

SOCI 321¹ Work, Employment and Society



"I can't remember—do I work at home or do I live at work?"

Image: [David Sipress](#)

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 decent and dignified work? 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 labour market trends unfolding in the COVID-19 pandemic including 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

anelyse@uvic.ca

anelyseweiler.com

If physical distancing protocols are still in place, office hours will be held remotely.

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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SOCI 321 may be taught remotely through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous modes. This means that students will be expected to participate actively in “live” classes during at least one of the two designated weekly class meetings (accommodations will of course be made in events such as illness, unexpected family care, etc.). While instructor guidance and interaction will be available throughout the course, because of the remote nature of the course students will be expected to practice more independence and self-pacing than with regular in-person classes.

If the course is taught remotely, we will be using a combination of Zoom (video conferencing), CourseSpaces (course website), and Kaltura (UVic’s in-house version of YouTube).

Course Objectives

The objectives are to: (1) gain a theoretical understanding of labour dynamics under contemporary capitalism; (2) understand how employment has related to specific social inequalities historically and today; (3) evaluate various proposed policy solutions to social problems in the world of work; (4) critically reflect on how course material applies to one’s own life and work trajectory.

Course Pre/Co-requisites

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

Topics May Include

COVID-19 and employment; Precarious work; Emotional labour and care work; Feminist, anti-racist, decolonial and anti-capitalist labour movements; Unionization; Work and disability; Animals and humane jobs; Food chain workers.

Required Textbook/Readings

There is no textbook for the course.

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