OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ONLINE – FALL 2012

Rutgers University
School of Management and Labor Relations
Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department

Course Number: 37:575:338:90
Instructor: Ashley Conway
Email: conway.ashley@gmail.com
Phone Number: 732-932-4245
Office Hours: By appointment

Note: The syllabus may be revised during the course. Students will be apprised of all changes.

Course Description:
Work has an impact on physical and psychological health. In this course, students will explore the health and safety issues of various types of work. Students will gain an understanding of the current state of occupational safety and health in the United States and globally including the enforcement of laws regulating occupational safety and health and the roles of workers, unions, and employers. The historical, economic, and cultural forces contributing to and inhibiting solutions to occupational safety and health problems will be analyzed.

Course Expectations:
This course requires that you:

- Write a paper on your family occupational safety and health history;
- Participate in 8 forum discussions;
- Take 2 midterm exams – one in November and one in December;
- Complete all assigned course work.

Objectives:

- Gain a historical, economic, and organizational perspective of occupational safety and health;
- Investigate current occupational safety and health problems and solutions;
- Identify the forces that influence occupational safety and health; and
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to identify workplace problems and advance safe, healthy work for oneself or others.

Required Books and Videos:
You are not required to purchase books or a text. Materials such as book chapters, articles, and audio or visual clips will be made available in e-college. You may need to rent one video from Netflix or Blockbuster.

Evaluation:
Grades will be based on each of the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction assignment</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Paper</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forums (8 – 50 points)</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>midterm exams – one in November</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 1000

GRADING SCALE (%):

- A 90 – 100
- B+ 85 – 89
- B 80 – 84
- C+ 75 – 79
- C 70 – 74
- D 60 – 69
- F < 60

In addition, I may increase or decrease your grade for exceptional (good or bad) class participation and performance – ordinarily by one level (for example, between B and B+).
Forums*:  
An important way to learn on-line is by participating in forums: a discussion group where students interact through a series of posts about a particular topic. Students can communicate their insights and thoughts 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 the instructor to identify whether or not a student comprehends required reading assignments. Forums include instructor-generated questions and student-to-student interaction.

Points have no “absolute meaning,” – in the end, I will use my judgment in translating points into grades for the course. 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.

Assessment of Online Forums
It is possible to earn up to 400 points by excellence in participation in a total of 8 forums (each forum is worth 50 points). The forum is like a class discussion with a set of questions (usually two).

A forum is an interactive discussion and your contribution will be evaluated on a scale from minimally adequate to exceptional, with more typical responses being in the good to excellent range. The score reflects:

- How often you participated. Posting four times regarding one of the questions is minimally adequate, whereas more extensive participation earns you more points.
- Was your participation interactive? Remember, this is a discussion – it is better to demonstrate understanding of the ideas of others before going on to your own opinion than to just “splash” your own ideas onto the page and never really interact with others.
- Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings? Did they reflect an accurate understanding of the material being discussed or were they riddled with errors regarding the course material.
- Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence? Did you draw on readings from other courses, current news, or online sources of information in a manner that contributes to the discussion?
- Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately? Do they show mastery of persuasive written English? Please do not “flame” in these forums; be courteous of others who will be reading your comments.

Keep current – 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 can only participate in forums when they are open.

You should inform me of serious personal emergencies that arise – for instance, hospitalization that makes it impossible to get online. A trip associated with your job is not such an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels, in campus computing facilities, or public libraries. An online class is somewhat flexible with regard to your schedule but you must be responsible for managing your time and for getting online each week no matter what else is going on in your life. In general, I recommend that you sign into the class AT LEAST 3 times a week and that you check your Rutgers email each day.

For more information on forums refer to the Forum Guidelines document in e-college.

Midterm Exams:
The November midterm exam (200 points) will cover material from Units 1 and 2. The exam may include true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, short answer and essay questions.

The December midterm exam (200 points) will cover material from Units 3 and 4; however, a general knowledge of material from the first half of the semester will be needed to answer some questions correctly. The exam may include true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay questions.

Writing Assignment:
Students will write one paper – an essay on your family occupational safety and health history (150 points).

Grading Criteria for Written Submissions (paper and forums):
Content. Writing should reflect careful, thorough consideration of the topic. Writing should also demonstrate careful reading of the course material and cite all sources that were consulted when preparing the assignment. The paper should have a clear thesis statement and a strong conclusion.

Mechanics. Writing should demonstrate college level competence in grammar and style. Students with unsatisfactory writing skills will be encouraged to seek additional assistance from tutorial resources.

Late submission of family OSH history paper:

- 25% point deduction for late submissions up to one week after due date
- 50% point deduction for late submissions more than one week and up to two weeks after the due date
- No points will be given for late submissions in excess of two weeks
- Forum posts will not be accepted once the forum is closed and the discussion is over
## Extra credit:
No extra credit assignments will be assigned except in extraordinary circumstances.

