# Rutgers—the State University of New Jersey

School of Management and Labor Relations Department of Labor and Employment Relations

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### **CURRENT LABOR PROBLEMS**

Michael.Merrill@esc.edu CAC – Scott Hall – Room 202 Tuesdays 7:40 PM to 10:30 PM

## Liberty and Justice for All?

It is the worst of times; it is the best of times. Life's prospects have improved for hundreds of millions of wage-earners across the globe, especially in Latin America and the Asia-Pacific. For hundreds of millions of others, however—especially in Africa and, for different reasons, in southern Europe—the prospects have remained or have recently become harrowing. As the latter case suggests, even in long-developed, richer regions of the world, the continuing and repeated revolutionizing of the means of production and the return of speculative cycles of boom and bust have made grievous economic insecurity a fact of life for millions of once prosperous families. What, if anything, can be done to ameliorate these problems? What has been done? What seems to work and what not? These are the questions we will be exploring in this semester's installment of Current Labor Problems.

### **GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In this course, students will:

- Review comparative measures of social and individual well-being and explore the reasons for their differences and divergences
- Study alternative theories of economic efficiency, wages and money in order to understand the social and economic sources of inequality and to explore possible solutions.

#### PARTIAL READING LIST

- Moshe Adler, *Economics for the Rest of Us: Debunking the Science that Makes Life Dismal* (New York: The New Press, 2010).
- Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger* (Bloomsbury Press, 2011)
- L. Randall Wray, *Understanding Modern Money: The Key to Full Employment and Price Stability* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1998)
- Selected critical and statistical studies of relevant facts and theories