UP 238 – Global Labor Analysis and Policy
4/6/2020 syllabus revision

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Office hours: Tues. 10:30-12:30, Weds. 10-12, or by appointment. Office hours are held at my personal Zoom link, https://ucla.zoom.us/j/5948102330, or by phone or Facetime. Please schedule ahead of time, do not just “show up”–I will not open my Zoom meeting unless I see office hours scheduled... Sign up for office hours at https://christilly.youcanbook.me/. If none of the open times work, you can also email me to see if we can set a different time.

Course meeting time and location
The course will meet on Wednesdays, 2-4:50, on Zoom links that will be announced by email ahead of each class.

When I was about 11, I attended a talk by a linguist at the University of Toronto. In front of the audience, he was introduced to a young man who spoke an undisclosed language. With the help of a few props—a stick, a rock, a leaf—he set about learning the young man’s language. By the end of the hour, the linguist was able to hold a rudimentary conversation with the young man, and was able to narrow down the language to a relatively small area (as I recall, it was part of Indonesia). The audience was very impressed!

To some extent, this course is designed to help you develop that linguist’s capacity, except with regard to labor markets. There is not enough material in this course for you to become an expert in labor for any one country or part of the world. The idea is for you to be able to look at any country’s or large region’s labor market and:

- recognize similarities and differences with other labor markets around the world
- understand in general how labor markets, institutions, and policies interact to generate varied labor outcomes
- be able to connect this understanding with key debates in the planning and public policy literature on labor
- and, based on all this, have tools to formulate effective policies, programs, and strategies to improve labor outcomes

We will look at 5 main types of policy/strategy approaches: migration policy, training, regulation and standard-setting, labor organizing, and social welfare/safety net. The focus is on compensated work and self-employment, with only a bit of attention to unpaid household labor. The focus is also urban, with not much about agricultural or resource-extraction jobs. Preoccupations throughout include tradeoffs between quantity and quality of jobs, between upgrading informal jobs and regulating formal jobs.

The course content reflects a particular set of priorities: there is not a lot here about small-scale economic development projects (microenterprise programs, coops) that are staples of development work. Instead, we are looking at lot at the potential for larger-scale structural changes, through public policy and organizing. (Students are welcome to bring smaller scale options into discussion or take them as paper topics.)

Overall, there is a somewhat greater focus on poor and middle income countries (with a bit more attention to Latin America), but the course also spends a lot of time looking at empirical realities and policies in the United States and Western Europe. The idea is to construct a broad comparative context for thinking about labor market analysis and policy, as well as to keep in mind both ends of the labor flows (migration), capital flows (investment), and goods flows (trade) that characterize the global economy.
Important notice on video and audio recording
The current Shelter at Home order is causing all kinds of logistical difficulties for many students. I would like to videorecord my lecture along with discussion so it will be available to anyone who needs to miss it. If you do not wish to be videorecorded, please leave your camera off. If you do not wish to be audiorecorded, that is more complicated given that I want to encourage class discussion, but if that is the case, please get in touch and we’ll try to figure something out.

UCLA has asked that I include the following language in the syllabus: This program (Zoom) uses video recording or other personal information capture for the purpose of facilitating the course and/or test environment. Pursuant to the terms of the agreement with UCLA, the data is used solely for this purpose and any vendor is prohibited from redisclosing this information. UCLA also does not use the data for any other purpose.

Important notice on flexibility
None of us signed up for undertaking online learning while sheltering in place. I understand that this places an extra burden on all of you, and extraordinary burdens on some. I will do my best to provide flexibility that will allow everyone to learn while balancing the requirements of school with the demands of the rest of life. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss your needs.

I hope that you will also offer me some flexibility as I traverse the learning curve of online teaching.

Learning objectives
The goals of this course are for students to learn:
- Basic analytical frameworks for understanding the economic, political, and policy forces affecting labor differentially across countries
- Key policy arenas and tools relevant to labor and employment
- Approaches to analyzing case of labor markets and labor regulation
- Critical approaches to strategy development and policy analysis, with particular emphasis on inequality by class, gender, migration status, and inter-regional inequality

Readings
Readings will be available via the CCLE website, under the headings “Week 1,” “Week 2,” etc. Some readings are also available online at URLs identified in the syllabus. Readings often include Optional readings and Resources that are just listed in case you may find them useful. Discussion questions and guidance on how to read (what to skip, what to skim, what to read closely) will be handed out and/or posted in advance of classes after the first class.