## Honor Code and Academic Integrity:
Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and permitted by the assignment.

Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses. Any such issues will be submitted to the Dean of the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department, as appropriate. Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course.

Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit.

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course.

Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit.

The Rutgers' academic integrity policy can be accessed at this link: 

Most academic integrity problems that arise are not intentional but are the consequence of failing to appropriately and carefully cite sources. Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity!

Your written work (forums and the paper) may be submitted to “Turnitin.com” to insure that your answers are yours alone – not answers from another student, from the web, or another source. Be careful not to “copy” phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words.

## Unit 1: Building a Foundation for Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Assignment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong> 9/12 – 9/18</td>
<td><strong>Course Overview and Introduction</strong> Assignment - Parts 1 &amp; 2 Learning objective: Become familiar with the college learning platform and meet group members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong> 9/19 – 9/25</td>
<td><strong>Occupational Safety and Health Historical Overview</strong> Learning objective: Review historical events and understand them from an OSH perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong> 9/26 – 10/2</td>
<td><strong>Occupational Safety and Health Concepts</strong> Learning Objective: Comprehend and interpret the basic principles and concepts of OSH, including frequently used terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong> 10/3 – 10/9</td>
<td><strong>OSH Power Dynamics</strong> Learning Objective: Identify the forces influencing OSH and analyze these forces.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Week 1 Assignment:
**Part 1:**
Post an introduction to your assigned group – due Saturday, 9/15 by 11:59 pm and Post additional comments to your assigned group – due Tuesday, 9/18 by 11:59 pm

**Part 2:**
Submit the introduction worksheet to the instructor in the drop box – due 9/18 by 11:59 pm

### Week 2 Assignment:
**Family OSH History Paper** – due 9/25 submit to instructor and share with group members in "Doc Sharing"

### Week 3 Assignment:
**Asbestos: W.R. Grace** Videos:

Readings:
- NIOSH. *Take Home Toxins."

**Assignment:** Forum #1 – first post due 9/29, forum closes 10/2

### Week 4 Assignment:
**Popcorn Worker's Lung: The Regulation of Diacetyl** Videos:

**Assignment:** Forum #2 – due first post 10/6, forum closes 10/9

---

**Triangle Shirtwaist Factory**
Videos:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 2</th>
<th>Regulatory Realities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9</strong> 11/7–11/13</td>
<td><strong>Evaluation Week</strong>&lt;br&gt;Learning objective: Synthesize and apply OSH knowledge to midterm exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Unit 3: Change and Progress

#### Week 10
**11/14-11/20**

**OSH Globalization and Tripartite Solutions**

- **Learning Objective:** Identify the roles of government, employers, and unions in occupational health and analyze global efforts to improve work safety and health.

- **Foxconn**
  - **Readings:**
  - **Videos:**

#### Week 11
**11/21-11/27**

**Linkages: OSH and the Environment**

- **Learning Objective:** Identify occupational safety and health partnerships and critique their effectiveness.

- **The Politics of Energy and OSH: From Fukushima to Fracking**
  - **Readings:**
    - TBA
  - **Spiegel Online International (2011). Fukushima Workers Risk Radiation to Feed Families.**
  - **Audio:**
  - **Videos:**
    - Need to Know, PBS (2010). *Uncharted Waters: The Spill and Human Health.*
  - **Readings:**
  - **Videos:**
  - **Assignment:** Read and view all assigned material – there is not a forum to participate in this week

---

**Thanksgiving Recess 12/22 – 12/25**

---

### Unit 3: 21st Century Work

#### Week 12
**11/28-12/4**

**Work Transformation, Psychosocial OSH Issues, and Terrorism**

- **Learning objectives:** Recognize psychosocial OSH factors and identify prevention and mitigation measures. Critique response efforts of 9/11 and examine the OSH implications.

- **9/11 and the World Trade Center Pile**
  - **Readings:**
    - TBA
  - **Viewings:**
    - Sundance Channel. *Dust to Dust.*
  - **Assignment:** Forum #8 – first post due 12/1, forum closes 12/4

#### Week 13
**12/4-12/11**

**Evaluation Week**

- **Learning objective:** Synthesize and apply OSH knowledge to midterm exam.

- **Midterm exam opens, Sunday 12/9, 12:00 am**
- **Midterm exam closes Tuesday, 12/11, 11:59 pm**

---

**Videos and Readings:** The videos and readings listed in the syllabus may be changed or augmented – always follow assignment directions provided in the weekly messages.

*Thank you to Professor Paula Voos for sharing content on forums for this syllabus.*