

School of Public Policy and Administration
Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies

AP/PPAS 3762 3.00 N
CANADA'S LABOUR MARKET POLICY

Winter 2020
THURSDAY 2:30-5:30 PM, CC 108

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Meritocracy is not meritorious.

1. Overview: Why Work?

You think you have to work. Like everyone else in your life. Non-negotiable. Whatever the job is. Heck, you might even think the only reason you are going to York is to get a job later. If not, what's the point, right? Yes, even if you hate your job you will do it. Even if you want out. Everyday. Everyone thinks so, you tell yourself.

Is that all there is in your life? What if work isn't what it seems. What if you could have a choice, but you aren't given that choice. What if the way how your work life is structured does not need to be what you think it needs to be. And you just might have a say.

2. Learning Outcomes: How You Might Have a Happier Life

If the course works as it is designed to be — with your involvement and contributions of course, you will learn to think about the outlook for your future work life in a new way while you learn how to make sense of the Canadian Labour market. You will learn to avoid the allure of what might look like jobs of glamour and glory but actually jobs of degradation of human spirits. You will learn to open your eyes to all the hocus-pocus of the gig economy aimed to sell you the illusion that exploitation is liberation. You will learn to challenge the norms of the labour market that many believe in. If everything works out, you might even have a chance to embark on a more productive life and a happier life in your own terms.

3. Course Materials: Readings + Kindle books

Students are required to make good use of readings assigned for each class along with the following three Kindle books:

- [Bullshit Jobs: A Theory](#)
- [Will the Gig Economy Prevail?](#)
- [The Myth of Meritocracy: Why Working-Class Kids Still Get Working-Class Jobs](#)

The urls to readings will be available on course Moodle before each class. Students are recommended to buy the Kindle edition of the books so they can read on their smart phones or other devices everywhere everyday.

4. Teaching Approach: Use What It Is to Probe What It Could Be

The course is designed with in-class activities in mind. In the course, you will learn how to process what it is to get at what it could be so you will work through analyses of labour market norms, comment on current Canadian labour market policies and search for a work future that you would like to have for everyone. Feedbacks to students' learning progress will be embedded weekly in class so students can learn from each other. Tentative marks will be posted on Moodle by the drop date.

5. Evaluation: Less is more

The evaluation focuses on basic academic skills that students are expected to learn in university studies – information literacy, critical thinking and effective communication as well as responsibility. All students will be graded and ranked in comparison to their peers. A final grade for the course will be given to each student at the end of the academic year based on the following components.

Reading diary [30%]. Each student is required to use the specially designed MS Excel workbook to “write” a “diary” on a part of the three Kindle books she or he reads each day. The diary will be required to be submitted on demand in class within a specific window. No out-of-class submission is accepted.

In-class assignments [40%]. Each student is required to complete assignments in class each class so please bring your laptop to each class. The in-class assignments will be required to be submitted in class within a specific window. No out-of-class submission is accepted.

Cap-stone project [30%]. Students are required to prepare a research project on an assigned topic to be submitted on a specific data after the end of Winter 2020. No late submission is accepted.

Very specific submission protocols of work done for the course including formats and deadlines will only be discussed in class as students will be involved in parts of the design of the protocols. For example, all submissions must be sent to taxlaw@yorku.ca, and submissions that don't follow the protocol will normally not be graded. All the submissions must follow the very specific submission protocols. Failure to follow the protocols could lead to failure in the course.

6. Tentative Schedule: Learning by Doing

As a gentle reminder, students are required to bring their laptop to each class as otherwise they won't be able to do the necessary work:

- Jan. 9 & 16: Your Career — Why Work?
- Jan. 23 & 30: Meritocracy — From Unemployment to Underemployment
- Feb. 6 & 13: Your Worth — Gender Pay Gap, Racial Discrimination
- Feb. 27 & Mar. 5: Collective Bargaining — Right to Strike to Protect Everyone
- Mar. 12 & 19: Gig Economy — Liberation or Exploitation?
- Mar. 26 & Apr. 2: Basic Income — An Opportunity to Fulfill Your Promise

I am eager to talk shop all the time. But to make sure that any academic discussion with any student will be shared with all students in the course so all students can benefit from it, please either raise questions in class or email me the questions so I can incorporate your wonderful contributions into the development of our course for all students. I am confident that such an approach are more conducive to learning than, let's say traditional office hours, given the design of the course.

7. Selected standard university policies provided by the administration

Please note that in-class discussions cannot be reappraised as they are not tangible work. See <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/grade-reappraisal-policy>.

Academic dishonesty will be prosecuted. Students might wish to review <http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/c.php?g=679678&p=4791863>.

For Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, see <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=68>.

On religious observance, see <https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>.

For students with special needs, see <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca>.

For mature students, see <http://www.yorku.ca/acmaps/>.

On withdrawal, see <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/withdrawn-from-course-w-%20policy-and-guidelines/>.