

Issues in Work: Strikes

37:575:394:01

Preliminary – subject to change

Instructor: Allan Frost

Wednesday's 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. beginning October 3, 2012 and ending October 31, 2012

Loree Hall

Room 020

1 Credit

Email: Check Sakai for email address

Course Overview

This course will study the historical, legal and practical issues of strike, stoppages, lockouts and boycotts in a collectively bargained as well as non-union environment. We will study the origin of strikes, the different kinds of strikes as well as a brief overview of the legalities of strikes and lockouts. We will study the decision making process to engage in economic action designed to pressure the other side as well as the conduct, resolution and consequences of such action. We will consider alternatives to strikes. We will compare and contrast rights in the public and private employment sectors as well as strikes in the U.S. and overseas with regard to the goals and conduct. We will study famous strikes in history and the lessons learned. There will be guest speakers who will share his experiences as well as films, clips and other materials. We will learn about other forms of economic action such as secondary boycotts, picketing, consumer boycotts and corporate campaigns. We will also consider the impact of such action on the public and the media coverage of strikes.

Course Requirements

- Students are required to attend all sessions of the course.
- All reading assignments should be completed before class since class participation is an essential element of the course. All reading assignments will either be handed out in class or posted in Sakai. No textbooks need to be purchased.
- Films, clips, and other materials will be used.
- Students will be assigned a significant strike or lockout and will make a group presentation to the class on that strike. The size of each group will depend upon the class enrollment. The presentation will be approximately 10 minutes in duration and will identify the parties; the date of the strike; the location(s) of the strike; the origin and duration of the strike; the critical issues, how the strike was conducted; how it was settled; and the significance of the strike to the parties, the industry, the public and this course. Students will be expected to use both primary and secondary sources and their creativity in making the presentation is encouraged. Students will present a written outline at the time of the presentation. This assignment will comprise 50% of the student's final grade.

- There will be a final exam given the last week of class which will comprise 50% of the final grade.

Week 1-

Course introduction and requirements. Student and family experiences with strikes or lockouts. The origin of strikes and the first strikes in the United States and in New Jersey. A comparison of strikes overseas and in the U.S. A brief overview of the law. Kinds of strikes and lockouts: economic, political, recognitional, safety, intermittent, unfair labor practice, jurisdictional, grievance and illegal strikes. Discussion of some major strikes and the lessons learned. No strike clauses. Arbitration. Students will be assigned their topics for the presentations during week 4.

Readings:

Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics website for major strike reports for 2011.

Frandsen, Paul, editor, translation of the “The Turin Strike Papyrus”, pages 1-4

Ray, D., Corbett, W, Cameron, C., “Labor Management Relations – Strikes, Lockouts and Boycotts” pages 30-34

Brennan, Aaron, “Types of Strikes”,” Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History”, Pages xxxvi-xxxix.

Week 2-

The anatomy of a strike. The decision to strike or lockout. Understanding leverage, timing and credibility. Consideration of the consequences of a strike. The alternatives to a strike (mandatory interest arbitration, slowdowns, sit-ins, work to rule, corporate campaigns, consumer boycotts, secondary boycotts, handbilling, sickouts). Union democracy. Notice requirements. The conduct of a strike from management and labor perspective. Tactics of the parties. Picketing, violence, strikebreakers, reserved gates, and strike resolution including reinstatement and replacement of strikers. The film “Final Offer” will be shown.

Readings:

Norwood, Stephen, “Strikebreaking and Intimidation” pages.15-21

Burns, Joe, “The Outlawing of Solidarity and the Decline of the Strike”, “Social Policy Magazine”, summer 2011, pages 27-35.

Carrell, Michael, “Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining”, pages 234-243,247-249

Week 3-

Continuation of the anatomy of a strike. How the public and media view strikes. A comparison of the public and private sector. The Wisconsin experience. Should public employees have a right to strike? A consideration of those states permitting public employee strikes. A panel discussion and questions by students of labor and management representatives from the entertainment industry who will share their experiences. What happens after the strike? Restoration of a relationship and implementation of change. A discussion of major strikes such as the Air Traffic Controllers and the Boston Police strike.

Readings:

Schager, Neil, editor, "St. James Encyclopedia of Labor History Worldwide", pages 99-103

Fillipelli, Ronald, editor, "Labor Conflict in the United States", pages 64-66.

Andrew Dawson, "Strikes in the Motion Picture Industry", "Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History", pages 652-664

Week 4-

The course wrap-up. Are there winners in strikes? Is a strike or lockout worth the risks? Why are there more strikes in certain industries? The film "Locked Out" will be shown. Student presentations on significant strikes or lockouts in the United States. The group presentations will consider each strike or lockout from the standpoint of what has been learned in class. The presentation will analyze the legality of the strike or lockout; the type of strike or lockout; the parties involved, whether or not the entire industry is involved; their past relationship; the timing of the strike; the leverage of the respective parties at the time of the strike or lockout; whether the parties considered alternatives; the duration of the strike; where it took place; the major issues of the strike; the resolution of the issues; the impact on the public, if any; was there a winner; the significance or lesson learned from the strike; and have the parties had disputes since this strike.

Readings:

No assigned readings, Presentation preparation.

Week 5- Final exam

