

**INT'L/COMPARATIVE LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS**  
**(Labor Studies and Employment Relations 578:562)**  
**Spring 2013**

**Course Syllabus**  
**(preliminary version | current as of 11/27/2012)**

Class Meetings:

Room 130  
Labor Education Center (LEC)  
Cook Campus  
Thursday, 4:30-7:10pm

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Office Hours: 2-4pm on Thursdays or Appt.

Course Overview:

This course introduces students to the comparative analysis of employment relations. It reviews labor, social, and economic policies with a focus on how labor movements in different parts of the world marshal political and economic resources to represent workers' interests. At the same time, it emphasizes how employment relations can be used as a prism for better understanding the broader character of different national models of democratic capitalism. The analytical focus on employment relations allows us to see how state-sponsored institutions in contemporary societies facilitate the co-existence of two types of governance principles: capitalist and democratic.

The course has four parts. Part I elaborates the benefits of using the comparative method for social inquiry and introduces the students to thinking about employment relations in terms of institutional systems. In part II, class participants learn about different national systems of employment relations, including their different patterns of wage-formation, diverse linkages between nation-level regulations and firm-level practices in labor management, as well as distinct social cleavages in countries' labor movements along such dimensions as gender, age or economic sectors. In part III, the course probes cross-national themes in employment relations, including such issues as competitiveness, social protection, training, labor market inclusion and the governance of capitalism. In part IV, students are asked, first, to reflect on different approaches to explaining institutional changes in employment relations and, second, to speculate on the future of employment relations and its study. Upon taking the course, students should be well-equipped to assess labor and employment relations in international and comparative perspective.

Learning Objectives:

The course aims to help students to:

- Develop a solid understanding of employment relations systems in a variety of countries.
- Compare and contrast labor and employment relations in selected nations with each other, and with those in the United States.

- Use the comparative approach and theoretical models to critically analyze labor and employment relations in the countries not covered in this course.
- Become familiar with sources of data and other information about labor and employment relations overseas.
- Improve professional competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving, verbal and written communication, and leadership, team and interpersonal skills.

Class Materials:

I recommend one book for purchase:

Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes, eds. 2011. *International & Comparative Employment Relations: Globalisation and Change (5th Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The university bookstore should have multiple copies for purchase. You can acquire it from other bookstores or online sources. I will only post chapters 1 and 3 of the text on Sakai.

All other readings will be made available to students on Rutgers Sakai (<http://sakai.rutgers.edu>). Students can access the course site on Sakai by following these directions:

- Go to <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>
- To log on, enter your Rutgers NetID and password in the upper right hand corner.
- Look for the tabs at the top of the next page. Click on the tab: 38:578:562:01.
- Click on “resources” on the menu on the left hand side of the next page. You should see the course syllabus and all of the course readings.

Special Rules on Readings:

Students are required to print out all assigned readings to allow for effective engagement with the material. Moreover, students are expected to bring hard-copy versions of the assigned texts to class meetings.

Special Rules on Electronic Devices:

There will be no use of laptops, tablets or smart phones during class sessions without special permission. While such instruments are important tools for research, they have also become distractions in the classroom. For in-depth learning in the course, students are asked to pay focused attention and contribute critical thought in class discussions.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation	30% of the course grade
Group Presentation	10%
Short Reaction Papers	30%
Long Paper Assignment	30%

Course Outline:

**Week 1: Introduction (Jan 24)**

We go over the syllabus and introduce employment relations as a central prism for understanding the character of modern capitalist democracies. We also familiarize ourselves with some of the library resources for the course (e.g. <http://libguides.rutgers.edu/content.php?pid=187223&sid=1572112>).

**COMPARING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS**

We lay the foundations for class discussion during the semester by probing the benefits of comparative analysis and inquiring about the role of institutions in employment relations.

**Week 2: Comparing Employment Relations: What, Why & How (Jan 31)**

Wolfgang Streeck. 2005. "The Sociology of Labor Markets and Trade Unions." In Neil J. Smelser and Richard Swedberg, eds. *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 254-283 (chapter 12).  
Charles Ragin. 1989. *The Comparative Methods: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 1, 3 & 4.

