

POLS 380
MWF 7:10-9:00pm, MI 209
Office: MI 214

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Office Hours: Tues. 12-1pm; Wed. 11:15am-12:15pm; Thur. 6-7pm; other times – email me

Senior Capstone Research Seminar Spring 2018

Course Description

This is a capstone seminar for students interested in political theory, public law, or American politics, with emphasis on preparing students' written work for presentation, including seminar presentations and peer review. Throughout the semester, all students will complete a significant research paper on a topic they develop, by working on multiple intermediate assignments building up to a draft and then final version of the paper. Students are encouraged to develop a paper connected to themes from class, but may ultimately write about any topic (developed in conversation with John) relevant to the fields of political theory, public law, and/or American politics.

The topical focus for the class is “Theories and Politics of Work and Labor,” involving both historical and contemporary critical scholarship on the nature of work and labor, and their relation to politics. We will investigate such questions as: what is work?; what is labor?; why do we work?; what is the relation between the realm of work and that of politics?; how are work and labor gendered and racialized?; is work necessary?; should we work?; what should we do if and when (human) work and labor are no longer necessary?; how and why do work and labor generate various forms of hierarchies?; is work always dominating?; can work ever be free?

The first section of the course examines canonical political theories of work and labor in conversation with contemporary scholarship on questions of gender, race, and colonialism in relation to those theories. The second section examines two phenomena in the history of American labor: the racialization of the white working class and 20th century labor law. The third section of the class examines contemporary and future issues of work and labor, especially the gendering and racialization of labor, hierarchy and domination in the workplace, and anti-work politics, with a focus on work that is at the same theoretically and empirically grounded. The final section of the course will be comprised of peer review and student research presentations. We will also focus on your own futures of work and labor throughout the semester, in the form of two professional and career development sessions led by Jessica Fox-Wilson from LAPC.

Ultimately, this course is designed to both generate a critical perspective on the past, present, and future of work and to cultivate sustained research and writing skills.

Evaluation

- Research paper: 55%
- Class citizenship: 30%
- Class facilitation: 10%
- Research presentation: 5%

Assignment

- Research paper (55% of grade): You will cultivate and write, throughout the semester, a substantial research paper on a topic you develop in consultation with John. I encourage you to write about something connected to the themes of the course, and will share a list of possible topic areas on Moodle; however, you may write about anything in the ambit of political theory, public law, and/or American politics. Because we will work on these papers throughout the semester, the expectations are high; this should be the best paper you write during your time at Beloit
 - Papers are to be 8,000 words in length (give or take 500), not including notes or bibliography; if you are doing honors, your paper is to be 15,000 words in length (give or take 1,000), not including notes or bibliography.
 - You will use Chicago author-date citations for your paper. I will provide guidelines and links about this; I also suggest you use this course as an opportunity to familiarize yourself with a citation management system (I recommend Zotero).
 - You have many intermediate assignments that are designed to “scaffold” the development of your topic, research, ideas, and plan and also to ensure you are working on your paper. Failure to turn in an assignment in full and on time will result in 10% off this part of your grade for each late and/or incomplete assignment. The schedule for these assignments is as follows.
 - Research question: **Jan. 30**
 - Abstract + initial list of sources (min. 10 academic sources) **Feb. 9**
 - Annotated Bibliography 1 (min. 8 sources) **March 8**
 - Annotate Bibliography 2 (min. 15 sources) + Planning document (outline, conceptual map, narrative of paper, etc.) **March 29**
 - Rough draft **April 12**
 - Final draft **May 8**
 - 500-word reflection on the research and writing development process **May 15**
- Class citizenship (30% of your grade): I care about whether you come to class and the role you play in it; our class will be most rewarding if you attend regularly, and if you are an active citizen. I expect you to come on time, to listen, and to participate. **After two absences, the class citizenship component of your grade will decrease.** Class citizenship, however, entails more than just showing up, it also means participating in class. This course will be organized and run as a graduate-level seminar, which means that the emphasis will be on *student* discussions and analyses of the assigned readings. Therefore, it is imperative that you complete the readings and familiarize yourself with the main points/issues they raise. This does not require ‘understanding’ the readings entirely; the goal of the course is analysis and interrogation and investigation and problematization and critical thinking rather than understanding. Simply attending class without actively taking part in the discussions will lower this portion of your grade.
 - One essential part of class citizenship is contributing **two discussion questions to Moodle for each class session, no later than noon the day of class.** These should be substantive and analytical questions for us to debate with one another in class, rather than content questions about the readings (those you should bring to class for us to clarify together). These will often form the basis of class discussion each day.
 - Participation can take many different forms: asking questions about unclear concepts or materials, raising ideas we as a class or the author may have overlooked,

