

WORK & ORGANIZATIONS
SOC 300A
Dr. CJ Churchill
St. Thomas Aquinas College
Tues./Thurs. 8:15-9:40

- **Not a General Education Requirement Class**
- **Satisfies upper level sociology class option for electives portion of the Social Sciences curriculum**

“Whether he is in a private office or a public bureau, the modern official always strives and usually enjoys a distinct *social esteem* as compared with the governed. His social position is guaranteed by the prescriptive rules of rank and order....”

Max Weber, “Bureaucracy” (c. 1922)

“Work may be a mere source of livelihood, or the most significant part of one’s inner life; it may be experienced as expiation, or as exuberant expression of self; as bounden duty, or as the development of man’s universal nature. Neither love nor hatred of work is inherent in man, or inherent in any given line of work. For work has no intrinsic meaning.”

C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (1951)

“The lowly worker can choose either to criticize the discipline to which he is subjected or else to endow it with an ideology. He usually does the latter, for otherwise, instead of participating as a co-worker in the order which has seized him, he falls victim to loneliness.”

Hans Speier, *German White-Collar Workers and the Rise of Hitler* (1986)

“[My father’s] job was to install windshields....Car, windshield. Car, windshield, Car, windshield....This kind of repetition didn’t look like any fun at all.”

Ben Hamper, *Rivthead: Tales from the Assembly Line* (1986)

“Because an everyday activity like work is often taken for granted, motives for it are infrequently enunciated. Motives for such commonplace activities do exist, however, and it is, in fact, by exploring the underlying motives of people’s everyday activities that one may understand their dominant concerns....Generally we may assume that people explain their activities by selecting motives which protect or enhance prized aspects of their own self-images.”

Robert Jackall, *Workers in a Labyrinth: Jobs and Survival in a Bank Bureaucracy* (1978)

Course Objectives: After childhood, work dominates our waking lives. Education prepares us for careers, and careers are spent in pursuit of professional recognition, promotions, higher pay, and a secure retirement. But work can also be a serious form of play in which the creativity we experience as children is extended into mature, productive activities with the dual objective of satisfying inner needs as well as our external obligations. Modern work, moreover, is almost always conducted in bureaucratic organizations which have unique effects on the social psychology and behavior of individuals and groups. This course explores these issues by looking at theories and case studies of work written by sociologists over the last century. The objective of the course is to challenge students to think and write critically about the sociology of work and organizations as they prepare to begin their own careers.

Learning Objectives:

A hard working student should complete this course with the capacity to do the following:

- Understand the origins and effects of bureaucratized work in contemporary society
- Analyze the social psychology of work in industrialized society
- Write critically and insightfully about the way work is experienced in contemporary society
- Explore how specific character types come to dominate or be dominated by bureaucracy
- Develop a critical perspective on work which will help him/her as s/he prepares to embark on a career after college

Dr. Churchill's Web Site: Go to <http://stacweb.stac.edu/~cchurchi/> for links to this syllabus (bottom of page), additional course material, and links to web sites relevant to sociology.

Final Grade: Participation = 20%
Presentation = 10%
Paper #1 = 20%
Paper #2 = 20%
Final Paper = 30%

NOTE: *Any work which you do not complete will be worth 0 points.*

Due Dates: To be announced.

Office Location: Maguire 12

Office Hours: Mon. 11:15-11:45
Tues. 11:15-2:00
Wed. 11:15-12:00

Office Telephone #: (845) 398 – 4387

E-mail: cchurchi@stac.edu

Required Texts (available in College bookstore):

- Ehrenreich, Barbara. (2001) *Nickel & Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*.
Kilborn, Peter T. (2009) *Next Stop, Reloville: Life Inside America's New Rootless Professional Class*.
Schor, Juliet B. (1992) *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*.
Sennett, Richard. (1998) *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*.
Terkel, Studs. (1972) *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*.

NOTE: Articles and chapters from other sources will also be distributed.

Requirements & Policies:

- 1) *Participation:* This is a seminar. You are required to make comments, ask questions, and participate in debate during class sessions.
- 2) *Special Accommodations:* If you are entitled to special accommodations, it is your obligation to let me know in advance of *each* relevant assignment and to show me proof of your entitlement each time.
- 3) *Reading:* To be done as assigned.
- 4) *Projects:* Guidelines for each project will be distributed in advance.
- 5) *Attendance:* More than 2 absences will harm your grade. Seven (7) absences will result in failing the course, regardless of whether absences are excused. Disruptive behavior such as reading newspapers, doing work for other courses, or sitting in a manner indicating you are asleep during class will result in your being marked absent. Coming into class late and leaving early will also be noted and will harm your grade.
- 6) *E-mail and phone:* Do not email or call me with questions about assignments, scheduling, or grades. These issues must be addressed to me directly in class or during office hours.
- 7) *Electronic communication devices:* All means of electronic communication (email, text messaging, etc.) are prohibited in class. If you plan to use a laptop computer during class for note taking, you are required to see me about this at the beginning of the semester. Use of electronic communication in class will result your being instructed to leave class for the day, marked absent for that session, and a lower participation grade.
- 8) *Grading:* The standard in grading all student work in this course can be found in the St. Thomas Aquinas College Catalog on the next to last page of this syllabus. While

the STAC grading scale does not include minuses (e.g. A -, B -, C -), my own scale does. See back page of the syllabus for a conversion chart.

