UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

April 19, 2021
Nora Drake

A Truly Global Seminar

There is no doubt that work is going to look a lot different when the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. In addition to familiarizing the workforce with flexible schedules and video conferencing, the pandemic has subverted assumptions about what work is — and what it can be.

UC Santa Barbara's Department of Global Studies will host sociologist Anthony Giddens as he discusses these issues and more surrounding the future of post-pandemic work. His talk, "COVID-19, AI and the Future of Work," will take place via Zoom Wednesday, April 21, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public.

Giddens, former director of the London School of Economics and a Life Fellow of King's College Cambridge, will present his findings followed immediately by a discussion with Harvey Molotch, professor of sociology and metropolitan studies at New York University. The talk is part of the global studies department's spring colloquium series.

"Anthony Giddens is one of the world's most prominent social scientists who now takes up key concerns," said Jan Nederveen Pieterse, Duncan and Suzanne Mellichamp Distinguished Professor of Global Studies and Sociology and organizer of the series. "These concerns include: how does COVID-19 affect work, in the private sector and in education? How are these effects filtered by artificial intelligence like surveillance capitalism and digital governance? How do remote work and digital migration affect urban change?"

Nederveen Pieterse says the pandemic has been beneficial to academic event organizing in two ways. First, it has broadened the reach of the colloquium series; and second, it has enabled him to include a wide range of guests. “In the past the Global Studies Colloquium was limited by geography — local speakers, and scholars who are traveling through the area. COVID-19 has eliminated Zoom/video snobbishness. We all have learned to make digital connectivity work,” he said. “This opens major horizons. We can invite speakers from abroad (time zones permitting) and engage them directly in discussion.”

Indeed, future talks will feature a geographically diverse roster of experts, including guests from Hong Kong, Rome and Manila.

“We also widen our audience,” Pieterse said. “Increasingly, an international audience of scholars participates. Global studies students and alumni who work or do research in other countries can be part of discussions as well. This is crucial for all higher education, and for global studies in particular.”

To register for the talk, visit *https://ucsb.zoom.us/j/84246564996*.

Tags
Artificial Intelligence

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.