Syllabus – Globalization and Labor, Fall 2014

Prof. David Bensman
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Office Hours, Thursday, 6:30-7:15 Room 150A, Labor Education Center and by appointment
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Books to Buy: R. Locke, The Promise and Limits of Private Power
D. Gallin, Solidarity
J. McCallum, Global Unions, Local Power
Books are available at Barnes and Noble bookstore in NB
Articles available on Sakai

Class Schedule

Week 1: Introduction, (Sept. 4)

Week 2, A Historical Background of the Problem of Global Governance of Labor and Work (Sept. 11)
Readings: McCallum, Global Unions, Local Power, pp. 1-47
Paul Garver, former colleague of Dan Gallin at International Union of Food Workers, will meet with class.

Week Three, World Systems Theory, (Sept. 18)
Thomas Hall, ed. A World-Systems Theory Reader, pp. 3-28
Peter Grimes, “Recent Research on World-Systems,” pp. 29-58, in Hall.
Joya Misra, “Gender and the World-System, 105-130,” in Hall.
“Job Creation should be Policy Priority: OECD”

Week Four, Global Supply Chains  (Sept. 25)


Mathias Bolton, of UNI in Geneva, will present, along with a delegation of unionists.

Week Five: The Decline of the Standard Contract of Employment (Oct. 2)


Also: Leah Vosko, Managing the Margins, 2010

Weeks Six and Seven: Governing Global Supply Chains (Oct. 9 and 16)

Richard Locke, The Promise and Limits of Private Power

Week 8: Additional Perspectives on Governing Global Supply Chains (Oct. 23)

Gaye Seidman, Beyond the Boycott. Pp. 1-46, 102-131

Nelson Lichtenstein, “Two Cheers for Vertical Integration: Corporate Governance in a World of Global Supply Chains.”

Weil, The Fissured Workplace, pp. 201-207.

Weeks Nine: International Framework Agreements (Oct. 30)


Weeks Ten and Eleven:


Week Twelve: The Rana Plaza Accord – Model or Pipedream? (Nov. 6)


Bangladesh: “Police Fire Tear Gas at Striking Workers,” Popular Resistance, Aug. 9 2014

Bangladesh Sees Sharp Gains in Trade Unions, Al Jazeera, Aug. 7, 2014

Weeks Thirteen to Fifteen (Nov. 13, 20, Dec. 4)

Student Project Presentations on Governing Work in Global Value Chains, in one of the following industries:

Seafaring, see Nathan Lillie.

Garment Industry, see Locke, Bonacich and Applebaum, Beyond the Label.

Auto, see Helper, MacDuffie and Sako (1998).

Electronics Manufacturing, see Locke. Pun Ngai and Jenny Chan (2010).