Unit Outline*

IREL2203

Work, Power and Society

Semester 1, 2011
Crawley Campus

Unit Coordinator – Dr. Jacquie Hutchinson

Business School

www.business.uwa.edu.au

* This Unit Outline should be read in conjunction with the Business School Unit Outline Supplement available on the Current Students web site http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students
UNIT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Welcome to Work, Power & Society.

In introductory units in industrial relations or employment relations (IR or ER), you were introduced to some discipline-specific concepts and tools of analysis such as industrial conflict, individualism v collectivism, the role of the actors in industrial relations (the state, employers, workers and their respective collective organisations) and, briefly, also to the recent changes to the organisation of work and the structure of the workplace. In this unit, we are concerned more broadly and more deeply with transformation to the nature and organisation of work, and explanations of such transformations, which inevitably involve theories about the nature of societies and the nature and exercise of power within them. In the main, we will focus on the transformation of work in the last three decades and the changing (or unchanging) role of State. Our examination of some of the debates centring on the transformation of work and the changes in the exercise and distribution of power will also deal with the effect these changes had on social relations at work, and on the lives of the diverse groups involved in these relations.

On behalf of all those involved in this unit, I hope not only that you will find that Work, Power and Society will challenge you to think in new ways about relations at work and the contexts in which they occur but also that you will find the unit enjoyable.

I look forward to working together

Dr Jacque Hutchinson
Unit Co-ordinator

Unit content

The unit examines theoretical perspectives on how different regimes of production and the organisation of work contribute to the balance of power between workers, employers or capital and the State. We will consider the impact of forces such as industrialisation and globalisation on societies, as well as canvass debates about the effects of these forces when mediated by class, culture, race, and gender, both in general and specifically, in the context of a series of industry and other case studies. We will explore these issues through readings, media and films, as well as guest speakers where appropriate.

The goal of the unit

The unit aims to increase appreciation of ‘what is happening to work, industrialised societies and people’s experience of work’ or its absence (Watson, 2008, p. xv) so as to enable students to better understand and contribute to their future work activities.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- Better understand some key theoretical sociological perspectives pertaining to the nature of change, the role of the State, employers and labour and the exercise of power in society,
- Increase your understanding of academic debates about the distribution and exercise of power at work in industrial and post-industrial societies,
- Understand some key academic debates about the complex relationship between work practices, (ii) workers’ experience of work, and (iii) wider social arrangements.
- Understand the importance of theoretical frameworks and research in assessing work practices in a workplace.
Educational principles and graduate attributes

In this unit, you will be encouraged and facilitated to develop the ability and desire to:

- increase your capacity to approach issues from a variety of perspectives
- improve your analytical and problem solving skills
- develop your qualitative research skills
- improve your written and oral communication skills
- improve your ability to think and reason logically

TEACHING AND LEARNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching and learning strategies

Students in this unit will be engaged in individual and group study and learning, with opportunities for group discussion, debates, quizzes, as well as problem solving and other critical thinking and critical analysis exercises.

Teaching and learning evaluation

You may be asked to complete two evaluations during this unit: the Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT) and the Student's Unit Reflective Feedback (SURF). The SPOT is optional and is an evaluation of the lecturer and the unit. The SURF is completed online and is a university wide survey and deals only with the unit. You will receive an email from the SURF office inviting you to complete the SURF when it is activated. We encourage you to complete the forms as your feedback is extremely important and can be used to make changes to the unit or lecturing style when appropriate. Feedback from students has already varied the teaching of this unit.