- respectfully sharing opinions, volunteering to read passages when asked, visiting office hours, contributing to class discussions in large and small groups without monopolizing conversations, paying attention to me and to your classmates, and taking risks when there are questions asked that have no clear answers. Participation does not only mean talking—it also means working to be aware of the space you inhabit and how you can best contribute to an atmosphere of supportive learning.
- I understand that speaking in class can be challenging. We will have a number of different kinds of discussions to encourage participation. Regularly coming to office hours and discussing the readings can contribute to your class citizenship grade as well, as does asking questions in class.
 - Last but not least, class citizenship means being receptive of and interested in others' political and philosophical perspectives, respectful of experiences different than your own, and open to having others disagree with you. Disagreement is inevitable in a political science class (including with me!), and can be incredibly productive so long as it proceeds collegially.
 - If I sense that people are not doing the reading, I reserve the right to institute reading quizzes and/or reading responses that will be part of this grade.
- **Class facilitation (10% of grade):** Once during the first few sections of the course, you will work another student to facilitate a class session; you will be in charge of class for that day, with John playing a supporting role at most. You should feel free to structure the class as you see fit, as long as the plan is directly connected to discussing / evaluating the readings. Usual class sessions will involve large- and small-group discussions, guided discussion questions, close readings of important passages, and short in-class writing. Other activities you might consider include but are not limited to structured debates, paired discussions, games, simulations, etc. You will need to develop at least six questions and distribute them to the class via email by 8am the morning of class. Keep in mind that the goal is discussion, not just having people repeat what the author(s) said. You need to be able to sustain discussion for the whole session.
 - You will sign up for class facilitations in the first or second week of class.
 - Each pair will be required to meet with John in advance of their facilitations.
 - **Research presentation (5% of grade):** During the last several class sessions, each student will give a 20 minute (approximately) presentation on their research paper, with each presentation followed by 10-15 minutes of question and answer/discussion with the class. You may choose to emphasize any aspect of the research you have conducted, so long as you also give us a sense of how it generally fits into the overall paper/project. If you are doing honors, I strongly recommend you present in the earliest day for presentations (April 17) so that you have practiced before the departmental defense.

Reading

All readings in this class will be available in PDF or other electronic form, accessed through Moodle.

Loud Bodies Project

This semester all of my classes are participating in the Loud Bodies Project, an initiative to bring stim toys into the classroom and encourage all students to participate to their fullest capacity. Every day, I will bring a bag of stim toys into the classroom, and I encourage you to use them, to

bring your own toys if you have them, and to think about what else would help you or any other students reach their full potential in the classroom. Around spring break, I'll be sending everyone a survey to assess how the project is going and what it can improve in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about the project, talk to me or email the coordinator, Eli Johnson, at johnsonr1@beloit.edu. For more information on neurodiversity, see <http://neurocosmopolitanism.com/neurodiversity-some-basic-terms-definitions/>

Technology

Numerous studies (for example [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#); for an overview see [here](#)) demonstrate that, on aggregate, students taking notes by hand learn information more effectively and receive higher grades than those taking notes on computer, even when those on devices are exclusively focused on class tasks. Moreover, many of us (myself certainly included!) find it difficult to pull ourselves away from email, social media, news, etc. when we have screens in front of us.

Thus, while readings for our class will be 100% electronic, I urge you to consider strategies to help your focus and bring in less digital methods for engaging in class, such as taking written notes, printing some or all of the readings, etc.

I would encourage you to reflect on the ways you learn effectively and the ways that learning is more difficult. I fully expect you to use devices in class only for tasks related to class, and that your attention is focused as much as possible on the conversations in class, and on your peers. Ultimately, I want you to engage with the course material and course sessions in the way that will support your success in the class.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a disability and need accommodations, contact Learning Enrichment and Disability Services (LEADS) located on 2nd floor Pearsons (north side), 608-363-2572, learning@beloit.edu or make an appointment through joydeleon.youcanbook.me. For accommodations in my class, you are to bring me an Access Letter from the Director of LEADS and then we will discuss how to implement the accommodations. Contact that office promptly; accommodations are not retroactive.

Writing Advising

The Writing Center has student writers who are trained tutors ready to work with you collaboratively on any stage of your writing in this class--from brainstorming to final editing. It's a friendly and supportive place, and their goal is to help you to improve your writing and become a better writer. You can make an appointment here: [Writing Center Appointments](#).

Policy on Inclusivity at Beloit College

Inclusivity is a demonstration of equity and social justice through awareness, understanding, and respect for the differences in identity, culture, background, experience, and socialization, and the ways in which these forms of difference impact how we live and learn. Inclusivity requires equitable, institution-wide representation and access to resources. In practice, this manifests itself by each individual being aware of, committed to, and responsible for the well-being and care of all students, staff, and faculty.

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

Academic misconduct and dishonesty are serious offenses. Such acts violate the trust that forms the foundation of the student-teacher relationship, they rob students of opportunities to learn, and they damage the reputation of the College as a whole. In particular, plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft and is completely unacceptable. I expect that you will follow Beloit's policy on academic honesty printed in the Student Handbook. Any assignments or exams that violate this policy will receive a failing grade. I will also notify the Dean of Students of any cases of academic dishonesty, and she will determine any further penalties.

Other course policies and notes

- If a student has a desired name that is not listed on my course roster, please let me know. Students are encouraged to notify me of their gender pronouns. I use he/him/his pronouns.
 - Check your email regularly.
 - I strongly encourage you to come visit my office hours; if the times listed don't work, email me so we can figure out another time to meet.
 - If you are struggling with any aspect of the course, talk to me sooner rather than later so we can work on the ways to best help you. Please also consider requesting a Peer Tutor, working with the Writing Center, or seeking assistance from Learning Enrichment and Disability Services.
 - If a religious holiday that you observe conflicts with an assignment, please let me know in advance so that we may discuss alternate options.
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READING SCHEDULE

Subject to changes, which will be announced in class and over e-mail. When there are multiple readings assigned, please read in the order listed below.

Jan. 23: What is work, and why study it anyway???

- In-class: group read Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, pp. 1-8 and 14-15

I. Political Theories of Work and Labor

Jan. 25: Aristotle, work, and politics

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X.6-X.8
- Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I
- Wendy Brown, "Aristotle: The Highest Good for Man," *Manhood and Politics* (1988)

Jan. 30: John Locke's labor theory of property and colonial liberalism

Research question due: bring a copy to class + email to John by 7:00pm

- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chap. 5 and chap. 9
- Uday Singh Mehta, "Liberalism, Territory, and Empire" (read pp. 124-132), *Liberalism and Empire* (1999)
- John Quiggin, "John Locke Against Freedom," *Jacobin* (2015)
- Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. I*, "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation," excerpt (M-ER 431-434)

Feb. 1: Interlude – Writing Workshop; Career Development

- Writing workshop: what does a 25-page paper about work and labor look like? And how do you write it?!?
 - Amy Schiller and John McMahon, “Alexa, AutoMarxism, and Affect: The Feminine Mystique in the Age of Home-Based Artificial Intelligence”: read for in-class discussion of writing process + student critique of paper
- Career Development (with Jessica Fox-Wilson, LAPC): Time and Technology in the Workplace
 - Cuilfi, L. & Pinatti de Carvallho, A. “Work Practices, Nomadicity, and the Mediational Role of Technology”
 - Duxbury, L. and Smart, R. “The ‘Myth of Separate Worlds’: An Exploration of How Mobile Technology has Redefined Work-Life Balance

Feb. 6: Hegel, work, and slavery

- G.W.F. Hegel, “Lordship and Bondage” in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), read para. 175-196
- Frederick Douglass, “To My Old Master” (1855)
- Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (1982), pp. 97-101

Feb. 8: Marx I – Labor and the Critique of Capitalism

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, excerpts (M-ER 149-159)
- Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, excerpts (M-ER 70-79)
- Marx, *Capital Vol. I*, excerpts (M-ER 336-343, 361-364)

Feb. 9, 11:59pm: 200-250 word abstract + initial list of 10 sources due by email to John

Feb. 13: Marx II – Emancipated labor?