Course requirements

Important note: This syllabus is your guide to readings and assignments. I will do my best to remind you of upcoming due dates, but you are responsible for keeping track of what is due when.
This is a fairly reading-intensive class. To keep the reading manageable, I will suggest priorities for reading each week. The requirements are:
- Students are expected to do the readings, come prepared for discussion, and participate in discussion.
- A weekly one-page commentary commenting on the readings is required for seven out of weeks 2-10 (students can take two “free passes”).
- A short (4-6 page) paper half-way through the course, reflecting on the readings from weeks 1-4
- A 10-15 page policy white paper on some issue in urban labor markets, which can be completed individually or in groups (group papers are expected to be longer and richer). Students may write a paper based purely on library research if they choose, although I encourage you to incorporate field research as well. There are a number of checkpoints on this paper throughout the quarter, when you are expected to report on the state of your work.
The requirements will contribute approximately the following percentages to your final grade:

- **25%** Short paper
- **40%** Policy white paper (includes oral presentation)
- **20%** Weekly one-page commentaries on readings
- **15%** Class participation

Assignments turned in late will be graded down severely. More on each of the assignments below. *Please turn in all assignments on the course CCLE/Moodle site.*

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**The commentaries**

Again, you are required to post commentaries for 7 out of the 9 weeks from 2-10. The purpose of the commentaries is not to summarize the readings, but to react to them.

- What did you find interesting? What was hard to understand? What touched you, and what annoyed you? You can compare and contrast the readings, or just comment on how well they fit together (or not).
- In addition to these general comments, at the end of your write-up please suggest 1 question that links together two or more of the readings. (This is not always easy!) If you simply must pose more than one question, that’s OK, but the assignment is to do one.

Your note should just be a page or so. I prefer to get the posts by early Tuesday morning so I can take them into account in preparing for class, but will accept them up till Wednesday.

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**The short paper**

Reflect on the policy debates in the readings from weeks 1-4. Pick either the Week 1 readings on precarious work (you may want to dip into the optional readings), the Week 2 readings the job quality-quantity tradeoff and other economic tradeoffs, or the Week 4 readings on migration. You are *not* expected to do additional reading or research; this is just a reflection piece. Please address some or all of the following:

- What are the main explicit or implicit debates the readings tell us about? Identify 1-3 such debates. (The readings do *not* consistently represent all sides in the debates, so in some cases you may need to infer what the debate is.) To what extent are the debates about positive issues (what is the reality?), to what extent about normative issues (what should we value as a society or as a world community?)?
- What is at stake in these debates, from a policy perspective? What difference does your side in the debate make, for what policies you will advocate?
- Choose one of the debates. What position in the debate do you find most compelling? (If you find that you don’t agree with any of the main viewpoints and want to lay out your own view, that’s fine.) Explain your choice.
- What added information do you feel like is needed for you to make up your mind more definitively about the debate, or is needed to move forward in this debate?

900-1500 words (4-6 pages double-spaced). Due Wednesday of Week 5.

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**The policy white paper**

This should go to a hypothetical manager or client—for example, a government agency, community-based organization, business association, or union. In most cases, I would expect the white paper to focus on a particular country or small set of countries. The exception would be policies that are by their nature global. It should provide full references like a research paper, but it should be written like a policy white paper giving advice to the manager or client. You can draw on course readings, but should go beyond them to draw on other published and/or online sources (including some quantitative background information as described below). I encourage you to also conduct one or more interviews (voice or email) with practitioners familiar with this issue, though it is not required. You can also do a group paper with up to four students total; again, I expect group papers to be longer and richer (but not *proportionally* longer, mainly richer). Your white paper should:

- Identify the intended recipient of the document
- Describe and provide some summary evidence for an urban labor market problem, including some quantitative background information, as described below
Discuss a range of possible policy or strategy solutions, saying something about the pluses and minuses of each. Your arguments about the pluses and minuses should draw on relevant evidence, as well as theoretical arguments if appropriate.

