for the course.

All required readings will be uploaded on Brightspace as the course progresses. A list of all required readings will be included in the detailed course syllabus.