5/27/19 version of syllabus

Professor Tilly
Public Affairs 5358
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tilly@ucla.edu  •  If you need to reach me within 24-48 hours, please call or text my cell phone  •
Office hours: Tues. 10:30-12:30, Weds. 10-12, or by appointment. Office hours are held in PA 5358. 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, 2:00-4:50 in Public Affairs 4320B

The central issue in urban economic development is jobs—how to create them, how to help disadvantaged populations get access to them, and how to ensure that they are of adequate quality in terms of wages, advancement, and skill development. In short, how do urban labor markets work, and what can we do to help them work better? This class examines these questions for the United States. There has been an explosion of new research and practice in this area, and we will draw lessons from it. We focus on low-wage, low-skill workers, and particularly on marginalized groups: inner city people of color and immigrants.

We will weave together analyses of how urban labor markets work with discussions of policy options for making them work better. Weeks 2 and 3 emphasize the analytical side, Weeks 4 and 8-10 emphasize policy, and the rest combine the two. We will address a range of solutions including job creation, workforce training, job ladder creation, union and community organizing, and immigration reform. Typically, we will consider both national and local policy options. Throughout, we will look at issues of power and economic inequality, and will focus on handles for making change.

Learning objectives
- Gain a wide-ranging understanding of key US labor market issues, some of the main policy and grassroots strategy tool kits to address them, and central policy debates
- Build skills in conceptualizing and analyzing the forces driving labor market inequality, with a framework that centers class, race, and gender
- Build the ability both to think creatively about solutions to problems with urban labor markets, and to evaluate policy proposals in an informed and thoughtful way
- Develop a framework for thinking about work and labor at different scales—understanding political economic processes and policy options at local, state, and national scales—as well as thinking across those scales

Course requirements
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 (including posing a question about them) is required for seven out of weeks 2-10 (students can take two “free passes”).
- A short (5-7 page) paper half-way through the course, reflecting on the readings from weeks 2-4
A 10-15 page policy memo 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.

The requirements will contribute approximately the following percentages to your final grade:

- 25% Short paper
- 40% Policy memo (includes prospectus, progress report, oral presentation as well as final memo)
- 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 site. I prefer to also receive a hard copy in class.

**The commentaries**

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). Please include a question that the readings spark in you. Your note should just be a page or so. I prefer to get the posts by Monday morning so I can take them into account in preparing for class, but will accept them up till Tuesday at 10am.

**The short paper**

Reflect on the policy/strategy recommendations in the readings from weeks 2-4. Choose one of three pairs of articles: either Papademetriou and Bloemraad (Week 2), or Moss/Tilly and Emselem/Mukamal (Week 3), or Lower-Basch/Greenberg and Albelda (“Time binds”—but also draw on Albelda’s policy section, 7-8, in the shorter piece). Please address the following points (you do not have to go into detail on each):

- What are the main policies or strategies they propose?
- Do they make a convincing case that these policies will have a significant effect on the problems or challenges they identify? Is it likely that implementing these policies will cause new problems?
- Who are the actors whom they want to implement policies? Why are they targeting these particular actors?
- How coherent and complete is each set of recommendations? What are the gaps or inconsistencies?
- Are there common policy recommendations or common approaches that emerge from these pieces? Are there disagreements, or policy proposals that would work at cross purposes? If we lumped the pieces you selected together into a set of “progressive proposals,” would they make sense together?
- Be sure to offer (and justify) your judgment of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the two policy “packages.”

1250-1750 words (5-7 pages double-spaced). Due May 1 (Week 5).

**The policy memo**

This should go to a hypothetical (or real) manager or client—for example, a government agency, community-based organization, business association, or union. It should provide full references like a research paper, but it should be written like a policy memo 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. I encourage you to also conduct one or more interviews with practitioners familiar with this issue, though it is not required. You can also do a group paper with up to three students total; again, I expect group papers to be longer and richer. Your memo should:

- Describe and provide some summary evidence for an urban labor market problem
- Discuss a range of possible policy or strategy solutions, saying something about the pluses and minuses of each.
- 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.
- Some past examples of paper topics that worked well: how local government can promote career ladders in health care for workers who start out with less education; how Mexico’s federal labor ministry could promote sector-based programs for youth workforce training; ways LA County can boost employment among formerly incarcerated people; strategy recommendations for the Teamsters union on how to improve port truckers’ jobs; how the CA Labor Commissioner could address precarious scheduling in retail and food service; recommendations to the LA City Council about how to regulate/license street food vending; strategies for developing green jobs in...
Detroit; guidance for the Bangladeshi government on policies to address the particular problems of women garment workers.