Make a recommendation in one of two ways: EITHER Make a case for one particular policy or strategy, OR present the tradeoffs between two or three possible policies or strategies.

As appropriate, point to next steps.

I’ve mentioned that you should include some quantitative background information (first report on this due in Week 7). In some cases you will be able to get data speaking directly to the issue you are discussing; in other cases you will only be able to give broader background data on a country or region. Some useful sources are (let me know if any of these links has stopped being active!):

- Most countries have online databases of varying scope and quality (in some cases, not surprisingly, little or nothing is available in English)

The due dates for the paper are:

- **Topic prospectus, due Wednesday of Week 4.** Your prospectus should identify your topic, the “audience” the white paper will be addressed to, and what types of sources you plan to use. If you are planning to conduct one or more interviews, describe your strategy for obtaining interviews. About 250-500 words.
- **Preliminary data report, due Wednesday of Week 7.** Your report should include one or two tables or figures and a short paragraph describing what they tell you.
- **Paper, due Week 11 (June 11).** 2500-3750 words, 10-15 pages double-spaced.
- **Presentation, to be scheduled in Week 11.** 5 minutes per student, with PowerPoint

### Using sources
In all written work, we expect you to identify all sources of data, information, and ideas. When quoting or paraphrasing someone else’s work, cite the source. My preferred form of citation is the author-date form. For example:

> The data on firm size indicate that small business’s contributions to U.S. growth are actually relatively modest (Harrison 1994, Chapter 2).

Then at the end of the paper, have a complete list of references. For example:


**NOTE:** Using someone else’s information or ideas without citing the source is misleading, prevents a reader from following up on interesting ideas, and defeats the educational purpose of the assignments (which is to build on other people’s work to come up with your own ideas and conclusions). Also, the university forbids it, and stipulates serious penalties if a student is caught at it. Please don’t do it. Guidelines for academic honesty are posted at http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/StudentGuide.pdf, with a more complete code of conduct at http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode.pdf. In brief, to adhere to academic honesty, you should:

- Again, provide citations for information, except for information that is general knowledge or that you learned from direct observation.
- When you use a direct quotation, “put it in quotation marks.” (For direct quotes, give the page number.) It is not OK to use a close paraphrase as an alternative to a direct quotation—if it’s close, we expect you to just use the direct quote.
- Most of a paper should be your own work. It is fine to summarize, critique, or build on other people’s ideas. But if a paper is mostly a string of quotations or descriptions of statements from others, that is a bad sign. We want you to develop your own synthesis and ideas.
Statement of Affirmation
I intend to make this class a space that affirms all identities and perspectives, including your: race, color, national origin, ethnic origin, ancestry, marital status, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, transgender status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship or service in the uniformed services. Regardless of background, all students have a right to an equitable education. Because of the multi-faceted and complex nature of our identities, it is imperative that we are committed to affirming one another’s perspectives as a collective for all enrolled in this course. I encourage all members to embrace and learn from the diversity in this classroom, school, and university. I want to highlight that discrimination, harassment, or forms of hateful transgressions will not be tolerated in our learning environment. If you have any recommendations about how to make our environment more inclusive feel free to let me know. If you require accommodations due to ADA related concerns or religious events, let me know at the start of the class so that we can make arrangements.
**Course outline**

**Week 1 (April 1—no foolin’): Precarious work around the world—Trends and debates**

“Precarious work” has become a catch-phrase to describe how work has become worse in many countries. Labor economist Guy Standing argues the “precariat” constitutes a new class. What do these terms help illuminate, and what do they obscure?

