

Syllabus
Introduction to Labor Studies and Employment Relations 37:575:100:H6
School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University
Summer 2012

Course Number: 37:575:100:H6
Day and Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:00-10:00 pm
Location: Murray Hall, Room 114

Professor: Carmen Martino
Office Location: Labor Education Center, 50 Labor Center Way,
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to the Labor Studies and Employment Relations major. Our primary focus will be work, workers and the organizations and institutions that shape and define the employment relationship. We will examine how class, race, ethnicity and gender impact work; the role of corporations; the role of unions; the global economy; and the future of work.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course we will:

- Know and understand fundamental social science, historical, and legal perspectives, theories, and concepts relating to work, employment relations, and worker movements;
- Know the fundamental laws/institutions governing employment relations including government, labor unions, corporations and other key institutions;
- Understand how the global economy impacts work and employment relations;
- Understand how our diverse backgrounds and cultures shape our experiences and perspectives on the world of work; and
- Improve our critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

III. EXPECTATIONS

Preparation

We will be covering a lot of ground in a very short time so please read and bring the assigned material to each class and take good notes.

Participation

Class sessions will include short lectures, small group discussions and group exercises. The expectation is that everyone will actively participate in the class.

When participating in discussions use your experience and the information you get from the readings. When you take a position try to back it up with facts, data and examples. And above all, we must all be respectful and listen when others are speaking. You do not have to agree but you must give full attention and consideration to other points of view.

Texting, or talking on cell phones and emailing are all prohibited during class.

Attendance

Thirty-five percent (35%) of your grade will be based on attendance and participation so it is vitally important to attend every class. Failure to sign the sign-in sheet will result in a loss of attendance points. You can only be excused for an illness, death in the family or other *real* emergencies.

Students who are late to class will lose attendance points so please be punctual. *Also*, if you leave early without permission you will be marked absent for the entire class.

Communication

Check your official Rutgers email account regularly for class announcements. I will communicate any official course correspondence via email. Students are responsible for all information communicated via email. Feel free to contact me via email with questions or concerns about the course. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

When emailing always include “Intro to Labor Studies and Employment Relations” in the subject line of your email.

IV. EVALUATION

Final grades will be based on the following:

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| 1. Class preparation, attendance and participation | (35%) |
| 2. Mid-Term Family Member Oral History Project | (35%) |
| 3. Collective Bargaining Exercise | (5%) |
| 4. Final Exam | (25%) |

Due Date for Family Member Oral History Project

The Mid-Term Oral History project will be due by **August 2th**. All papers turned in after this time will be marked late. Late papers will be marked down one full letter grade for each day that they are late.

Collective Bargaining Exercise

Attendance, participation and preparation will be critical for this exercise!

Final Exam

The final exam will include a written take-home portion and an in-class multiple choice/short answer portion that will cover all course readings, lectures, discussion questions, films, exercises, etc.

V. COURSE READINGS

Text: Stephen Sweet and Peter Meiksins. *Changing Contours of Work: Jobs and Opportunities in the New Economy*. Pine Forge Press. 2008

All other materials are available on the course Sakai website. Students can access the course Sakai site by following these directions:

- Go to <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>
- To log on, enter your Rutgers net ID and password in the upper right hand corner.
- Look for the tabs at the top of the next page. Click on the tab: 37:575:100:H6 Su11.
- Click on “resources” on the menu on the left hand side of the next page. You should see a folder for each class and inside each folder you will find all of the course readings.

VI. SYLLABUS

PART I: WORK, CLASS, RACE, ETHNICITY AND GENDER IN THE U.S.

TUESDAY JULY 10. COURSE INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Read: The syllabus

In-Class: Introduction: Our expectations for the class, review syllabus

For Group Discussion: What is a union? Why are unions in decline? Does it matter?

THURSDAY JULY 12. WORK, CLASS AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 1, “Mapping the Contours of Work.”
Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 2, “How New is the New Economy?”
Janny Scott and David Leonhardt “Shadowy Lines that Still Divide” (pp. 1-26.
Timothy Noah, The Great Divergence, Slate.com
Studs Terkel, "Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do" (New York: Random House Inc., 1972), interviews with steelworker Mike LeFevre, pp. XXXI-XXXVIII,

farm worker Roberto Acuna, pp. 7-13, and waitress Delores Dante, pp. 293-298.

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on inequality and stratification in the U.S.
Group discussion about individual work history, family economic history

Film: People Like Us: Social Class in America

Mid-Term

Assignment: Understanding Your Family's Work and Economic History

TUESDAY, JULY 17. WORK, GENDER AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 3, "Gender Chasms in the New Economy."
Virgina Valian "Gender Schemas at Work" in Why So Slow? (pp. 1-22)
Virgina Valian "Evaluating Men and Women" in Why So Slow? (pp. 125-144)

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on gender, equal pay and "women's work"

Film: Rosie the Riveter

THURSDAY, JULY 19. WORK, RACE, ETHNICITY AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 4, "Race, Ethnicity and Work."
Upton Sinclair, The Jungle (pp. 21-52)
Charlie LeDuff "At a Slaughterhouse Some Things Never Die" (pp. 96-114)

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on race, ethnicity and inequality in the workplace
Group Discussions about Race, Gender and Equality in the workplace

Film: At the River I Stand

PART II: A FRAMEWORK FOR LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

TUESDAY, JULY 24. UNIONS I

Read: Voos and Slott, U.S. Labor History—Summary of Key Events, 1-5
Note: Another reading will be added and uploaded to Sakai

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on development of labor unions, Knights of Labor, AFL and IWW

Film: 1877 The Grand Army of Starvation

THURSDAY, JULY 26. UNION II

Read: Thomas Geoghegan, Which Side Are You On, Chapter 3, Before the Lean Years

Note: Another reading will be added and uploaded to Sakai
Voos and Slott, U.S. Labor History—Summary of Key Events, 1-5

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on the Depression, CIO, WWII and Industrial Unionism

Film: Sitdown and Fight—Walther Reuther and The Rise of the Auto Workers

TUESDAY, JULY 31. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Read: Michael Yates “Collective Bargaining” in Why Unions Matter (pp.53-80)

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on Collective Bargaining
Collective Bargaining Exercise

Film: The Final Offer

PART III: EMPLOYMENT IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2. THE CORPORATION

Read: Joel Bakan The Corporation, Chapters 3-4

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on the evolution of the corporation
Group discussion on the role of corporations in society

Film: The Corporation

*** Mid-Term Assignment Due**

TUESDAY, AUGUST 7. THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Read: William Greider, Come Home America, Chapters 6-7, 2009
Martino and Bensman, Regular Work in an Irregular Economy, American Prospect, Sept. 2008
Bonacich and Wilson, Getting the Goods, Chapter 6, Warehouses and Distribution Centers, 2008

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion—Global Supply Chains
Group Discussion—How Can We Survive the Global Economy?

Film: China Blue

THURSDAY, AUGUST 9. THE FUTURE OF WORK AND REVIEW FOR FINAL

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 6, "A Fair Day's Work."
Sweet and Meiskins, Chapter 7, "Reshaping the Contours the New Economy"

Thomas Geoghegan, Which Side Are You On? Afterword, It's 2004 and Labor's Even Smaller

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on the Future of Work
Group Discussion What Do You Want?

Review for Final

TUESDAY, AUGUST 14. FINAL EXAM