9 to 5 and then Bye-bye: Working Across our Lives

Professor Annette Nierobisz

Carleton College • Fall 2015
Course Description

We spend a substantial portion of our lives at work and the jobs we hold shape almost every aspect of our lives including our daily activities, social interactions, personal identities, and life outcomes. In this course we explore how work is experienced at four distinct stages in the human lifecycle: adolescence, early adulthood, midlife, and mature adulthood. At each stage we examine some of the questions asked by sociologists who study work and occupations. For example, how do teenagers envision their future careers and are their aspirations realistic? How do people find a job? What types of mid-career challenges do people typically experience? When and how do people retire from their jobs?

Course Objectives

This course is designed with three goals in mind. First, you’ll learn about the academic field called “sociology of work and occupations.” The insights you’ll gain are invaluable for understanding your own employment experiences and the larger discipline of sociology. Second, you’ll learn about sociology in general. You’ll learn about the critical mindset sociologists adopt, the types of questions sociologists ask, some of the research methods they use, and how sociological evidence is communicated to a wider audience. In the process, you’ll become familiar with quantitative reasoning and visualization practices. Finally, because this is an A&I seminar, you’ll learn about Carleton’s resources, its expectations, the nature of a liberal arts education, and the mindset expected of a curious intellectual.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has specified six student learning outcomes (SLOs) that we want students to acquire before graduating. In this course, we focus on the following two:

1. Formulate appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research questions about socio-cultural phenomena

2. Select (and apply) appropriate sociological and/or anthropological research methods to study socio-cultural phenomena
Reading Material

Three books are required for this course:


Additional reading material is available electronically via the course moodle. Always complete the assigned readings before class. Read the material closely, take effective notes, determine what is clear to you and what needs further clarification, and also consider how core ideas can be connected to other readings.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on the following:

Short paper and presentation (20 points)
After exploring more than 400 occupations tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, you’ll analyze employment and earnings data in an occupation that interests you. You’ll then write a paper about your findings and present your work to the class.

Book presentation (10 points)
You will conduct a group book presentation focused on one of the following books:


Term paper (50 points)
You will write a major paper on a topic of interest in the sociology of work and occupations. You’ll work on this paper throughout the term, submitting four portions at different stages:
• Part 1: Select a topic from the list provided on your assignment sheet. Submit a two-page paper that tells the reader which topic you have selected, why you have selected that topic, and what questions you would like to explore about the topic. Although this paper is relatively informal, you should still write it with a formal academic voice.

• Part 2: Submit a four-page draft of your term paper. This paper will include an introduction that specifies your research question, an overview of four journal articles that help answer your question, and a page of references cited. If statistical indicators are available for your paper, please include those as well.

• Part 3: Submit an eight-page draft of your term paper. This paper will include an introduction, a more extensive overview of relevant literature, a preliminary conclusion, and a page of references cited.

• Part 4: Submit a professionally formatted 12-14 page paper that raises an important question and offers a soundly-argued answer to that question in an engaging way. This paper should be free of errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Students who pursue writing assistance generally fare best on this assignment.

Peer feedback (10 points)
Twice this term you will give your classmates feedback on their term papers. The format of this feedback will be discussed in class.

Class participation (10 points)
You participation will be evaluated according to mandatory class attendance, punctuality, and completion of the assigned readings so that your comments and questions have solid grounding and advance discussion. Participation also involves listening when others are speaking. Cell phones and other technology are not welcome in my classroom. You may use your personal computers to pull up class readings but in-class notes should be taken with paper and pen. If you have a personal circumstance that merits exception, please see me about this in advance. Students who meet the standards of class participation at only the most basic level will receive the “default” participation grade of 5 points. Students who miss more than three classes risk forfeiting their participation grade.
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Distribution Date</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
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<tr>
<td>BLS Reflection Paper</td>
<td>9/21</td>
<td>10/01</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td>BLS Slides</td>
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<td>BLS Presentation</td>
<td>9/21</td>
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<td>Book Presentation</td>
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<td>Term Paper Part 1</td>
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<td>Term Paper Part 2</td>
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<td>9/18</td>
<td>11/17</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<td>3 points</td>
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<td>9/18</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>7 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>9/14</td>
<td>as per requirements</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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* Assignments due on non-class days should be placed in my SOAN mailbox by 5:00 p.m. on the date due. No extensions will be provided, and late submissions will have one-half point deducted for each day late.

Grade range: “A” = 90-100%; “B” = 80-89%; “C” = 70-79%; “D” = 60-69%; “F” <= 59%

Assistive Services for Students

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process. Please note I will only respond to official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students.

Technological Resources for Students with Disabilities

The Assistive Technology program brings together academic and technological resources to complement student classroom and computing needs, particularly in support of students with physical or learning disabilities. Accessibility features include text-to-speech (Kurzweil) software, speech-to-text (Dragon)
software, and audio recording Smartpens. For more information, contact aztechs@carleton.edu or visit go.carleton.edu/aztech.

