

Issues in Work: Strikes 37:575:394:01

Instructor: Allan Frost

Wednesday 3:55 p.m. to 6:55 beginning April 3 and ending May 1

Labor Education Center

Auditorium (Room 137)

1 Credit

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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 discuss basic labor law and labor relations concepts. 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. 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.
- Class participation will also be taken into account.

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 and labor relations. 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.

Bureau of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics website for major strike report.

Frandsen, Paul, editor, translation of the “The Turin Strike Papyrus”, pages 1-3

Ray, D., Corbett, W, Cameron, C., “Labor Management Relations – Strikes, Lockouts and Boycotts” pages 30-35

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

Week 2-

The decision to strike or lockout. Understanding leverage, timing and credibility. Consideration of the consequences of a strike. Union democracy and politics in a strike. Notice requirements. The film “Final Offer” will be shown. Students will be given their assignments for group projects.

Readings:

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-

The conduct of a strike or lockout. What happens during a strike. What happens after the strike. Restoration of a relationship and implementation of change. Corporate campaigns,

boycotts, handbilling. The lockout strategies. Alternatives to a strike or lockout. The film "Locked Out" will be shown. The public sector. Discussion of the Air Traffic Controllers and 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. 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