COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines changing labor market conditions and their impact on workers, especially middle and low income earners. The course will start with an overview of recent writings that look at transformative forces related to international trade, corporate restructuring, new skill demands, and weakening labor bargaining power. We will consider how these forces are experienced differently across industries and across socio-economic groups, as well as some of the institutional factors that help to explain widening wage and income disparities in the United States. The second half of the course will focus on some of the policy and planning implications of these transformative forces and specifically the role that local practitioners and policy makers can play in addressing sources of socio-economic disparity. Four areas of policy will be considered, including: efforts to link competitiveness-enhancing retraining and industrial/sectoral upgrading initiatives; the creation of innovative new partnerships between employers and labor market intermediaries, such as staffing agencies, labor unions and non-profits; strategies that connect smart-growth and social equity goals; and finally, new forms of labor and community organizing designed to improve workplace justice (e.g., community benefits and living wage movements). This course is open to graduate students from all disciplines. Although required readings for this class draw primarily on the U.S. experience, international case comparisons will be incorporated into class discussions and select assignments.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING
Transformative Trends and Debates ................................................................. (20 percent)
A small group of students (3-4) will pair up to facilitate discussion of one key debate or transformative trend that could shape labor market dynamics for years/decades to come (see list below). Each group will assign 2-4 readings related to this debate (post assigned readings to Sakai at least 1 week in advance of your session— I have suggested readings I can share in advance). Required readings should not total more than 45 pages. The groups should plan to facilitate the full class session (a max. of 60 mins) allowing time at the beginning or end for general announcements and updates. The last 15 minutes of your facilitated session should be dedicated to a group discussion that draws out this theme/debate in relation to planning practice: the goal is to develop 3-4 talking points that planning practitioners might use to help clients and stakeholders understand the nuances of this particular debate and how it relates to their own circumstances or professional practice. Be creative with the format. Possibilities include: a mock debate, use of an introductory video, radio or podcast segment to set the stage (15 minutes at most), small-group breakout or activity, or structured class discussion (two formats at most). Handouts and/or visual aids are encouraged (PowerPoint if necessary).

Due date: Various class sessions in September
Career Journal...........................................................................................................................................................(45 percent)
This is an opportunity to conduct independent research on your future career in planning, economic
development or other post-graduation profession. Write 4 journal entries. The first entry should be based on
an informational interview conducted this semester with two planning professionals in jobs you might like to
have yourself in a few years. One of these can be a follow up interview with someone you have previously
spoken with. (3 double spaced pages). A second entry will involve a comparison of 5 organizations you
might want to work at post-graduation using at least four criteria you define (that matter most to you. For
example-starting wage, advancement opportunities, work-based learning, work that challenges you, career-
life balance, location etc. Write brief summaries of each organization and create a one page matrix/table for
comparison that can be shared with your classmates. For a third entry you will write two sample letters for a
post-graduation job. One must be unsolicited and the other responding to an actual job posting. In addition
to the letters, you should provide some background on why you chose to target this job or organization and
what skill sets or experiences you think you have that make this a good fit. For your final entry, you will
need to attend an in-person session that helps you develop your resume or your job search strategy. You will
write a 2 page reflection on the session and briefly describe the purpose of the session, what you learned
from it, what changes you might make to your resume or job search strategy as a result of that learning, and a
brief statement on whether you would recommend this session to others in the future. All entries must be in
MSWord, double-spaced, and Times New Roman size 12 font

Due Date: Tues, October 4th (Entries 1 and 2) Tues, November 15th (Entries 3 and 4)

Workforce Development Solution: Handout and Presentation.........................................................(20 percent)
2-3 students will be paired together to present on an intervention designed to improve working conditions or
worker rights. An “intervention” is a course of action that analyzes or attempts to resolve a labor market-
related problem or challenge. This can be an action taken by an existing labor market intermediary,
workforce development organization, community development organization, new federal or state law or
policy, labor union campaign, or proposed policy initiative (including proposals by political candidates).
Each student must present some of the material as part of your grade will be based on individual
performance. If three students are presenting on one action or intervention, one might frame the labor market
problem, another might provide an overview of the program/policy and solution it offers and a third might
reflect on what works well and why and provide some transferable lessons on what might be needed to
implement the policy. Presentations should be approximately 20 minutes in length, followed by 10 minutes
max. of Q&A. You might be asked to share a 60 minute presentation slot with another team—therefore, your
final grade will also reflect good time management! Your team must prepare a two page detailed handout
for the presentation (10 percent of your grade will be based on this handout). Sample copies of handouts are
posted to Sakai.