The due dates for the paper are:

- **Topic prospectus, due Week 4 (April 24).** Your prospectus should identify your topic, the “audience” the memo 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.

- **Outline and progress report, due Week 8 (May 22).** The outline should be an elaborated outline laying out the main topics and arguments you plan to explore, not just “introduction – findings – conclusion.” By this time you should have identified some sources, so say what sources you have and where/how you plan to look for others (I am **not** looking for full, correct references at this stage for writing). The progress report is saying briefly what you have done and what you plan to do to complete the research for the paper. This can be point-by-point within the outline, or set apart as a separate narrative. The outline/progress report document should probably be at least 500 words.

- **Paper, due June 12.** 2500-3750 words, 10-15 pages double-spaced.

- **Presentation, to be scheduled during Finals Week.** 3-5 minutes (depending on class size) per student, with PowerPoint

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Please don’t plagiarize
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](http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/StudentGuide.pdf), with a more complete code of conduct at [http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode.pdf](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.

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**Readings**
Most of the readings for the seminar will be available on the course website.

In addition, two books are required:


The books can be purchased from the publishers or major online booksellers (I don’t bother with the bookstore any more, but let me know if this is a problem). **People have told me Amazon is giving a long shipping time for the books—however, the Cornell and U of Minnesota presses offer shipment in two weeks.** Doussard’s book looks at how labor markets have restructured in Chicago, with detailed case studies of small retailers and construction. He argues that these “local-serving” industries (as opposed to export industries like manufacturing) have often been
assumed to just inevitably be bad, but demonstrates that a variety of leverage points and strategies can be used to improve them. The Bernhardt et al collection is a set of articles primarily focusing on different aspects of “unregulated work” (how employers violate or evade labor laws and standards, and what can be done about it) but touching on a wide range of issues in low-wage work.

I will do my best to give you weekly guidance about how to focus your reading: what parts to skip or skim, what parts to read carefully.
Course outline

I. Introduction (Week 1)

Week 1 (April 3): Introduction and overview
What are the main problems that need to be solved in urban labor markets? What are some of the Big Ideas that can help guide us in searching for solutions?

- Bernhardt, Boushey, Dresser, and Tilly, “An introduction to the gloves-off economy,” Gloves-Off Ch.1 (1-28)

OPTIONAL

II. Who does worse and why: Race, immigration status, gender (Weeks 2-4)

Week 2 (April 10): Immigrant workers and immigration policy
Large scale immigration has transformed the US labor market. What are the economic impacts of immigration? What are sensible national, state, and local policies toward migrants?

- Sarah Gammage, “Working on the margins: Migration and employment in the United States,” Gloves-Off Ch.6 (137-62)
- Amy Sugimori, “State and local policy models promoting immigrant worker justice,” Gloves-Off Ch.9 (217-42)

OPTIONAL:

RESOURCES:

First commentary on readings is due this week.

Week 3 (April 17): Race, racism, and criminal justice: Problems and remedies
There are still large differences by race in the labor market. How much can be explained by skill? By discrimination? How has the expansion of incarceration affected the picture? What kinds of policies could make a difference?

- Nancy DiTomaso, “Racism and discrimination versus advantage and favoritism: Bias for versus bias against.” Research in Organizational Behavior 35 (57-77), 2015 (selections)
- Philip Moss and Chris Tilly, Stories Employers Tell: Race, Skill, and Hiring in America (New York: Russell Sage, 2001), Ch. 4 and 7 (“Employer perceptions of race and skill” [85-155] and “The moral of the tale: Designing better labor market policies” [245-274])—I will highlight selections
• Maurice Emsellem and Deborah Mukamal, “The new challenge of employment in the era of criminal background checks,” Gloves-Off Ch.8 (191-214)

OPTIONAL:

Week 4 (April 24): The safety net, work supports, and single mothers in the labor market
US public policy has shifted from providing welfare to requiring, and supporting, work. What are the tradeoffs involved in this shift? How have single mothers fared?
• Elizabeth Lower-Basch and Mark Greenberg, “Single mothers in the era of welfare reform,” Gloves-Off Ch.7.

