

# LABOUR STUDIES – LABR 1C03E Voices of Work, Resistance and Change

Fall 2016

Time and Date of Classes: Monday 7-9pm

Class Location: JHE 264

Instructor: Katherine Nastovski

Email Address: nastov@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Thursdays 12-1pm or by appointment

Office Location: Kenneth Taylor Hall Room 724

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the nature and historical development of work and struggles over work under capitalism. We will examine how work, conditions of work and control over work have been shaped by the development of capitalism, imperialism, racism and patriarchy. We will look at struggles and histories locally but within an international context. Starting from the global and historical context we will move into local strategies of employers and the state in their efforts to shape conditions of work. The second half of the course will focus on resistance and organizing. This will include responses from informal everyday forms of resistance in the workplace to union struggles and community and political organizing.

## TEXT AND COURSEWARE

1. David McNally, *Another World is Possible*. Revised Expanded Edition.  
Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2006.
2. Course Kit (referred to below as CK)
3. Online Articles: Listed Below

## EVALUATION BREAKDOWN

### **Film Analysis – 20%      Due October 17<sup>th</sup>**

6 pages (approximately 1800 words, double spaced 12pt font)

This assignment requires you to write a short essay analyzing a film related to the course themes.

### **Midterm Test – 25%      In Class November 7<sup>th</sup>**

The midterm will be written in class. It will test your knowledge of the material in the first part of the course including readings, lectures, films and tutorials. The test will consist of short answer and essay questions.

### **Group Project – 30%      Due December 5<sup>th</sup>**

Organizing Proposal

15 pages (approximately 4500 words, double spaced 12pt font)

This proposal will be done in groups of three.

### **Final Exam – 15%      Date and Time TBA**

The final exam will be held during the exam period set by the Registrar. The exam will focus on material from the second part of the course. The exam will consist of short answer and essay questions.

## **Tutorial Attendance and Participation – 10%**

Tutorial participation grades will be based on attendance, participation and demonstrating that you have done the readings.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course addresses four important University Undergraduate Degree Expectations. First, the course will introduce a range of theories relevant to the study of work. These theories are drawn a range of disciplines and will provide a basis for developing strong analytical and critical thinking skills. Second, through the first assignment, midterm and final exam, students will be required to develop arguments and apply the theories, concepts and histories we consider in the course. Lastly, through the group assignment and tutorials, the course aims to support both the development of effective communication skills and the skills necessary to work well with others.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

### **Week 1**

September 12

#### ***Introduction to the Course:***

Review of the syllabus and course requirements  
Introduction to course themes and questions

### **Week 2**

September 19

#### ***What is Work? Introduction to Capitalism and Wage Labour***

McNally, “The Invisible Hand is a Closed Fist” p. 83-108  
Reinhart, “Work as a Social Problem” p. 1-10 (CK)

### **Week 3**

September 26

#### ***Alienation and Hegemony***

McNally, “The Invisible Hand is a Closed Fist” p. 114-131  
Reinhart, “Alienation and Its Sources” p. 11-21 (CK)

### **Week 4**

October 3

#### ***Making ‘flexible’ Workers - Part One: Global Strategies From Colonization to Neoliberal Globalization***

McNally, “The Colour of Money” p. 137-173

\*\*\*\*\*Midterm Recess\*\*\*\*\*

### **Week 5**

October 17

(Film Analysis Due)

#### ***Making ‘flexible’ Workers – Global Strategies Continued***

McNally, “Globalization: It’s Not About Free Trade” p. 27-34  
McNally, “The Colour of Money” p. 174-194  
Adriana Paz “Harvest of Injustice”

[http://www.justicia4migrantworkers.org/bc/articles/article\\_01.html](http://www.justicia4migrantworkers.org/bc/articles/article_01.html)

**Week 6**  
October 24

***Making 'flexible' Workers - Part Two: Local Strategies***

***The Current Context: Neoliberalism and the Age of Austerity***

Nandita Sharma, "Canadian Nationalism and the Making of a Global Apartheid" p. 1-11.

[https://www.academia.edu/8010721/Sharma\\_Nandita\\_2005\\_Nationalism\\_and\\_the\\_Making\\_of\\_a\\_Global\\_Apartheid\\_Women\\_and\\_Environments\\_International\\_Magazine\\_No.\\_68-69\\_Fall](https://www.academia.edu/8010721/Sharma_Nandita_2005_Nationalism_and_the_Making_of_a_Global_Apartheid_Women_and_Environments_International_Magazine_No._68-69_Fall)

Roxana Ng, "Garment Production in Canada: Social and Political Implications" p. 193-211

<http://spe.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/spe/article/view/5201/2069>

Rick Fantasia, "Corporate Union-Busting and the 'New' Industrial Relations." (CK)

**Week 7**  
October 31

***Conclusion of Lecture on Local Strategies***

***Review for the Midterm***

**Week 8**  
November 7

***Midterm Test*** (In class)

(No Tutorials)