Attendance

Participation in class, whether it be listening to a lecture or getting involved in other activities, is an important part of the learning process, therefore it is important that you attend classes. More formally, the University regulations state that ‘to complete a course or unit students shall attend prescribed classes, lectures, seminars and tutorials’.
CONTACT DETAILS

We strongly advise students to regularly access their student email accounts. Important information regarding the unit is often communicated by email and will not be automatically forwarded to private email addresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit coordinator/lecturer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>Dr Jacquie Hutchinson</td>
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<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jacquie.hutchinson@uwa.edu.au">Jacquie.hutchinson@uwa.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td>6488 1434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
<td>By appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecture times:</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday 3:00 – 4:45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecture venue:</strong></td>
<td>BUSN 201</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tutor Name:</strong></td>
<td>Lee Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:grantlee@iinet.net.au">grantlee@iinet.net.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
<td>(By appointment)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tutorial times:</strong></td>
<td>Wednesday 9am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tutorial Venue:</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
<td>Jane Baxter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:baxterj01@student.uwa.edu.au">baxterj01@student.uwa.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consultation hours:</strong></td>
<td>Thursday 12pm – 3pm (By appointment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tutorial times &amp; venues:</strong></td>
<td>Thursday 3pm: ENCM 245&lt;br&gt;Thursday 4pm: ENCM 245</td>
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TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCES

Unit website
http://www.webct.uwa.edu.au

Recommended/required text
A set of readings will be available for purchase from the UWA COOP book shop.

Additional resources and reading material
Other material will be distributed over the semester. The list below is only a small sample of the literature available on the subjects we will be covering.

Additional resources & reading material
Other material will be distributed over the semester. The list below is only a small sample of the literature available on the subjects we will be covering. Your textbook contains many other relevant references;

Texts that may be of interest


Herod, A (ed) 1998 *Organizing the landscape: geographical perspectives on labor unionism*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.


Munro, A 2001, 'A feminist trade union agenda? The continued significance of class, gender and race', *Gender, Work and Organization*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 454-471.


Sennett, R 1998 The corrosion of character: the personal consequences of work in the new capitalism, Norton, NY.


Thompson, P & Mchugh, D 2002, Work organizations: a critical introduction, 3rd edn, Palgrave, Basingstoke (Hants)


Watson, TJ 2008, Sociology, work and industry, 5th edn, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon.


Journals
Australian Bulletin of Labour
Australian Feminist Studies
British Journal of Industrial Relations
Business and Society
Community, Work and Family
Economic and Industrial Democracy
Economic and Labour Relations Review
Gender and Society
Gender Work and Organization
Industrial and Labor Relations Review
Industrial Relations
Industrial Relations Journal
International Journal of Employment Studies
Journal of Industrial Relations
Labour and Industry
Labour History
New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations
Relations Industrielles
Work, Employment and Society
UNIT STRUCTURE
Lecture and tutorial schedule

Part I: Understanding the Evolution of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Preparatory reading for the week</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 28 February    | 1. Introduction to unit  
2. ‘Evolution of Work’  
• Key themes & issues  
• Definitions and meanings  
3. Study of work  
| 7 March        | Work in Historical Perspective  
- pre-industrial work  
- feudalism  
| 14 March       | Classical approaches to work  
Part 2: The Social Organisation of Work in Post-Industrial Societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Preparatory reading for the week</th>
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Part 3: The Future of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week beginning</th>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Preparatory reading for the week</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 April</td>
<td>STUDY BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Review of unit and exam preparation</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TUTORIALS

Part I: Different Ways of Understanding Work

Week beginning 7 March: Work in historical perspectives
1. In groups answer these questions:
   - In what ways did the industrial revolution impact people’s lives? Both positive and negative effects.
   - Who were the most vulnerable people and why? Can you draw any parallels with life in Australia today?

Week beginning 14 March: Classical approaches to work
1. What relevance has Marx, Engels, and Weber today?
2. Does ‘class’ still have relevance today?

Week beginning 21 March: Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism
1. Consider the role of technology in work. Have developments in technology meant progress in the conditions of work? Has it minimised hazardous work or has it led to poorer working environments?

Week beginning 28 March: Status of work: Professional and marginal jobs
1. Read the article: Willis, Evan (1989), The subordination of midwifery, Medical Dominance: the Division of Labour in Australian Health Care, Allen & Unwin: Sydney. pp92-124. (Unit readings)
   - 20 years on from when this article was written do you think the situation between Drs and midwives and nurses remains unchanged? Discuss
   - Do you see parallels in other industries?

Week beginning 4 April: Sources of power: gender & race
1. Discrimination in employment on the grounds of race and gender has been illegal in most Western countries for at least 30 years. How much progress has been made to achieve a more representative workplace and society? Explain.
2. What other groups do you think also have limited power?