- Marx and Engels, *German Ideology*, excerpt (M-ER 160)
- Marx, *Capital Vol. III*, excerpts (M-ER 439-41)
- Marx, *Grundrisse*, “Fragment on Machines”
- Frank Wilderson III, “Gramsci’s Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?,” *Social Identities* 9, 2003

Feb. 15: Rachel Brown on migrant labor

For extra credit, attend Rachel Brown’s talk at 4:30pm in Moore Lounge – to receive the extra credit, you must either ask a question during Q&A of the talk or email a 300-word response to John

- Brown, “Re-examining the Transnational Nanny: Migrant Carework Beyond the Chain.” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* (2016)
- Rachel H. Brown, “Multiple Modes of Care: Internet and the Formation of Migrant Care Networks in Israel.” *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* (2016)

II. Histories of American Labor

Feb. 20: Race and American labor

- David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (1991), Preface (read xiv-end), chap. 1, chap. 4,

Feb. 22: Race and American labor

- Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness*, chaps. 7, 8

Feb. 27: 20th century labor law

- James A. Gross, *Broken Promise: The Subversion of U.S. Labor Relations Policy, 1947-1994* (2003), Preface, chap. 1 and chap. 2
** Available online through the library – search for the title

March 1: 20th century labor law

- Gross, *Broken Promise*, chaps. 8, 13

III. Contemporary Critiques of Work and Labor

March 6: Work and hierarchy

- Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It)* (2017), Author's Preface and chap. 1

March 8: Work and hierarchy

Annotated Bibliography 1 (min. 10 sources) due – email to John by 11:59pm

- Anderson, *Private Government*, chap. 2
- Miya Tokumitsu, "In the Name of Love," *Jacobin* (2014),
<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/01/in-the-name-of-love/>

SPRING BREAK

March 20: Marxist feminism and domestic labor

- Nicole Cox and Silvia Federici, *Counter-Planning from the Kitchen: Wages for Housework—A Perspective on Capital and the Left* (1975)
- Lise Vogel, "Domestic Labor Revisited," *Science & Society* 64 (2000)

March 22: Black feminism

- Angela Davis, "Women and Capitalism: Dialectics of Oppression and Liberation" (1977), in *The Black Feminist Reader*, ed. James and Sharpley-Whiting
- Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (2000), chap. 3

March 27: Weissberg chair; Race and affective labor

The first of class will be comprised of a conversation with the Weissberg chair, Steven Hawkins. The second half will be a normal class

- Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, "Preface" and ch. 10, "Suppressed Incomes"
- TBA on global housing segregation
- Shiloh Whitney, "Affective Indigestion: Lorde, Fanon, and Gutierrez-Rodriguez on Race and Affective Labor," *Journal of*

Speculative Philosophy 30 (2016)

March 29: Work day (John away at WPSA conference)

Annotated bibliography 2 + Planning document (Outline, conceptual map, narrative of paper, etc.) due: email to John by 11:59pm

April 3: Kathi Weeks and post-work imaginaries

- Kathi Weeks, *The Problem With Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (2011)
 - You may want to re-read the parts of the Introduction that we read on the first day (1-8, 14-16)
 - Introduction, pp. 8-14 (“Gender at Work” + “Work Values”) + pp. 20-23 (“Freedom and Equality”)
 - Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, chap. 3

April 5: Kathi Weeks and post-work imaginaries

- Weeks, *The Problem with Work*, chap. 4 and Epilogue
- Andy Beckett, “Post-Work: The radical idea of a world without jobs.” *The Guardian* (2018)

April 10: Career Development (with Jessica Fox-Wilson, LAPC): Workplace as a Culture

- Benjamin Schneider, “The People Make the Place,” *Personnel Psychology* 40 (1987)
- Dave Eggers, *The Circle* (2013), excerpt

IV. Presentations and Writing

April 12: Peer Review

FIRST DRAFT DUE: electronic copy emailed to John by 7:00pm; bring one paper copy to class

April 17: Presentations

No class April 19 – Student Symposium

- For extra credit, write a 500-word critical reflection on a panel you attend
 - When the schedule comes out, John will suggest panels

April 24: Presentations

April 26: Presentations

May 1: Presentations

May 3: Presentations

May 8: **FINAL PAPER DUE at 7:00pm**; Dinner at John’s house, 7:15pm

May 15, 5pm: **500-word reflection due**