**READINGS:**

**REQUIRED**
- Marcel Paret, “Politics of Solidarity and Agency in an Age of Precarity,” *Global Labour Journal*, 2016, 7(2): 174-188. *(Read 174-80, 185-86. Paret is responding to Standing’s book, on which the Standing article is based.)*

**OPTIONAL (except for the last, these are other articles in a *Global Labour Journal* special issue responding to Standing)**

**Week 2 (April 8): Tradeoffs: Equity vs. efficiency**

An influential viewpoint says that to get employment growth we must reduce labor regulations and accept lower quality jobs and rising inequality. True? What about other such tradeoffs: Coronavirus deaths vs. economic distress? Jobs vs. the environment?

**READINGS:**

**REQUIRED**
• David H. Bradley and John D. Stephens, “Employment Performance in OECD Countries: A Test of Neo-Liberal and Institutionalist Hypotheses” Comparative Political Studies 40 (12): 1486-1510, 2007. (Read the whole thing, except 1497-1500 on data and methods, which you can skim or skip.)


OPTIONAL


Week 3 (April 15): How labor regimes vary
How should labor regimes be classified? Does the same logic work for richer and poorer countries? What do we learn from classifying at the level of the country, and what from classifying at the level of the workplace?

READINGS:
REQUIRED


OPTIONAL


Week 4 (April 22): Immigration flows and policies
Who benefits and who loses from international migration? Do emigration and remittances help sending countries develop? Why and how do different receiving countries treat migrants differently?
READINGS:

REQUIRED


OPTIONAL


Term paper topic prospectus due

Week 5 (April 29): Skill development systems
How do nation-level skill development systems differ, and how do these differences affect labor outcomes? Can high-road, high-skill approaches be maintained amidst global competition?

READINGS:

REQUIRED

- Maddalena Honorati and Thomas P. McAr dul, The Nuts and Bolts of Designing and Implementing Training Programs in Developing Countries, World Bank, June 2013. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16101 (78 pages; we will read selections)

Short paper on first 4 weeks of readings due

Week 6 (May 6): Labor market regulation
What are the impacts, intended and unintended, of labor regulation? Does such regulation push businesses into the informal sector? What regulations and regulatory practices make a difference for job quality?

READINGS:

REQUIRED

- Judith Tendler, “Small firms, the informal sector, and the ‘devil’s deal.’” Institute for Development
Studies Bulletin (University of Sussex), Vol.33 No.3, July 2002 (14 pp.)


OPTIONAL


Week 7 (May 13): Organizing strategies at the national level

Should we expect capital mobility stymie unions? What labor organizing strategies are succeeding around the world? To what extent are NGOs and unions able to work together on labor issues?

READINGS:

REQUIRED


PLUS, READ OR SKIM AT LEAST 1 OR 2 OF THE FOLLOWING 4 PAPERS:

Data report due

Week 8 (May 20): Organizing and regulation go global
Capital is global. How can labor and labor regulators match that reach?

READINGS:
REQUIRED

OPTIONAL

Week 9 (May 27): Gender inequality and care work
Women are concentrated in care work, paid and unpaid, around the world. How is this related to gender inequality in paid work? How do the configurations differ across countries? What can be done?

READINGS:
REQUIRED
- Rachel Masika with Susan Joekes, Employment and sustainable livelihoods: A gender perspective, Report #37, BRIDGE, Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex, 1996 (37 pp.) (Selections) http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/go/home&id=52022&type=Document
- Institute for Development Studies, “Gender & Care,” BRIDGE Bulletin #20, February 2009 (6 pp.)

OPTIONAL

Week 10 (June 3): Labor, politics, and development
We close by once more placing job quality in the bigger picture of growth and inequality. How can developing economies provide sufficient numbers of jobs, and simultaneously ensure that as many as possible are good jobs? What are the political prerequisites for adopting the necessary polices?

READINGS:
REQUIRED

OPTIONAL
• Dani Rodrik, “Premature deindustrialization,” Journal of Economic Growth 21: 1-33, 2016. (The key article on premature deindustrialization)
• Peter Evans and Sarah Staveteig, “The changing structure of employment in contemporary China,” pp.69-82 in Deborah S. Davis and Wang Feng, Creating Wealth and Poverty in Postsocialist China (Stanford University Press 2009). (Still more on premature deindustrialization)

**Term paper due June 11**

**Student presentations**

To be scheduled during Finals Week (Week 11)