Week beginning 11 April: Patriarchy and the modern family
If the family is defined as outside the world of work then it is easy to see people who have trouble juggling work and family lives as ‘a problem’. In line with this thinking, the study of industrial relations has traditionally focused on paid work, and in fact many scholars define IR as simply the study of the paid employment relationship.

- Do later thinkers come up with a better explanation of the role played by family life in contemporary work and society?
- How do women and men deal with the increasing tensions they feel in juggling paid work and family responsibilities? Is hired help the answer?
- Do you know couples who reverse roles?
**Week beginning 18 April: The rise of corporations**

1. Discuss examples of where corporation decisions can have drastic effects on jobs and lives and even nations

**Week beginning 2 May: New Public Management: the role of governments**

What do you think the role of governments should be?
What role do you think governments should have in regulating?
- Employment
- Moderating the decisions of large Corporations

**Week beginning 9 May: Resistance & conflict**

Debate Proposition: Unions are no longer relevant in today’s Australian society.
Tutorial group divided into two groups one preparing an argument in favour of the proposition and the other against. Each group selects 3 people to put their case. Speakers 1 & 2 have 3 minutes each and the third speaker has 4 minutes.

**Week beginning 16 May: Globalisation**

As students living in Australia Globalisation has impacted on us in many ways. We drink Coke, eat at McDonalds, wear Nike runners and use Nokia mobile phones. We support American Basket Ball teams and English soccer clubs and watch '21/2 Men' on TV. With all of this in mind it is time to ask ourselves the questions 'What does Globalisation have to do with me?'
In groups focus on answering the question:

*What is Globalisation and how does it impact on individuals, Australia and the World?*

Identify the items of clothing that your team are wearing that were made outside of Australia and the food you have eaten recently that comes from another culture. On the map of the world plot the countries that were identified through this process.

You should use a different colour to clearly identify food you have eaten and the clothing you wear. What does this map now tell us about the global influence on our everyday lives? Is there a region that has a greater influence than another?

**Week beginning 23 May: Issues of work, power and society today**

How do you see Australians today and in the future being impacted by technology and globalization?

**Week beginning 30 May: Overview of unit and exam preparation**
ASSESSMENT MECHANISM

The purpose of assessment

There are a number of reasons for having assessable tasks as part of an academic program. The assessable tasks are designed to encourage you to explore and understand the subject more fully. The fact that we grade your work provides you an indication of how much you have achieved. Providing feedback on your work also serves as part of the learning process.

Assessment mechanism summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial exercises/activities</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>28 March</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19 April</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23 May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
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Note 1: Results may be subject to scaling and standardisation under faculty policy and are not necessarily the sum of the component parts.

Note 2: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning outcomes as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the unit.

Note 3: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning outcomes as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the unit.
Assessment components

1. Participation

Marking Guide for Tutorial Participation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Mark</th>
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<tr>
<td>Non attendance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive contributions plus regular attendance</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insightful, analytical contributions plus regular attendance</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding contributions plus regular attendance</td>
<td>8+</td>
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2. Short Essay: The hidden dynamics of advantage. (20%) 1500 words plus references.

Choose one of the following essay topics:

- **Worthless Work.** Why are domestic tasks such as caring responsibilities and housework devalued? Suggest some strategies that could be implemented to change this situation.

- **No More Work?** What aspects of the current computer-based technology pose the greatest threat to jobs now and in the future? Are there any factors that could offset this? If so, what are they? Give examples to support your argument.

- **The Future of Professions.** The professions are based on knowledge. How does the spread of information technology affect the professions? What is the effect of the internet on the monopoly of professional knowledge?

- **Marginal Work.** Women and people from different cultural backgrounds are more likely to be found in these types of jobs? Choosing either women or a cultural group such as Indigenous, or groups from non-English speaking backgrounds discuss why they are often found in marginal employment. Do you think these groups will find greater quality and opportunities in the future? Explain your reasons.