Library

Ask a librarian for help with your research in this class. You can drop by the library’s Research/IT desk to ask any question you have, at any point in your process. Librarians help students find and evaluate articles, books, websites, statistics, data, and government documents; they can also show you how to cite your sources. For more information on hours and librarians, visit the Gould Library website at go.carleton.edu/library.

Time Management, Test Preparation, and Study Skills

Residential Life Area Directors are trained to work with you to improve your time management and academic skills. Their goals are to heighten awareness of your personal strengths and skills and to offer different ways you can approach your academic work so you're more efficient and effective. Meetings are by appointment; you simply need to email one of them to arrange a visit. For more details and resources, visit the Academic Skills Coaching website.

Writing Assistance

All students are encouraged to work with the Writing Assistant for this course, Melanie Teruya ’16 (teruyam@carelton.edu). Melanie is aware of our assignments and deadlines, and she can help you with anything from organizing your ideas to editing your rough drafts. She will use our course Moodle and email you with available appointment times. The Writing Center, located in 4th Libe, also has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final proofreading. Hours and more information can be found on the writing center website. You can reserve specific times for conferences by using their online appointment system. Walk-ins are welcome although writers with appointments have priority.

Writing Assistance for Students whose First Language is not English

If you are a second language writer and believe you might benefit from working individually with a writing consultant, email Renata Fitzpatrick, Multilingual Writing Coordinator, call her at x5998, or stop by her office in 420D 4th Libe. She can arrange once- or twice-a-week meetings between you and a specific writing consultant throughout the term.
Course Outline

9/14

Introducing the Course


9/16, 18

Introducing Sociology

9/16


9/18


Class activity: You will be assigned one of the following readings to present to the class. In doing so, you will practice citing other people’s work and presenting ideas concisely. You’ll also explain whether your article challenges conventional wisdom, identifies a pattern in social behavior, or exposes the social construction of reality. The readings are available on moodle.

9/21

**The Sociological Imagination**


9/23

**How Do Sociologists Study Work?**


9/25

**A&I Convocation Day**

@ 10:50 a.m.
A&I Convocation by Cliff Clark, Professor of History, Carleton College and M.A. and A.D. Hulings Professor of American Studies: “My Freshman Year and Yours: Political, Technological Change, and the Future of the Liberal Arts.”

@ 2:20 p.m

- In-class activity: With a small group of classmates, review a table of statistical findings that report the relationship between education and employment. Write a summary of the trends integrating the tips provided by Jane Miller (2004). This activity will let you practice writing and talking about numbers.

9/28

**Sociologists in the Information Age**

Library session (location to be announced)

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**Adolescence**

9/30

**Adolescent Views of Work**


Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Barbara Schniedier. 2000. *Becoming Adult*. Just read: Chapter 1, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3

10/2

**Learning to Work**

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Barbara Schniedier. 2000. *Becoming Adult*. Just read: Chapter 4, Chapter 5 (only pages 95-99), Chapter 6 and Chapter 7
Making the Transition to Adulthood: Part I

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and Barbara Schnedier. 2000. *Becoming Adult*. Just read: Chapter 9 and Chapter 10

Preparing for your BLS Presentation


BLS Presentations


Early Adulthood

“Man! I just had to pull another all-dayer.”
Making the Transition to Adulthood: Part II

10/12:


10/14:


Finding a Job: Structural Opportunities and Impediments

10/16


10/19
MID-TERM BREAK

10/21
Presentation 1: Selling Women Short: Gender and Money on Wall Street


Presentation 2: *No More Invisible Man: Race and Gender in Men’s Work*


**Midlife**

"We were hoping that you could work from work today."

10/26  
The Time Bind

Gerson, Kathleen. 2010. *The Unfinished Revolution*. Just read: Chapter 1, Appendix 1, and Appendix 2.


10/28  
Growing up in Changing Families


10/30  
Facing the Future

Gerson, Kathleen. 2010. *The Unfinished Revolution*. Just read: Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7
Want to know how men behave when they stay home to raise their children? Read this fascinating article published by Erin Rehel in Gender and Society, 2014: *When Dad Stays Home too: Paternity, Gender, and Parenting*.

11/2

**Peer editing session**

You will present your feedback to a classmate’s term paper during class time. A paper copy of your feedback also will be placed in my SOAN mailbox.

11/4

**Presentation 3: Opting Out? Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home**


Want to know more about Pamela Stone’s study? Read this fascinating follow-up in the *New York Times Magazine* article by Judith Warner: *The Opt-Out Generation Wants Back In*

**Mature Adulthood**

*I'm fifty-three, but I have the résumé of a much younger man.*

11/6

**An Aging Population**


11/9, 11

**Working While Old**

11/9

11/11

11/13

**Presentation 4: The Experience of Retirement**


11/16, 18

**Term Paper Presentations**

*Happy Winter Break!*