All grade questions must be discussed with me in person, not by telephone or by email. Athletic obligations and vacation plans are your burden to accommodate. Tests and due dates will not be altered to fit these external activities. A test missed because of a valid, documented excuse will be replaced with a make up test. Absences without a valid excuse during a test result in 0 points for that test.

STAC Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity, a commitment to honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility, is the foundation of the learning process. All members of the St. Thomas Aquinas College community are held to the highest standards of academic honesty. While we recognize the participatory nature of education, we take academic integrity very seriously, and the College policy on academic dishonesty details consequences that can include dismissal from the College. That policy can be found in both the Student Handbook and the College Catalog.

As a student in this class, you must demonstrate your commitment to academic integrity by submitting work which originates in your own imagination, analytical faculties, or your own knowledge, which you have done yourself, and which represents your very best efforts. When appropriate, your work should be supplemented and supported by other sources; however, you must always insure that these sources are properly cited using the recommended documentation system.

Academic Accommodations: Students requiring accommodations for a documented disability should notify the instructor before the end of the first week of class.

WRITING GUIDE

The most important rule to remember in writing papers is to be clear and to the point. If you read your paper aloud to yourself, you will hear whether what you have written is clear or garbled. Reread your written work a couple of times before handing it in. Any sentences or paragraphs which do not make sense to you will make even less sense to me. An excellent guide for clear writing is *The Elements of Style* by Strunk & White. This is a slim and inexpensive paperback available in most bookstores.

The following rules apply to all writing:

- 1) **Plagiarism: DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.** Plagiarism is a serious offense. If you use *anyone* else's writing in your papers without quoting and citing them properly, you will receive an F on your paper and you may receive an F for the entire course. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated under any circumstances in this course.
- 2) **Format:** All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Do not use excessive margins or font sizes to extend the length of your paper. If you do, your grade will suffer.
- 3) **Cover Page:** All papers must have a cover page which contains the following: (a) paper title, (b) your name, (c) the course and section for which the paper is written, and (d) the date on which the paper is handed in. The cover page does not count toward the length of the paper.
- 4) **Numbering:** Number all pages except for the cover page.
- 5) **Contractions:** Do not use contractions. For example, instead of writing "don't" or "haven't" write "do not" or "have not". Contractions are informal and do not belong in academic writing.
- 6) **References and Citations:** Any time you quote or reference work which is not your own, you must provide a full citation for that work in a footnote or endnote as well as provide a full bibliographical reference. This pertains to any printed or spoken idea or words you are using which are not your own. If you are quoting a source from the Internet, you are required to provide proof that the source is reliable (that is, show me that it is an academic or mass media source). It is your obligation to prove that any Internet site is a legitimate source of information.

Web sites are never acceptable citations unless approved by professor in advance and provided with an annotation in the bibliography.

For guides on formatting footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographies, go to the library and locate the citation guidelines of the Modern Language Association (MLA). You may also use *The Chicago Manual of Style* as a guide.

STAC Grading Standards
(Excerpted from College catalogue; emphasis added)

GRADING SYSTEM

A (94-100%)

Excellent. Indicates *unusually high achievement*. Students who merit A, in addition to fulfilling the minimum requirements, give evidence of the *ability to work independently, read rather widely on their own initiative*, organize the materials of the course in relation to its wider implications, give evidence in skill subjects of habitual *errorless mastery*.

B+ (87-93%)

Very good-superior. Indicates achievement *demonstrably above average* and an intelligent fulfillment of course requirements in a manner that *approaches the excellence of the highest grade*.

B (80-86%)

Good. Signifies a *consistently high level of achievement* and indicates that the course requirements have been fulfilled in an intelligent and *above-average* manner.

C+ (75-79%)

Very satisfactory. Signifies a more acceptable degree of understanding and consistent achievement than a C. Indicates that a *student has mastered the basic course material, attended classes regularly, fulfilled assignments as required*, and given *evidence of mastery* of the skills required for the course.

C (70-74%)

Satisfactory. Signifies *acceptable understanding & consistent achievement* of quality that satisfies the required graduation grade.

D (65-69%)

Inferior-passing. Indicates understanding and achievement *below the average level* expected of students and therefore warrants only minimum approval.

F

Failure. Indicates that the student's work does not merit a passing grade.

**GRADING CONVERSION CHART
STAC to Dr. Churchill**

STAC		Dr. Churchill	
<i>Letter</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Letter</i>	<i>%</i>
A	94 – 100	A+	100
		A	95 – 99
		A –	94
B+	87 – 93	B+	87 – 93
B	80 – 86	B	84 – 86
		B –	80 – 83
C+	75 – 79	C+	75 – 79
C	70 – 74	C	74
		C –	70 – 73
D	65 – 69	D+	67 – 69
		D	65 – 67
F	0 – 64	F	0 – 64*

***NOTE:**

If you hand in work which earns an F, the percentage equivalent for that F is usually 64%. If you fail to hand in an assignment, the F you receive for it has the percentage equivalent of 0%. In the latter case, the F is technically worth far less than an F for a completed assignment and will have far more damaging consequences for your overall grade. **In all cases of plagiarism and cheating, an F is worth 0% and the violation is recorded in a permanent file in the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Depending on the severity of the incident, you may also fail the entire course.**