



Course Information

Prefix & number	Title
EDST 575	Work and Learning
Instructor	Prerequisites or restrictions (if any)
Alison Taylor	N/A

Focus or Content
<p>This course examines the relationship between formal education and the economy, a topic that has preoccupied researchers since economists Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis wrote “Schooling in Capitalist America” in 1976. Expanding our focus beyond K-12 schooling, we will take a critical look at contemporary discourses, policies, and practices related to work and learning with youth as the focus. Policy discourses include the knowledge economy and Industry 4.0, 21st century skills and employability skills, and neoliberal human capital thinking. The following questions organize our inquiry in the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have work and employment relationships changed in the past half century as a result of globalized capitalism, technological change, and climate crisis? • What skills are seen as necessary for labour market entrants and how are they to be developed? • How have youth transitions to the labour market (in their diversity) changed in Canada and other countries? • What changes when policy discourses and practices centre youth voices? <p>Course materials will include perspectives from the global North and South. Readings and other sources focused on understanding the changing context over time address the topics of flexible capital, the platform economy and precarious work, and the AI divide. Course materials also provide counter-hegemonic responses through the topics of skills ecosystems, alternative visions of professional and vocational work learning (PVWL) for human flourishing, and just transitions for sustainable work.</p>

Goals, Objectives or Learning Outcomes
<p>By the end of the course, you should have developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness of changing discourses about work and learning across different timescales and geographic sites; • An understanding of how scholars from education and other disciplines are challenging taken-for-granted policy discourses around PVWL; • A basis for developing your own framework for understanding policies and practices related to the preparation of youth for the workforce; and • An opportunity to extend your knowledge and practice your writing skills.

Assignments or Assessment Process

*Note: this may change.

Class participation and presentation 30%

Learning journal 30%

Final written assignment 40%

Notes/Other

This course is typically offered online as part of the Adult Learning and Global Change MEd program. This time, it will be offered on campus as an elective for students in Master's and Doctoral programs across Educational Studies. The topics of inquiry are likely to be of interest to students in other departments and faculties too given the connections to sociology of education, youth studies, and policy studies literatures. There are no prerequisites.