**Week 3: Thinking in Terms of National Employment Relations Systems (Febr 7)**

John T. Dunlop. 1994. *Industrial Relations Systems* (Reprinted & Revised). Ithaca: Cornell University ILR Press, commentary and chapter 1.  
Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes. 2011. "An Introduction." In Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes, eds. *International & Comparative Employment Relations: Globalisation and Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1-35.  
Gregory Jackson and Tim Muellenborn. 2012. "Understanding the Role of Institutions in Industrial Relations: Perspectives from Classical Sociological Theory." *Industrial Relations* 51(S1): 472-500.

**NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS SYSTEMS**

We learn about different national employment systems, including such issues as patterns of wage-formation, linkages between national-level regulations and firm-level practices in labor management, as well as social cleavages in countries' labor movement (e.g., gender, age and sectors).

**Week 4: United States – The Demise of the New Deal System (Febr 14)**

- Harry C. Katz and Alexander Colvin. 2011. "Employment Relations in the United States of America. In Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes, eds. *International & Comparative Employment Relations: Globalisation and Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 62-97.
- Richard B. Freeman. 2007. *America Works: Critical Thoughts on the Exceptional U.S. Labor Market*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 7-19 (chapter 1).
- Rebecca M. Blank. Book Review of *America Works: Critical Thoughts on the Exceptional U.S. Labor Market*. *ILR Review* 62(2): 252-253.
- Paul Frymer. 2010. "Labor and American Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 8(2): 609-616.

**Week 5: Germany – Enduring Questions about Organized Capitalism (Febr 21)**

- Berndt K. Keller and Anja Kirsch. 2011. "Employment Relations in Germany." In Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes, eds. *International & Comparative Employment Relations: Globalisation and Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 196-223.
- Wolfgang Streeck. 1997. "Beneficial Constraints: On the Economic Limits of Rational Voluntarism." In J. Rodgers Hollingsworth and Robert Boyer, eds. *Contemporary Capitalism: The Embeddedness of Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 197-219.
- Alexander Reisenbichler and Kimberly J. Morgan. 2012. "From 'Sick Man' to 'Miracle': Explaining the Robustness of the German Labor Market During and After the Financial Crisis 2008-09." *Politics & Society* 40(4): 549-579.

**Week 6: Denmark – Facing Globalization with Flexicurity (Febr 28)**

- Jørgen Steen Madsen, Jesper Due and Søren Kaj Andersen. 2011. "Employment Relations in Denmark." In Greg J. Bamber, Russell D. Lansbury and Nick Wailes, eds. *International & Comparative Employment Relations: Globalisation and Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 224-251.
- Peer Hull Kristensen. 2011. "The Co-evolution of Experimentalist Business Systems and Enabling Welfare States: Nordic Countries in Transition." In Peer Hull Kristensen and Kari Lilja, eds. *Nordic Capitalisms and Globalization: New Forms of Economic Organization and Welfare Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-46.
- Peer Hull Kristensen, Maja Lotz, and Robson Rocha. 2011. "Denmark: Tailoring Flexicurity for Changing Roles in Global Games." In Peer Hull Kristensen and Kari Lilja, eds. *Nordic Capitalisms and Globalization: New Forms of Economic Organization and Welfare Institutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 86-140.

**Week 7: Other Countries' Employment Relations Systems (March 7)**

Group presentations on four countries (possible options: Britain, Canada, Italy, France, Japan, South Korea, China, and India).

**CROSS-NATIONAL THEMES IN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS**

We probe cross-national themes in employment relations, including such issues as competitiveness, social protection, training, social inclusion and the governance of capitalism.

**Week 8: Employment Relations and Competitiveness (March 14)**

Peter A. Hall and David Soskice. 2001. "An Introduction to Varieties of Capitalism." In Peter A. Hall and David Soskice, eds. *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutions of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-36 & 54-60.

John L. Campbell and Ove K. Pedersen. 2007. "Institutional Competitiveness in the Global Economy: Denmark, the United States, and the Varieties of Capitalism." *Regulation & Governance* 1(3): 230-246.

Michael E. Porter and Jan W. Rivkin. 2012. "The Looming Challenge to U.S. Competitiveness." *Harvard Business Review* (March): 54-62.

**Week 9: Employment Relations and Social Protection (March 28)**

Gøsta Esping-Andersen. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, chapters 3 & 6.

Philip Manow and Eric Seils. 2000. "The Employment Crisis of the German Welfare State." *West European Politics* 23(3): 137-160.

Arthur Daemrich and Thomas Bredgaard. 2012. "The Welfare State as an Investment Strategy: Denmark's Flexicurity Policies." In Ashok Bardhan, Cynthia A. Kroll and Dwight M. Jaffee, eds. *Oxford Handbook of Offshoring and Global Employment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**Week 10: Employment Relations and Training (April 4)**

Marius R. Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch. 2012. "The Comparative Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation." In Marius R. Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch, eds. *The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3-40.

Kathleen Thelen and Marius R. Busemeyer. 2012. "Institutional Change in German Vocational Training: From Collectivism toward Segmentalism." In Marius R.

- Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch, eds. *The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 68-100.
- Moira Nelson. 2012. "Continued Collectivism: The Role of Trade Self-Management and the Social Democratic Party in Danish Vocational Education and Training." In Marius R. Busemeyer and Christine Trampusch, eds. *The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 179-203.
- Further reading: Cathie Jo Martin. 2006. *Stuck in Neutral: Business and the Politics of Human Capital Investment Policy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3-19 (introduction).

### **Week 11: Employment Relations and Labor Market Inclusion (April 11)**

- Gerhard Bosch and Claudia Weinkopf, eds. 2008. *Low-Wage Work in Germany*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, page selections to be determined.
- Niels Westergaard-Nielsen, ed. 2008. *Low-Wage Work in Denmark*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, page selections to be determined.

### **Week 12: Employment Relations and Governing Capitalism (April 18)**

- Philippe C. Schmitter. 1974. "Still the Century of Corporatism?" *Review of Politics* 36(1): 85-131.
- Wolfgang Streeck. 2006. "The Study of Organized Interests: Before 'The Century' and After." In Colin Crouch and Wolfgang Streeck, eds. *The Diversity of Democracy: Corporatism, Social Order and Political Conflict*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 3-45.
- Richard Trumka. 2012. Response to the Report of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, January 18.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

In this section, we ask ourselves where employment relations and their study are heading. We reflect on how we should we think about institutional change.

### **Week 13: Explaining Institutional Change in Employment Relations Systems (April 25)**

- Kathleen Thelen. 2009. "Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 47(3): 471-498.
- Chris Howell and Rebecca Collins Givan. 2011. "Rethinking Institutions and Institutional Change in European Industrial Relations." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 49(3): 231-255.
- James Mahoney. 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology." *Theory & Society* 29(4): 507-548.

## **Week 14: What Future for Employment Relations? (May 2)**

Harry C. Katz and Owen Darbishire. 1999. *Converging Divergences: Worldwide Changes in Employment Systems*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell ILR Press, 263-284 (chapter 7).

Michael J. Piore. 2011. "Whither Industrial Relations: Does It Have a Future in Post-Industrial Society?" *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 49(4): 792-801.

Colin Crouch. 2011. *The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 162-180 (chapter 8).

Further reading: Carola Frege, Edmund Heery and Lowell Turner. 2004. "The New Solidarity? Trade Union Coalition-Building in Five Countries." In Carola Frege and John Kelly, eds. *Varieties Unionism: Strategies for Union Revitalization in a Globalizing Economy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 137-158.

### Appendix – Further Information on Course Assignments & Class Rules:

#### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Be prepared for class and always read the assigned materials before our meetings. You are expected to bring questions and comments about the course material so that you can participate in class discussions. With much of our time spent learning through discussion, it is necessary for everybody to participate. I might ask students to use their questions to stimulate discussions and will ensure broad participation. It is critical that we respect one another's thoughts and address our comments at others' ideas, not at people themselves. This course is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language. Finally, please take careful notes.

Students should plan to attend every course session, and I ask you to sign in personally at the beginning of class. If for some unavoidable reason you must miss a class, please let me know in advance through the university's absence reporting website (<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>) so that your absence will not remain unexplained. If you are late or leave early repeatedly, and if you miss class unexcused, your participation grade will suffer.

The class participation grade will include your attendance and your contribution to the intellectual life of the classroom, including depth of content, relevance and responsiveness to other students' contributions.

