

Semester: **Summer 2023**
 Course Number: **37:575:338:T1**
 Course Title: **Occupational Safety and Health**
 Course Day and Time: **Tuesdays through Mondays**
 Location: **Online**
 Course Instructor: **Carmen Martino**
 Contact Information: **Primary - use Canvas; Secondary - carmenm@smlr.rutgers.edu**
 Office Hours and Location: **By arrangement**
 Text: **Readings available on Canvas – no required text**

Course Description

Federal and state regulatory laws and enforcement; the basic issues involved in safety and health at the workplace; and worker, union, worker center, and employer response to the issues.

Learning Objectives

The student is able to:

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department

- Apply employment relations concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2)

School of Management and Labor Relations

- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)

Additional course objectives from the Instructor

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience of work. (SMLR Goal V)
- Utilize information literacy skills

Class Outline by Week

The syllabus is subject to change – always refer to Canvas for the most up-to-date information

Video viewings and additional readings will be added to assignments

Units	Topic	Assignments
1 5/30- 6/5	Orientation to the course and introductions	Academic Integrity quiz, introduction survey, group introductions
2	OSH history	<i>Case: Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire</i>

6/6 – 6/12		OSH family history paper – due 6/19
3 6/13 – 6/19	OSH Concepts	<i>Case-The contamination of Libby, MT</i> Continue to work on OSH family history paper – due 6/19
4 6/20 – 6/26	OSH policy, politics and power And a New Crisis—COVID-19	<i>Case-Regulating diacetyl</i> Group Forum #1 – closes 6/26
5 6/27 – 7/3	The OSH Act and OSHA A Worker’s Right to Refuse	<i>Case-Change at McWane Foundries</i> Group Forum #2 – closes 7/3
6 7/4 – 7/10	The economics of safety and health (Optional but strongly encouraged!) - Right-to-know, health and safety committees, and workers’ compensation)	<i>Case-Pinto Madness</i> Group Forum #3 – closes 7/10
7 7/11 – 7/17	Evaluation week	Take Home Exam 1: Assigned 7/11 and due 7/17, at 11:59 pm
8 7/18 - 7/24	Globalization and tripartite solutions to OSH problems	<i>Case-Rana Plaza 10th Anniversary</i> Group Forum #4 – closes 7/24
9 7/25 – 7/31	OSH and the environment	<i>Case-Fracking</i> Group Forum #5 – closes 7/31
10 8/1– 8/7	Work transformation and psychosocial OSH issues	<i>Case-COVID19...Essential Workers and Working from Home</i> Discussion #6 and course evaluation– closes 8/7
11 8/8 – 8/14	Evaluation week	Take Home Exam 2: Assigned 8/8 and due 8/14 at 11:59 PM

Course Assessment

The following assignments will assess the course learning goals.

Apply employment-relations concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work.

Exams I and II (Take Home)

Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance.

Students will participate in 6 online discussions.

Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience of work.

Family occupational safety and health history paper

Utilize information literacy skills

Students will access and evaluate information and appropriately apply citations in all work.

Course Grading

A=90-100

B+=85-89

B=80-84

C+=75-79

C=70-74

D=60-69

F=59 and lower

Activity	Number	Percent or course total	Points that can be accrued
Introduction assignments Academic Integrity Quiz Intro Survey Forum Intros	3 parts	5%	50 points
Family OSH history paper and information literacy	-	20%	200 points
Online Discussions	6 @ 50 points each	30%	300 points
Exam I	-	22.5%	225 points
Exam II	-	22.5%	225 points
Total			1,000 points

Points have no absolute meaning, and in the end, I will use my judgment in translating points into grades for the course. Implicitly, that means that grades are “curved” in the sense that they are comparative. The comparison is both to other students taking the class this semester and with those who took the class in the past.

Grading rubrics for assignments and discussions are available on Canvas.

Extra credit is not offered in this course.

Family occupational safety and health history paper

A paper that chronicles your family occupational safety and health work history will be assigned early in the semester. The papers will be shared in assigned discussion groups.

Online discussions

For online discussions students interact through a series of posts about a particular topic. Students can communicate their questions, insights, and conclusions in a *threaded discussion* pertaining to a topic, as well as learn from one another in the process. Threaded discussions are also a means for me to identify whether or not you comprehend the course content. Discussions include responding to instructor and student generated questions.

The *Online Group Discussion Guidelines and Grading Rubric* document (available on the course site in Canvas) provides an in-depth explanation of how to successfully participate in an online discussion and how the discussions are evaluated. Your posts will be evaluated on a scale from minimally adequate to exceptional, with more typical responses being in the good to excellent range.

As you review the class schedule, please note that there are six graded discussions held over the semester. Although the discussions are held online and are asynchronous (in other words, you don't have to participate in a forum in “real time”) they still require a weekly time commitment. In this way, the discussions are much like signing up for a class with mandatory attendance. You are required to post on the discussion site multiple times during the week of study. A discussion may require preparing a critique, preparing a brief topic/issue presentation, or conducting online research to share with your assigned group. Failing to participate in a discussion during the open period will result in a major point deduction (50% or more) or zero points, depending on your participation history. *If you think this is a commitment that you cannot realistically make, then this class is not a good choice for you.*

Take Home Exams

Over the years this course has included standard true and false, multiple choice and short answer midterm and final exams. However, I have reached the conclusion that “take-home” mid-term and final exams are a better option. That said, the take-homes will be short papers, probably 3-5 pages, double space, 12pt fonts with inline citations and a works cited page. The papers will be based on questions or prompts that I will assign and you will have one week to complete the assignments. Further details will be included with the Exams.