- **Guidelines**

  In marking your essay, we will be looking for the following elements:

  - A logical structure with an Introduction, Discussion/Analysis and Conclusion
  - Clarity of argument
  - Good use of relevant literature to support your argument
  - Evidence of critical thinking
  - Coherence between discussion/analysis and conclusion
  - Accurate referencing
  - Correct English: grammar, syntax and spelling.

3. Research Project: Work in 2030

- This assignment provides you with opportunities to apply research techniques and strategies to investigating how work develops and evolves as a result of different factors including social, technological, environmental, economic, and political and others.

- **Working in pairs:**
  - You will choose an occupation. For example:
    - trade e.g. electrician, hairdressing, plumbing,
    - profession e.g. lawyer, doctor, engineer, architect, psychologist, vet
    - semi-professional e.g. teaching, nursing, social worker
    - miscellaneous e.g. retail assistant, radio broadcaster, aged care worker, politician, pilot, farmer,
Together you will prepare a report on what you believe this work will be like in 2030. Your predictions need to be based on research into a number of areas including:

- What is currently involved in doing the current occupation?
- What prior skills, knowledge, experience are required for the job today?
- What are the factors that have the potential to shape and influence whether this work will still exist or how it will be undertaken in 2030?
- Who is doing the work and where is it being done?

Research methodology: You will be expected to use a range of different research approaches. However, each project group will be required to undertake:

- **One interview** with someone currently in the chosen occupation. This interview should provide you with the view of a practitioner about how the work is currently undertaken and also an informed view about the future and the influences on their role and work.
- **Literature review** to provide background and history of the occupation and also some ideas about how different factors might impact on the job.

You are required to submit 2 pieces of work:

- Research proposal 1000 words (10%)
- Research report 2000 words (20%)

Guidelines

- **Research Proposal**
  A good research proposal clearly sets out the intended approach. It is a plan of action that describes the “what”, “who” and “how” of the research. The proposal should:
  - Clearly describe the occupation that you have chosen.
  - Provide reasons for your choice.
  - Are there particular issues, trends, factors that you are interested in investigating?
  - Make reference to the key literature on this topic (which articles have prompted your interest and what do they have to say?).
  - Describe the different research methodologies and what different types of information and data they will uncover

- **Research Report**
  Your report should:
  - Start with a brief introduction.
  - Have a sound theoretical base
  - Include literature that is relevant to your research topic (expand on the literature mentioned in your proposal). Ensure that you use academic sources and don’t just rely on web sites).
  - Discuss the research methods used
  - Say what you did (per the research proposal).
  - What problems did you encounter in gathering the data and how did you deal with these issues?
  - Present and analyse the data
  - Based on the data and the literature, provide a description of your chosen occupation in year 2030.
  - What are the implications of this prediction: job loss, different service delivery, work being done overseas, more migration?
  - Finish with a succinct conclusion.

3. **Mini Test**

A short answer test will be administered in the lecture 10 May. The test will cover key concepts covered weeks 1-9.
Exam
Students will sit a two-hour exam during the period 5 June - 19 June 2010. The exam will comprise both short answer questions and essay writing. This is not an open book exam. Further details will be provided in the final lecture and tutorial.

Submission of assignments
An electronic submission is required by the due date. Submit your assignment in an electronic format by going to the Uniprint web site www.uniprint.uwa.edu.au, then click on “Student Assignments” and follow the instructions.

You will also be required to submit a copy of your assignment on WebCT.

If you have been granted additional time to complete an assignment or have missed the deadline for submission, you can submit your assignment in hard copy to the Student Centre. Please remember to attach an Assignment Cover sheet to the front of your assignment. You can download the relevant Assignment Cover sheet from the Business School Current Students web page http://www.business.uwa.edu.au/students/assessments.

Student Guild
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Facsimile: (+61 8) 6488 1041
E-mail: enquiries@guild.uwa.edu.au
Website: http://www.guild.uwa.edu.au

Charter of Student Rights and Responsibilities

Appeals against academic assessment
The University provides the opportunity for students to lodge an appeal against assessment results and/or progress status (refer http://www.secretariat.uwa.edu.au/home/policies/appeals).