

Division of the Social Sciences  
University of Minnesota, Morris

**Labor Market, Technological Change and Skill Formation**  
(MGMT 4502)

**FALL 2016**

MWF: 2:15 PM – 3:20 PM

Class: 112 Imholte Hall

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Office Hours: MW: 1:00 PM – 2:00 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 in the development and transformation of technology, focusing on competition and its impact on 'deskilling' and 'skill formation' within the business enterprises and contemporary economy as a whole. Technological change is broadly defined in order to capture change in the structure, institutions, and organizations toward the original meaning of the term. Finally, the meaning of 'skill' and 'kill formation' vis-à-vis technology in modern capitalist system shall be juxtaposed with its counterpart within the preceding system of crafts and craft production. This seminar also will shed light on the dynamics of the contemporary hyper-competitive, technology-driven, fast-paced, universally uncertain world of business today. *Transnational Enterprise* (MGMT 3601) is a desirable background but not indispensable (pre-req. MGMT 2102, ECON 1111, ECON 1112).

### ***Course Objectives:***

- 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 Business World.
- Given the cumulative effects of the above themes, the inevitable question of *strategy* and *strategizing* will be discussed.

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

While the main texts would establish the basic groundwork for this course, the bulk of lecture materials and thus extended class discussions, including supplementary materials, is an essential part of this seminar. Hence, class participation and class discussions will carry considerable weight in the final evaluation of the course. The selection of relevant topics (projects) to be presented by participants shall be identified during the first week of the class. The format, magnitude, and nature of presentations shall be fully discussed early on. In addition, there will be group presentation on some selected chapters from the texts by participants. Active participation, exploration for additional materials and sufficient critical discussion are essential in this course. Finally, in addition to a final exam, there will be oral projects on approved topics as part of evaluating. University regulations and the by-laws concerning student conduct in or out of classroom shall be observed.

***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 for taking notes (if need be) and possibly during weekly oral reports.
- No e-mail should be sent to instructor after 8:00 PM and/or before 8:00 AM for any for any reason.
- No e-mails (or telephone call) should be sent to instructor, 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 the specifics of one’s final grade, etc.
- Absolutely no texting or any other electronic communication while class is in session - violations are subject to university regulation.
- Any assistance whatsoever received from others on any class assignments (in and out of the classroom) is considered as outright plagiarism; and shall 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 the class. The instructor though is empathetic to all students’ needs and to inadvertent occurrences that may arise in particular individual circumstances; honoring such requests is thus a matter of course.

***Grade Distribution:***

Final Exam: .....	55%
Research Project: .....	25%
Class Presentation: .....	15%
Active 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: 60 and below.	

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

**Project Presentations Are Due:** December 5th and 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Final Exam:** Wednesday, December 14, 2016: 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM