OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ONLINE - SPRING 2013

Rutgers University

School of Management and Labor Relations

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department

Course Number: 37:575:338:92

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Office Location: By Appointment
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:

- Complete the Week 1 Intro Assignment;
- Write a paper on your family occupational safety and health history;
- Write an occupational safety and health case study;
- Complete ten weekly forums;
- Participate in forum discussions;
- Take a midterm exam; and
- Complete all required course readings and video viewings.

Learning Goals and Objectives:

How does this course meet the Labor Studies and Employment Relations (LSER) Department's overall learning objectives?

- Analyze a contemporary global issue in labor & employment relations from a multidisciplinary perspective
- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts
- Work productively in teams, in social networks, and on an individual basis

What are the learning objectives for this course?

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

Required Books and Videos:

You are not required to purchase books. Materials such as book chapters, articles, and audio or visual clips will be available in e-college.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on each of the following activities:

	Points
Intro Assignment	25
History Paper	100
Forums (5 @ 25 points plus 5 @ 50 points)	375
Midterm Exam	100
Case study (proposal, draft, final submission, and presentation)	400
Total	1000

GRADING SCALE (%):

A	90 - 100
B+	85 – 89
В	80 - 84
C+	75 - 79
C	70 - 74
D	60 - 70
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+), but possibly more.

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. 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.

Assessment of Online Forums

It is possible to earn up to 375 points by excellence in participation in a total of ten forums. The forum is like a class discussion with a set of one or two questions (each question is worth 25 points).

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. Signing on three times to interact with other students 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 up with 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:

The midterm exam (100 points) will cover concepts and competencies students learned in the first half of the semester. The exam will consist of true/false, multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions.

Writing Assignments:

Students will write two papers – the OSH Family History (100 points) and an OSH case study (400 points). Case study instructions will be provided in a separate document.

Grading Criteria for Written Submissions (paper, case study, 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. Papers 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 submissions:

- 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
- Forums posts will not be accepted once the forum is closed and the discussion is over

Extra credit:

No extra credit assignments will be allowed 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 are expected to abide by the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct. They are to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity.

Review the Rutgers' academic integrity statement at this link: http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity

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, papers, and the case study) will 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 Study	
Week 1 1/23- 1/29	Course Overview Intro Worksheet and Forum Intro's	Introduction Complete and submit introduction worksheet to instructor in drop box - due 1/29 Forum Intro's – closes at 11:59 PM on 1/2
Week 2 1/30-2/5	Historical OSH Overview Learning objective: Review historical events from an OSH perspective.	Viewings: Caruso, D. 2009. The Cloth Inferno- The Triangle Shirt Waist Factory Fire (9:18). OSHA. 1970. Can't Take No More (26:57). Jeffries, M. 2007. U.S. Child Labor 1908 – 1920 (9:22). Readings: Brodeur, P. 1968. Reporter at Large - The Magic Mineral. The New Yorker. Walsh-Healey Contracts Act. Course document. Assignment: Family OSH History Paper – due 2/5
Week 3 2/6-2/12	OSH Concepts Learning Objective: Comprehend and interpret the basic principles and concepts of OSH, including frequently used terms.	Viewings: Alice Hamilton. TED Talk. Dr. Snow. Understanding Hazard and Risk. The Scientific Method Made Easy. Readings: ILO Encyclopedia of OSH, Chapter 30, Occupational Hygiene: Goals, Definitions and General Information. Interview with Mike Bennett – Course Document Assignment: Forum #1 – closes at 11:59 PM on 2/12
Week 4 2/13- 2/19	OSH Power Dynamics Learning Objective: Identify the forces influencing OSH and analyze those forces.	Viewings: WCBN (2010) Popcorn Lung: Part I (5:59) WCBN (2010) Popcorn Lung: Part II (5:21) Readings: New York Times Article: OSHA leaves worker safety in the hands of industry Assignment: Forum #2 - closes at 11:59 PM on 2/19 Receive case study assignment instructions - 2/13

Unit 2	Regulatory Realities	
Week 5 2/20-2/26	OSH Act and OSHA Learning objective: Gain an understanding of the scope of the OSH Act and the role of OSHA.	Viewings: PBS, FRONTLINE. A Dangerous Business Revisited. The Story of OSHA Readings: CATO Institute. Handbook for Congress: Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Silverstein, M. 2008. Getting Home Safe and Sound: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration at 38. American Journal of Public Health. Weil, David. 2003. OSHA: Beyond the Politics. From PBS, FRONTLINE web site Assignment: Forum #3 – closes at 11:59 PM on 2/26 Case study topic proposal due 2/26
Week 6 2/27-3/5	Economics Learning Objective: Learn how market theory impacts work safety and health and analyze the effects of economics on injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.	Viewings: PBS, NOVA. Mind Over Money. Readings: Levenstein, C. and 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. Rosner, D. 2000. When Does a Worker's Death Become a Murder? American Journal of Public Health. Assignment: Forum #4 – closed at 11:59 PM on 3/5 Receive case study topic proposal approval- 3/5
Unit 3		Change and Progress
Week 7 3/6-3/12	Right to Know and Workplace Health & Safety Committees Learning Objectives: Gain an understanding of the role information plays in occupational safety and health and learn how to access health and safety information. Examine the role of health and safety	Viewings: PBS, FRONTLINE. The Spill. Readings: Bingham, Eula. 1983. Right to Know Movement. American Journal of Public Health. ILO Encyclopedia of Occupational Safety and Health. From Chapter 23: The COSH Movement and Right to Know. Massachusetts Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health. Health and Safety Committees. Schor, E. 2010. Twin BP Disasters Complicate Push for Safety. New York Times. Assignment: Forum #5 – closed at 11:59 PM on 3/12 You should also use this week to work on your case study paper.

Week 8 3/13- 3/15 & 3/25- 3/26	Workers' Compensation	Viewings: New York Times video: The World of Hurt: The Examination. (5:20): http://video.nytimes.com/video/2009/03/31/nyregion/1194838956105/a-world-of-hurt-the-examination.html Nimitz High School (2008). Video: Workers' Compensation History. (10:09) Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcE6GJ05W00
		Readings: Calderone, P. (2011). NJ Workers' Compensation Program: A Century of Cooperation, Innovation. New Jersey Law Journal. New Jersey Policy Research Organization Foundation (2007). Workers' Compensation in New Jersey. NJ PRO: Facts for Discussion.
		Assignment: There is not a forum to participate in this week. You should use this week to work on your case study paper and begin reviewing for your midterm exam (see midterm study guide).
Spring Break 3/16- 3/24		
Week 9 3/27-4/2	Midterm Exam	Review for midterm exam
		Take exam – opens Saturday 3/30, 12:01 AM – closes Tuesday, 4/2, 11:59 PM
Week 10 4/3-4/9	Linkages – Unions and the Environmental Movement	Viewings: How the Seattle WTO Protects Changed the World (No Longer Available) 60 Minutes Video – The Blowout PBS video Uncharted Waters: the Spill and Human Health
	Learning Objective: Identify occupational safety and health partnerships and critique their effectiveness.	Readings: ILO Encyclopedia of Occupational Safety and Health. Kohler, L. 1998. Environment and the World of Work: An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development, Environment, and the Work Environment. Last Defense at Troubled Reactors: 50 Japanese Workers.
		Assignment: Case study draft due Tuesday, 4/9, 11:59 PM

Week 11	Tripartite	Viewings:
4/10-	Responsibilities	Development Crossing (2009). Did you Know? – Corporate Social Responsibility
4/16	and Solutions	CNN (2010). BP – "Model of corporate responsibility?"
7,10	and Solutions	World Biz Watch (2006) – Can drinking coffee save the world?
	Learning Objective:	Starbucks Corporation (2010). Starbucks is the largest purchaser of free trade coffee.
	Identify the roles of	Starbucks corporation (2010). Starbucks is the largest purchaser of free trade correct.
	government,	Readings:
	employers, and unions in	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. 2007. National economics and safety and health
	occupational	fact sheet.
	health and analyze	Weil, D. 1991. Enforcing OSHA: The Role of Labor Unions. Journal of Industrial Relations.
	global efforts to	well, b. 1991. Enjoicing Osha. The Note of Lubbi Onions. Souther of Industrial Relations.
	improve work safety and health.	Assignment:
	Sujety and neartin	Forum #6 – closed at 11:59 PM on 4/16
		100 closed at 11.55 f W on 4) 10
		Receive Case Study Draft Feedback
Unit 4		21 st Century Work
Week 12	Globalization	OSH and Globalization
4/17-		
4/23	Learning Objective: Gain a global	Readings:
	perspective of	
	occupational safety and health.	Lowenson, R. (2001). Globalization and Occupational Health: A Perspective from Southern Africa.
	and nounn.	Bulletin of the World Health Organization.
		3
		Tofani, L. (2007). Chinese Workers Lose Their Lives Producing Goods for America. Salt Lake City
		Tribune.
		Assignment:
		Forum #7 – closed at 11:59 PM on 4/23
		Work on Case Studies
Week 13	Work	9/11 World Trade Center Responders
4/24-	Transformation	
4/30	, Psychosocial	Viewings:
	Issues, and	Sundance Channel. Dust to Dust.
	Terrorism	
		Readings:
	Learning objectives: Recognize	No readings
	psychosocial OSH	
	factors and identify	Assignment:
	prevention and	Forum #8 – closed at 11:59 PM on 4/30
	mitigation measures. Critique	
	response efforts to	
	the WTC terrorist	
	attack response and	
	examine the OSH implications.	
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Week 14 5/1-5/7	Evaluation Week	Assignments: Case study and case study presentation due Thursday, 5/2, 11:59 PM – submit final version of case study to instructor and submit virtual poster presentation to group for critique
	Learning objective: Synthesize and apply OSH knowledge by writing a case study.	Forum #9 – read group members' case study virtual poster presentation and critique – due 5/7

Readings:Note: The readings and viewings contained in the syllabus may be changed or augmented.