OPTIONAL:
• Jill Rubery and Gai Hebson, “Applying a gender lens to employment relations: Revitalisation, resistance and risks,” Journal of Industrial Relations 60(3): 414-436

Term paper topic prospectus due

III. Overview of urban labor market problems and solutions (Weeks 5-7)

Week 5 (May 1): The big picture: Labor market restructuring, job creation, job quality
How have labor markets, and urban labor markets in particular restructured in the US? How stable is the US economy’s ability to create jobs in the long run? How can community-level organizations improve labor market outcomes for disadvantaged residents? And why should we worry about monopsony, anyway?
• Doussard, Degraded Work, Introduction (vii-xvii—skim) and Chapters 1 (“New inequalities”, 1-22, but just read 10-22), 2 (“Beyond low wages”, 23-48 but just read 25-25, 37-48), and 3 (“The city that sweats work”, 49-80, but just skim 49-52, read 65-68, 79-80)

OPTIONAL:


**Short paper on first 4 weeks of readings due**

**Week 6 (May 8): Labor dynamics at the local and sectoral level**

*Now for the small picture. What are the dynamics of construction and small-scale, local retail in Chicago? How are small retailers and construction contractors able to make profits despite intense competition? What are the consequences for workers in these sectors?*

• Doussard, *Degraded Work*, Chapters 4-7 (“How food retailers thrive in disinvested neighborhoods”, “Midsize supermarkets and degraded work”, “Dangerous work and falling pay during a construction boom”, and “Day labor in a precarious industry”, 81-202—selections to be specified)

**Week 7 (May 15)—need to reschedule due to travel AND possibly switch with next week’s class to accommodate that week’s guest speaker—maybe move to Monday May 13?): Organizing strategies: Unions, worker centers, and coalition-building**

*US unions have been in retreat since the 1970s. What strategies can workers use to organize in order to defend their own interests?*


• Doussard, *Degraded Work*, Chapters 8-9 (“The creative work of reversing degradation”, “Conclusion”, 203-236—selections to be specified)


**OPTIONAL:**


• Stephen Lerner, Jill Hurst, and Glenn Adler, “Fighting and winning in the outsourced economy: Justice for janitors at the University of Miami,” *Gloves-Off* Ch.10 (243-268)


• Ruth Milkman, “Putting wages back into competition: Deunionization and degradation in place-bound industries,” *Gloves-Off* Ch.4 (91-110, skim)

**III. Policy strategies: Skills, regulation, organizing, and the potential of worker ownership (Weeks 8-10)**

**Week 8 (May 22): Skills, training, and workforce development**

*Much of the discussion of labor market problems points to better education and training as the solution. Is a skill shortage the main problem? What new approaches to workforce development hold the most promise?*

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Hina Sheikh (UCLA MURP 2016), Economic & Workforce Development Deputy to LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis (speaker to be scheduled at time that works for her and as much of the class as possible—most likely will not be during regular class time)

• Anthony P. Carnevale & Stephen J. Rose, *The Undereducated American*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2013. (48 pages, but big print and lots of pictures)


Joan Fitzgerald and Virginia Carlson, “Ladders to a better life.” The American Prospect, November 2002 (8 pages)

OPTIONAL:

National Skills Coalition, Side-by-Side Comparison of WIA and WIOA. 2014.


Term paper outline and progress report due

Week 9 (May 29): The informal economy and new approaches to labor standards regulation

What is the informal economy, why has it grown, and what makes it tick? What new approaches to monitoring and enforcing labor regulations could be more effective in “re-formalizing” work?


Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, Off the Books: The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), Ch.2, “Home at work” (21-90; I will identify selections to read)


OPTIONAL:


Week 10 (June 5): Worker cooperatives and the solidarity economy

We close by spotlighting one particular area of policy and strategy: worker cooperatives and the solidarity economy. How much potential do coops hold for less-skilled urban workers? Why haven’t coops expanded more? What grassroots and policy strategies could help expand them?


Vincent Roscigno, George Wilson, Martha Crowley, Jil Yavorsky, and Onyefor O. Okuwobi. “The Workplace Foundations of Inequality Beliefs.” Manuscript, Department of Sociology, Ohio State University. August 2018. (22 pages including tables)

OPTIONAL:

Jane Paul, “Workplace Solidarity in the Equitable Economy,” Dollars & Sense, July/August 2018. (3 pages)


**Term paper due June 12**

**Student presentations**
**To be scheduled during Finals Week**