#### **GROUP PRESENTATION**

The session on March 7 will be used for group presentations on the employment relations systems in four (out of eight) countries not covered in-depth during the course. Groups will be assembled during the session on February 21, and I will reserve some time during our meetings on February 21 and 28 for groups to coordinate on researching their countries and preparing presentations. On March 7, each group gives a 20-minute presentation and answers questions (5

minutes). Everybody in the group is expected to speak, and the group should prepare PowerPoint slides that will be distributed to the other students via Sakai.

Please send your presentation slides (including the names of your group's participants) to the instructor via email by March 5. There will be peer evaluations of your group members' contribution to the group presentations. Each participating student is required to submit your peer evaluation to the instructor. The peer evaluation grades range from 0 to 10. Your final grade for the group project will be based on both your group performance (which will be evaluated by the instructor) and your average peer evaluations. For example, if your group gets 9 (the full mark is 10) for your group presentation, and your average peer evaluation score is 9.5/10, your final score for the group presentation will be  $9 \times 9.5/10 = 8.55$ .

### **SHORT REACTION PAPERS (“THINKPIECES”)**

You are expected to complete a short reaction paper on a week's readings on three occasions during the semester. These “thinkpieces” are due at the beginning of the class, and a printout should be handed to the instructor. These papers should not exceed three pages in length and are meant to provide an opportunity for you to reflect in writing on the readings. I am not looking for summaries of the assigned articles or chapters, rather I invite you to share with me your impressions, what you found interesting or where you think that the authors are imprecise etc. You are also welcome to relate the readings of the current week to each other or to topics/readings from other weeks. Anything goes, as long as you show that you have engaged with the assigned readings in an effective fashion.

### **LONG PAPER ASSIGNMENT**

(Topic due in class April 4. Draft due in class April 18. Paper due in class May 2)

There will be a 10-page (double spaced) individual term paper. You will need to do original research and use at least two additional academic sources (books or articles) beyond those discussed in class. There are two formats to choose from:

- 1) Comparative Research Paper: You can write a paper that compares and contrasts a specific aspect of employment relations in two or more countries (the U.S. can be included). For example, you may compare works councils in Germany and France.
- 2) Policy Brief: Write a paper outlining the rationale for choosing a particular policy alternative or course of action in a current policy debate in the field of employment relations in the US. A policy brief is the response to a request directly from a decision-maker. You can choose which policy question you want to answer, but the brief needs to be addressed either to the President of the United States (Barack Obama), the Governor of New Jersey (Chris Christie), or the President of the AFL-CIO (Richard Trumka). Detailed information on the purpose and structure of a policy brief will be provided halfway through the course. You are required to highlight other countries' experiences on the issue in question.

The papers should reflect thorough consideration of the assignment. All papers should demonstrate careful reading of the course material and cite all sources that are consulted in a consistent citation style. Moreover, students' writing should demonstrate graduate-level competence in grammar and style.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Students are expected to check their Rutgers email accounts regularly for class announcements. Students are responsible for all information communicated to them via email by the instructor. Feel free to contact the instructor via email with questions or concerns about the course. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. When emailing the instructor, always include "Comparative Employment Relations" in the subject line of your email.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

While I encourage students to work together to understand theories and concepts, all written work should be your own. Please do not use other students' papers or exercises for your assignments. If you cite an author or use his/her ideas, please cite properly. Plagiarized assignments will receive a failing grade.

## **GRADE DISPUTES**

If you think your paper or exam has been graded incorrectly, you must submit your reasons in writing within one week of the work being handed back. You should specifically address the comments that accompany the grade on the assignment and why you feel you receive a grade in error. Your written appeal should be at least one paragraph and should not exceed one page. I will read your appeal and re-consider your grade. Please be aware that this could result in a higher, lower or unchanged grade.

## **EXTENSIONS AND LATE PAPERS**

Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the instructor and only in the event of significant and verifiable personal emergency. In the interest of fairness to all, no extensions will be granted due to the stresses of academic life. I will accept unexcused late papers, but note that the grade will be lowered by a grade for each day that the assignment is due.

## **KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS**

Throughout the course, students should keep up with current events by reading at least one quality newspaper (e.g. Financial Times, New York Times) and one news magazine (e.g. The Economist, The Atlantic) on a regular basis. You may also choose foreign-language publications as well, or fulfill this assignment by checking Internet and newsgroup news sources regularly. In addition, you will be expected to read any newspaper clippings handed out in class or emailed by the instructor.