

**The Ohio State University
Freshman Seminar Program
Course Proposal**

Course Information.

1. Attach a sample syllabus that includes the following. (Sample syllabi can be found at <http://freshmanseminars.osu.edu>).
 - the course goals
 - a brief description of the content
 - the distribution of meeting times
 - a weekly topical outline
 - a listing of assignments
 - grade assessment information (A-E or S / U)
 - required textbooks and / or reading list
 - the academic misconduct and disability services statements (sample statements can be found at <http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/currofc/resources.cfm>)

2. Attach a brief biographical paragraph that includes the current research interests, teaching awards and honors, and undergraduate courses taught by the participating instructor(s). The paragraph will be included in materials for first-year students.

Nancy Ettlinger

Proposer's Name and Academic Unit



Proposer's Signature

ettlinger1@osu.edu

Proposer's e-Mail Address

(614) 292-2573

Contact Phone Number

4/29/2016

Submission Date



Signature Department Chair of Academic Unit

Please indicate the semester you would like to offer the seminar: AU' X SP' _____

This form and any attachments should be mailed to Freshman Seminar Program, 100 Denney Hall, 164 Annie & John Glenn Avenue, ATTN: Dawn Nolen or e-mailed to nolen.2@osu.edu. For additional information, please call 614/292-4680.

DIGITAL LABOR IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Freshman Seminar: One Credit

ARTSCI xxxx

Day TBA

Time and Place TBA

Professor Nancy Ettlinger

Department Geography

Contact information

office: 1144 Derby Hall

email: ettlinger.1@osu.edu

direct office tel: 292-2573

Office hours by appointment: drop-ins welcome

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course engages new ways by which firms access workers throughout the global economy via cyberspace, the new forms of *digital* work performed on internet-enabled devices, and the implications for workers and the meaning and even re/definition of employment itself. Digital work signifies that firms bypass the costs for workplaces because workers perform cognitive tasks in their own spaces (homes, digital cafés, on-the-run via mobile devices) as well as the costs of shipping and distribution because results are transferred in cyberspace. Accordingly, digitizing tasks spread across the global economy results in considerably increased profits for firms. Despite the skilled nature of such tasks, they often are, however, scarcely or *un-*waged, further increasing firm profitability. This emergent regime of work raises a number of pressing questions that this course will address. What are the effects on labor and what are the prospects for earning a living in this new work regime? What is the nature of the experience of new forms of digital work? What is the spatial scope of the new work regime, where are sources of control (where are most of the firms located) and where, specifically are the labor markets? Why do skilled workers self-enroll in this new labor regime for no or low wages? Is collective action on the part of the emergent digital labor force possible, and if so, what might new forms of resistance look like?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is required. Students should drop this course if they have commitments that overlap with the class period. Students should indicate *in advance* if they cannot be at a particular class on time or have to leave in the middle due to uncontrolled

circumstances that can be documented (e.g. a medical appointment). *Students are responsible for any course material and announcements that are missed.*

Reading: required text

T. Sholz, ed., 2013 *Digital labor: the internet as playground and factory*. New York: Routledge.

This book is available online through the OSU library, and will be available in hard copy in OSU bookstores. It is an edited collection of papers ranging from case studies to broad-based examinations of recent transformations in the global economy.

Class preparation & participation

Students are required to read the assigned material **before** the class in which material is to be discussed. Students are expected to participate in class discussion *responsibly*, that is, based on adequate preparation – take notes on the details of a reading and also think about the big picture (purpose, main message(s), overall significance).

Presentations

Presentations are a vehicle for actively and critically engaging course material. They also are good practice for the development of public speaking skills. In additions, the presentations entail collaboration – an important avenue for learning.

Depending on class size, each student will present in a small group (of 2 or 3) twice during the semester on the assigned reading, depending on class size. The presentation overall should include: a brief *synthesis* (not summary) of the reading and an indication of the main questions that are raised by the reading. Each student has 10 minutes (a group of 2 will have 20minutes; a group of 3, 30 minutes). The group presentation will be followed by discussion per questions raised by other students.

Preparation for the presentation should be *collaborative*, and the presentations should reflect the collaboration. Students should read the article carefully on their own, then get together with their co-presenter(s) to sort out the details and arrive at a sense of the big picture. The division of labor for the presentations should be based on overall points, not specific segments of the reading (the latter would speak more to summary than synthesis). For example, rather than meeting to decide that one person will summarize the 1st half, and the other person, the 2nd half, students should talk through the significance overall of the reading, its purpose, and main messages, and then divide the presentation relative to issues (not details of different sections of the reading). The purpose is not to regurgitate every point in the article, but rather to set up issues for discussion with the understanding that everyone has read the material.

Evaluation is on an individual, not group basis.

Students are encouraged to think about their interests and request presenting on a particular reading; let Professor Ettlinger know by e-mail or before or after class at the beginning of the semester if you have requests (assignments will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis). Other assignments will be made randomly by the end of the 2nd week; assignments before the 2nd week will be decided in class on a volunteer basis.

GRADING: Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory

Class participation: 40%

Presentations: 60%

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To gain an understanding of the issues involved recent transformations of the global economy regarding digital work and labor
- To develop skills in oral presentation
- To enhance critical skills in critical thinking

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct compromises the academic integrity of a university and the educational process, and violates the code of student conduct. It is not tolerated. See the Code of Student Conduct at OSU at http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp.

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

As a professor in the Department of Geography, I teach one large lecture class, Social and Economic Geography (Geog 2400); a senior capstone course called Geographic Inquiry (Geog 4100); and two courses at the 5000 level that include honors and upper-level undergraduates and graduate students (Geog 5502, The Neoliberal City and Geog 5601, Foucault, Power, Governance). I designed and put both of the 5000-level courses on the books; undergraduates taking these courses develop independent research papers and often use these courses to develop senior theses and projects for the Denman competition. I also teach a graduate seminar (the specific topic of which changes each time relative to my current research), in which undergraduates can enroll with my permission.

As a critical human geographer I ask broadly: how can critiques of our social, political, economic, and cultural environment offer insights into how to produce change? How are people governed and enrolled in a wide range of societal projects (e.g. neoliberalism, segregation, democracy), and what are the prospects for resistance? What is the relation between subjectivity and change? Underscoring these questions is a concern for the relation between individuals and larger-scale phenomena (firms, institutions, societal projects) and an interconnected view of social, political, economic, and cultural processes.

WEEKLY READINGS:

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Introduction: defining the digital economy, digital work, digital labor | |
| 2. Scholtz, chapt. 1 | 9. chapt. 9 |
| 3. chapt. 2 | 10. chapt. 10 |
| 4. chapt. 3 | 11. chapt. 11 |
| 5. chapt. 4 | 12. chapt. 12, 13 |
| 6. chapt. 5 | 13. chapt. 14 |
| 7. chapt. 6, 8 | 14. recap |
| 8. chapt. 7 | |