

Simon Fraser University  
Labour Studies & School for International Studies  
LBST201/IS221 Spring 2020

**Workers in the Global Economy: Globalization, Labour and Uneven Development  
Final Exam (Take-home)**

**Instructor:** Dr. Sumercan Bozkurt-Gungen

**Start Date/Time:** April 14, 14:00 **Due Date/Time:** April 19, 23:59

**Total:** 40 pts.

---Please read the exam rules and instructions carefully before answering the questions. ---

The first question is mandatory and is worth 20 points.

**Question 1 (20 pts.)** – Please read the news articles below and write an essay which provides answers to the following questions:

- What are the factors making many workers across the iPhone value chain vulnerable to poor working conditions?
- What does the working environment in Foxconn tell us about labour freedom/unfreedom in contemporary global capitalism?
- Where does the burden of responsibility in terms of these working conditions lie between Apple, Foxconn, consumers, the Chinese State and the workers?

The News Articles:

“Life and Death in Apple’s Forbidden City” *The Guardian* [by Brian Merchant], 18.06.2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/jun/18/foxconn-life-death-forbidden-city-longhua-suicide-apple-iphone-brian-merchant-one-device-extract>

“Apple, Foxconn Broke a Chinese Labor Law to Build Latest iPhones” *Bloomberg* [by Marc Gurman], 08.09.2019, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-09/apple-foxconn-broke-a-chinese-labor-law-for-iphone-production>

Answer **two** of the following three questions (10 pts. each)

**Question 2 (10 pts.)** – A newly established trade union, which aims to represent the collective interests of migrant agricultural workers in Canada, wants to make a better sense of how structural conditions in both sending countries and Canada shape these workers’ experiences in the Canadian labour market. The head of the trade union asks you to write a short report:

- identifying and explaining the three most important trends shaping the wave of Global labour migration to Canada from the Global South in the neoliberal era; and
- offering three strategies that this trade union can pursue to initiate change to the benefit of migrant workers in the agricultural sector

**Question 3 (10 pts.)** - According to the news article below, many companies are speeding up efforts to automate their businesses during the Covid19 pandemic. How might such an acceleration affect the world of work in the post-pandemic period in the global South and the global North? How would a techno-optimist, a techno-pessimist and a proponent of the labour centred perspective evaluate the potential impacts of a rapid expansion of automation on labour markets in a post-pandemic world? With which perspective do you agree the most? Why?

The News Article:

“COVID-19 will herald an automation boom”, <https://www.protocol.com/automation-boom-caused-by-coronavirus>

**Question 4 (10 pts.)** – Drawing on the course materials describing and evaluating the activities of the non-governmental initiatives/organizations below and on the information provided in their websites, discuss the effectiveness of strategies they pursue for the improvement of labour standards and working conditions. In your essay, also reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of these strategies compared to traditional union organizing and government regulation.

- Social Accountability International’s (SAI) SA8000 code of conduct - <http://www.sai-intl.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.ViewPage&pageId=1689>
- The Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) - <https://www.workersrights.org/>
- Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) - <http://www.sewa.org/>