This course will explore social science perspectives on the dynamics of the workplace, considering a range of perspectives on organizations and workforce issues in relation to the “new” global economy. Major theoretical frameworks and multidisciplinary research will be engaged for contextualized policy analysis and for looking to the future of work in different sectors and for different organizations and groups in and across societies. Employing a comparative perspective, particular attention will be given transformations in the world of work due to forces such as globalization, new technologies, institutional shifts, political and economic relations, and broader cultural processes. The principal aim will be to provide students with a better understanding of organizational and workforce changes around the world as a foundation for policy inquiry and action.

Course Objectives

- Identify and explore challenges, problems, and opportunities due to the “digital revolution” and changes in organizational needs and arrangements.
- Understand and compare different factors influencing organizational change and workforce adaptations.
- Understand and participate in high level analysis and synthesis regarding complex organizational dynamics and changes in occupational types and structures.
- Examine socio-technological trends impacting the world of work and labor market reforms.
- Engage debates on social and technological innovations and their implications for organizational and work futures in different settings and circumstances.
- Develop a multilevel awareness and critical understanding of policy antecedents, responses, and consequences relative to key workforce issues.

Course Requirements

This course will be conducted online, primarily involving asynchronous “discussions,” presentations, and assignments. Blackboard (courses.gmu.edu) will serve as the primary medium for communication and engagement. In addition, the course will include a limited number of scheduled synchronous open discussion sessions and guest lectures via Zoom. Students should familiarize themselves with Blackboard and Zoom facilities; help is available online if needed.

All students are expected to complete required readings for each week, and will provide brief written comments/questions on at least three (3) related topics at various points in the semester to exchange with fellow students. In addition, each student will make one (1) online
Presentation on a selected topic and will be assigned to provide comments on another student’s presentation at a different time. (All students are encouraged to provide comments/questions on the readings and/or presentations at any time, beyond required assignments.) Students also will prepare two (2) brief analytical essays that draw on assigned class readings, and an additional more extended essay on a selected topic. Detailed instructions will be provided for all assignments.

Grades will be determined by participation based on submitted comments and other interactions (20%), the presentation (30%), the brief essays (15% each, 30% total), and the extended essay (20%).

A detailed syllabus, along with course scheduling and orientation materials, will be available on Blackboard for registered students by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 25 August 2020. The Professor also will be available 5:30-6:30 p.m., via Zoom online or call-in (information provided on Blackboard), to answer any questions you might have. Please review all of the materials and related instructions. Complete the readings for the following week as indicated on the syllabus and be prepared to provide information and to respond online to questions as posed by the Professor.

Required Reading
Required readings, as indicated on the detailed syllabus, will be available on Blackboard or online via the GMU library.

COURSE ORIENTATION: 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 25 August 2020
A detailed syllabus and course information and instructions will be available on Blackboard for registered students.

Schar School Policy on Plagiarism
The professional scholarship and intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the Schar School of Policy and Government. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable.

Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. It is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.
The Schar School faculty takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1, or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. [http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html]

Disabled Student Accommodation

If you are a student with a disability for which you need academic accommodation, please inform the professor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be recognized and arranged through the DRC.