Due Date: Thurs, October 27th (Groups 1 & 2) Tues, November 8th (Groups 3 & 4) Thurs, November 17th
(Groups 5 & 6)

Class Participation...........................................................................................................................................(15 percent)
Each session is more effective as a dialogue rather than lecture format. Please complete all assigned readings
before class and be prepared to contribute! In-class activities, including some reflective writings, will be used
to encourage participation.

Due Date: Cumulative throughout the semester

POLICY FOR LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Please note that I will downgrade assignments a half letter grade
for each late day. Exceptions will be made in the case of a medical or family emergency.
PLAN 774 COURSE TOPICS AND REQUIRED READING

PART 1. WORK TRANSFORMED

1/2 Course Overview (Aug 23/25)


3/4 Work, Transformed (Aug 30/Sept 1)

Activities: Class discussion of pre- and post-WWII labor market structure. Conduct an interview to capture pre-1980 work experience of a grandparent or more senior family member (be prepared to discuss August 30th)


5 The State of Work in North Carolina (Sept 6): John Quintero

Quintero, John. Few Signs of a Carolina Comeback (read all four reports linked at end of this press release) http://www.thinkncfirst.org/news/few-signs-of-a-carolina-comeback

6 Labor Market Segmentation, through Lens of Race and Gender (Sept 8)


PART 2. FUTURE OF WORK: THE BIG DEBATES (*STUDENT LED)

7 Do Workers Share in the Sharing Economy? (Sept 13)*

8 Is Manufacturing Still a Path to the Middle Class? (Sept 15)*

9 Is Wal-Mart (now) good for America? (Sept 20)*

10 Is this the End of Work as We Know it? (Sept 22)*

11/12 Is Education Policy Enough? (Sept 27/29)

Activity (11): Half class will focus on service work; other half on manual tasks/trade. Come prepared to talk about the skills of a worker you interviewed over the weekend. How did they develop their skill? Was it through the classroom? On-the-job? Through formal or informal training? Was there a social dimension to their learning process? Are these transferable skills? Are these hidden or tacit skills? If so, how do they demonstrate them?

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/24/magazine/24labor-t.html?pagewanted=all


http://prospect.org/article/skills-myth


http://online.wsj.com/article/SB100014240529702044422404576596630897409182.html

PART 3. LABOR MARKET SOLUTIONS

13 Living Wage Campaigns (Oct 4)


14 **High Performance Work Organizations (Oct 6)**


15 **Guest Speaker: Anne Claire Broughton (Oct 11)**

Hitachi Pioneer Employers: various case studies (TBA)


16 **HR @ Carolina Inn: (Oct 13)**

17 **Workforce Intermediation (Oct 18)**


Conway, Maureen. 2014. “A Brief History of Sector Strategies”. In Connecting People to Work: Workforce Intermediaries and Sector Strategies, Maureen Conway and Robert Giloth (ed.)


**FALL BREAK: NO CLASS (Oct 20)**
18 **WI: The Case of Garments (Oct 25)**


19 **Student Presentations: Group 1 & 2 (Oct 27)**

20 **Guest Speaker: Community College System (Nov 1)**

21 **Public Sector In–Sourcing and Local Hiring (Nov 3)**


David Ranii. Insourcing installers; Complexity, competition lead Time Warner Cable to use contractors less. News and Observer. April 28.

22 **Student Presentations: Groups 3 &4 (Nov 8):**

23 **Community Benefits Agreements (Nov 10):**


24 Next Generation Apprenticeship (Nov 15)


25 Student Presentations: Groups 5/6 (Nov 17)

PART 4. FEDERAL/NATIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGY

26 Next Generation Unionism (Nov 22)


THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS (Nov 24)

27 Career Journal debrief (Nov 29)
28 Federal Workforce Policy (Dec 1)


Holland, Brian. 2016. Both sides now: Toward the dual customer approach under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the United States. Local Economy. Vol. 31(3) 424–441

30 Class Wrap-Up (Dec 6)