Class participation

Keep current and avoid being late - This is an interactive class; you need to keep current in the readings, viewings, and discussion forums to effectively interact with others in the class. You should inform me of serious personal emergencies that arise such as a hospitalization that makes it impossible to get online. Because this class does not meet face-to-face, a routine illness (such as a cold, stomach virus or “not feeling well”) is not considered a valid excuse for failing to participate in the class. Except for a truly serious illness, you are expected to log in to view course material, submit assignments, participate in online discussions, and complete the take-home exams.

With the exception of a military deployment, work related scheduling conflicts are not considered an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels, at campus computing facilities, public libraries, or cafes. Also, with the Canvas app for your smart phone you can attend class without a computer.

A scheduling conflict related to athletic participation is not considered an acceptable excuse for late submission of an assignment, absence from a discussion or failing to take an exam. Athletes should plan the study week to accommodate practice, events, and event related travel.

An online class provides welcome schedule flexibility, but you are responsible for managing your time and participating in class every week no matter what else is going on in your life. In general, I recommend that you sign into the class at least four times a week and that you check your Rutgers email every day.

Contribute to the learning environment - You are expected to contribute to creating an environment that fosters respect and civility by adherence to class norms for discussion, debate, and all interpersonal interaction.

Course communications - You are responsible for accessing course materials on Canvas and participating as instructed. Students must maintain a functioning Rutgers e-mail address and should check it frequently throughout the study week for class announcements or updates.

Instructor communications - It is your responsibility to promptly reply to emails that request a response. You should inform me of emergencies or problems that are likely to affect your participation or performance in the course. The sooner I am informed, the easier it will be to develop a plan for you to keep up with the course work.

Class cancellations – Because this is a fully online course, Rutgers class cancellations will not affect participation. In the event of wide-spread loss of power and internet connectivity (e.g. power outages due to a hurricane or other intense storms), assignments should be completed off-line according to the syllabus.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is vital to the mission of Rutgers, to education at Rutgers and membership in the Rutgers community. It is a core value that supports trust among students, and between students and teachers. It is also a shared value; administration, faculty and students each play a vital part in promoting, securing and nurturing it.

Academic dishonesty is not an individual act that affects only the students involved. It violates communal trust, impacts other members of the community, and is an offense against scholarship. For this reason, any instance of cheating or plagiarism will be dealt with harshly.

Honesty matters. As a shared value, administration, faculty and students each play a vital part in promoting, securing and nurturing it. See the Rutgers Academic Code and Academic Oath at:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

From the Office of Disability Services

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Readings

Note: This is a partial reading list. Additional readings will be listed on the Canvas course site.

Week 2

Broder, P. (1968, October 12). The Magic mineral. *The New Yorker*, p. 117.

Week 4

Labaton, S. (2007, April 25). OSHA leaves worker safety in the hands of industry. *The New York Times*.

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. (1997) Protect your family: Reduce contamination at home. Publication #97-125.

Week 5

Kniesner, T. & Leeth, J. (2001) Policy recommendations for the 107th Congress: Occupational Safety and Health Administration. *CATO Institute*.

Silverstein, M. (2008) Getting home safe and sound: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration at 38. *American Journal of Public Health*, 98, 3, 416-423.

Weil, D. (2003) OSHA: Beyond the politics. Retrieved from:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/workplace/osha/weil.html>

Week 6

Dorman, P. (2000). The economics of safety, health, and well-being at work: An overview. *InFocus Program on SafeWork, International Labour Organization*. Retrieved from:
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_110382.pdf

Kimes, M. (2010) Oil companies safety records: A black hole. *Fortune*. Retrieved from:
http://archive.fortune.com/2010/05/10/pf/oil_safety.fortune/index.htm

Levenstein, C. & Dunn, M. (2005). Show me the money: Cost-benefit analysis in the work environment. *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Safety and Health Policy*, 15 (3).

Rosner, D. (2000). When does a worker's death become a murder? *American Journal of Public Health*, 90(4): 535-540.

(Optional Reading)

Bingham, E. (1983). Right to Know movement. *American Journal of Public Health*, 73(11): 1302.

Grabell, M. & Berkes, H. (2015). The demolition of Workers Comp. *ProPublica and National Public Radio*. Retrieved from <https://www.propublica.org/article/the-demolition-of-workers-compensation>

International Labor Organization. (2012) The COSH Movement and Right to Know. *Encyclopedia of Occupational Safety and Health*, 4th Ed. (59). Retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/safework/info/publications/WCMS_113329/lang--en/index.htm

New Jersey Work Environment Council (2008). Still at risk: Protecting New Jersey jobs, families, and hometowns from toxic chemical disaster. Retrieved from https://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/events/pastmtg/hazmat/assets/2008/wetp_fall_2008_works_hop_patel_1_508.pdf

Week 9

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. (2001). Corporate responsibility and safety and Health at work.

Loewenson, R. (2001). Globalization and occupational health: A perspective from Southern Africa. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 79(9). Published online at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2566652/pdf/11584735.pdf>

Week 10

Adam-Poupart, A *et al.* (2013) The impact of climate change on occupational safety and health. Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail (IRSST). Retrieved from <http://www.irsst.qc.ca/media/documents/PubIRSST/R-775.pdf>

Michaels, D. & Monforton, C. (2005) Manufacturing uncertainty: Contested science and the protection of the public's health and environment. *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 95, No. S1, pp. S39-S48.

Rich, M. & Broder, J. (2011, November 4). A debate arises on job creation and the environment. *New York Times*.