

Division of the Social Sciences  
University of Minnesota, Morris

# Labor Market, Technological Change and Skill Formation

(MGMT 4502)

## Spring 2020

T, TH: 12:50 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Class: 113 Imholte Hall

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Office Hours: Tuesday: 4:20 PM – 5:00 PM  
&  
Thursday: 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM and/or by appointment

### ***Textbooks and Course Materials:***

Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*, New Edition, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998.

Jamee K. Moudud, Cyrus Bina, and Patrick L. Mason, *Alternative Theories of Competition: Challenges to the Orthodoxy* (eds.), New York: Routledge (Paperback Edition, 2014).

Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, New York: Harpers & Row, 1942 (Chapter 7) [on reserve at UMM Briggs Library].

Joseph A. Schumpeter, “The Instability of Capitalism,” *Economic Journal*, 38 (151):361-386 [on reserve at UMM Briggs Library].

Cyrus Bina, “Deskilling,” in *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*, 4 vols. (eds.) M. Juergensmeyer and H. K. Anheier, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 2012—vol. 1: 396-98 [on reserve at UMM Briggs Library].

Cyrus Bina, “Technology Sector,” in *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*, 4 vols. (eds.), M. Juergensmeyer and H. K. Anheier, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 2012—vol. 4: 1623-25 [on reserve at UMM Briggs Library].

Cyrus Bina and Chuck Davis, “Globalization, Technology, and Skill Formation in Capitalism,” in Baiman, et al. (eds.) *Political Economy and Contemporary Capitalism*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe Publishers, 2000 [on reserve at UMM Briggs Library].

### ***Course Description:***

Catalog Description: *The change of technology in relation to the formation of skills and transformation of the regional labor markets globally. 'Skilling' and 'deskilling' of labor and their intimate relationship with the transformation of technology in contemporary capitalism.*

This course provides a somewhat advanced coverage of the development and transformation of technology through competition and its impact on 'deskilling' and new 'skill' formation in the business enterprises, in particular and contemporary economy, in general. Technological change is broadly defined in order to capture the changes in the structure, institutions, and organizations, in addition to the classical meaning of the term. Finally, the meaning of 'skill' vis-à-vis technology shall be contrasted with its counterpart in the previous systems of production. In this connection, this seminar will shed light on the dynamics of the contemporary hyper-competitive, technology-driven, fast-paced, uncertain world of business. *Transnational Enterprise* is a desirable background but not indispensable (pre-req. Mgmt 2102, Eco.1111, Econ. 1112).

### ***Course Objectives and Outcome:***

- Meaning and Impact of Technology in Contemporary Economy and Society.
- Dynamics of Technological Change in the Global Arena.
- Competitive Process and Hyper-Competition.
- Meaning and Function of 'Knowledge' in Today's Globalized World.
- Meaning of 'Skill' in Contemporary Capitalism.
- Disposability of 'Skills' and Real Meaning of 'Deskilling'.
- The Role of Technology and Meaning of Uncertainty in today's World.
- Given the cumulative effects of the above points, answer to the question of why *strategy* and *strategizing* will become apparent.

These focal points underpin the aim of leaning and thus the outcome for this seminar, functioning as a pivotal part of management program and, at the same time, serving in a larger context within the liberal arts.

### ***Course Requirement:***

While the main texts would establish the basic groundwork for this course, a bulk of lecture materials and thus extended class discussions, including the supplementary materials are essential parts of the study. As a result, class participation and class discussions carry considerable weight in the final grading of the course. The selection of relevant topics pertaining to each project shall be made after the first week of class. The format, magnitude, and the nature of presentations shall be fully discussed during the early weeks of the class. In addition, there will be a group presentation of some selected chapters from the texts by students. The expectation of participation, search for updated materials, and adequate critical discussions are essential in this course. In addition to a final exam, there will be an oral project on an approved topic in this seminar. It goes without saying that also all University procedures and by-laws are relevant to the conduct of student in and out of classroom in this course.

***Student Conduct:***

Students are expected to observe the following points:

- Mobile phones must be switched off during class.
- Laptops should not be in use, except taking notes (if need be) and during weekly oral reports.
- No e-mail should be sent to instructor after 8:00 PM and/or before 8:00 AM for any possible communication with instructor.
- No e-mails or telephone call either before or after student received his/her final grade from the Registrar’s Office. Student should wait till the beginning of following semester to contact the instructor if he/she wishes to learn about one’s final grade, etc.
- Absolutely no texting or any other electronic communication while class is in session. Violations are subject to university regulations.
- Any assistance whatsoever received from others on any class assignment (in and out of the classroom) is outright plagiarism; and will be dealt with according to university policies.
- No need for the so-called Chancellor’s excuse, since such excuses are exclusive academic right of the instructor who teaches this class. The instructor though is empathetic to all students’ needs and to inadvertent occurrences that may arise in such personal circumstances; honoring such requests is thus a matter of course.

***Grade Distribution:***

Final Exam: .....	55%
Research Project: .....	25%
Class Presentation: .....	15%
Class Participation: .....	..5%

The grading scale will follow the following intervals:

A:	94 – 100	A-:	90 – 93	B+:	87 – 89
B:	83 – 86	B-:	80 – 82	C+:	76 – 79
C:	72 – 75	C:	68 – 71	D+:	64 – 67
D:	60 – 63	F:	59 and below.		

The tentative outline will be identified, discussed and carried through as we plunge into the materials during the first few sessions of this seminar.

**Project Presentation & Written Documentation Due: TBA**

**Final Exam: Wednesday, May 13, 2020: 8:30 AM – 10:30 AM**