**Week 9**  
November 14

***Introduction to Histories and Strategies of Resistance:***

***An Overview of Visions, Strategies, Tactics and Challenges***

Robin Kelley *Race Rebels* p. 1-10 (CK)

McNally, "Freedom Song" p. 355-380

**Week 10**  
November 21

***Collective Strategies I: Unions and Workplace Organizing***

***Introduction to Unions: History, Structure and Action***

Reinhart, "War in the Workplace" p. 135-144 (CK)

McNally, "Democracy Against Capitalism" p. 302-328

**Week 11**  
November 28

***Collective Strategies II: Organizing Inside and Outside the***

***Workplace Tactics, Strategies and Challenges***

Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, "'Just-in-Time' Guerrilla Warriors" p. 215-246 (CK)

Evelyn Encalada Grez, "Justice for Migrant Farm Workers: Reflections on the Importance of Community Organizing" p. 23-25.

[http://www.socialistproject.ca/relay/r12\\_grez.pdf](http://www.socialistproject.ca/relay/r12_grez.pdf)

Dan La Botz, "Ontario's 'Days of Action' A Citywide Political Strike Offers A Potential Example for Madison"

<http://www.labornotes.org/2011/03/ontarios-days-action-citywide-political-strike-offers-potential-example-madison>

**Week 12**  
December 5

(Group Project Due)

***Alternative Visions***

McNally, "Freedom Song" p.336-354

### **Assignment Submission, Deductions for Lateness and Failing to Write the Midterm**

The due dates for assignments are firm. Late assignments will receive a deduction of one mark per day. For example, if an assignment that received 16/20 is handed in one day late, the mark will be reduced to 15/20. All assignments are to be handed in to your tutorial leader at the beginning of tutorial on the date they are due. Assignments that are more than a week late will not be accepted.

If you miss the midterm, please contact me via email as soon as possible (and cc your TA). You will need to have a valid reason i.e. illness or a death in the family and you will need to provide documentation to write the make-up.

If you miss the final exam, you will need to contact the exam office at [exams@mcmaster.ca](mailto:exams@mcmaster.ca)

### **Laptops, Cell Phones and Hand Held Devices**

Please make sure that all cell phones and hand held devices are turned off during class. I discourage the use of laptops in class. This creates a better learning environment for everyone (including you).

### **Citation Format**

You may use MLA or Chicago style. Make sure to be consistent.

<http://library.mcmaster.ca/citation-and-style-guides>

### **Email Guidelines**

The best way to reach me is to visit me at my office hour from 12-1pm on Thursdays in Room 724, Kenneth Taylor Hall. I will do my best to return emails within 24-48 hours of the time they are sent. Please take that into consideration when sending emails i.e. if you send an email the day the research paper is due I will likely not get back to you in time. Email should be restricted to emergencies and arranging to meet with me. If you have questions about the course material please visit me during my office hour.

*Always include the course name, your name and your TA's name in your messages.*

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.html>**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.

2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

Labour Studies staff does not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of student papers. All papers should be submitted/returned in-class, in tutorials or during Professor/TA office hours. Instructors who utilize Avenue to Learn will provide instructions on that preference.

**Absence Reporting:** <http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/> On-line self-reporting tool – illness lasting **less than 3 days**. Can only be used once per term. Instructors are not allowed to accept medical notes! These must be submitted to your Faculty office. In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. Please also communicate with the course instructor.

**Code of conduct:** <http://studentaffairs.mcmaster.ca>

“McMaster University is a community dedicated to furthering learning, intellectual inquiry, the dissemination of knowledge and personal and professional development. Membership in this community implies acceptance of the principle of mutual respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study work and live within it.”

**Computer use** in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

**Course Modifications:** The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email AND Avenue to Learn (if used by instructor) regularly during the term to note any changes.

**E-Mail Communication Policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences:** all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own **McMaster University e-mail account**. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor/TA receives a communication from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. **Please always include student name, ID, course # and TA name in messages.**

**Evaluations (Online):** <http://evals.mcmaster.ca>, and log in via MACID.

These help faculty and the School of Labour Studies to meet our goal of continually improving teaching effectiveness. All students in the course are invited and encouraged to complete the evaluation.

**Student Accessibility Services:** <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/> MUSC-B107 905-525-9140 x28652

*NOTE: Disclosure of disability-related information is personal and confidential.*

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. We work with full time and part time students. SAS provides or assists students with their academic and disability-related needs, including: Learning Strategies, Assistive Technologies, Test & Exam Administration, Note-Taking Programs, and Classroom Accommodations. \*Please inform the instructor if there are disability needs that are not being met.

**McMaster University Policy on Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities & McMaster University Anti-Discrimination Policy**

- <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

**Student Success Centre:** <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/>

**GH-110 905-525-9140 x24254**

Some services include: student orientation, academic skills, volunteerism, educational planning, employment and career transition. Writing Support:

<http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/students/academic-skills/writing-support-services.html>

**Student Wellness Centre:** <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/> **MUSC-B101 905-525-9140 x27700**

Provides services in: Personal and Psychological Counselling, Mental Health Support, Medical and Health Services