

PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
37:575:395:90 Online

Spring 2012
Professor Paula Voos

Course Expectations and Requirements

This course is designed to give you a chance to become engaged with the intellectual tradition in labor studies. You will read classic authors and current professional theory. You will have the opportunity to examine some of the big issues in the field and to decide what you think about them. You will also gain proficiency in important skills: reading for analytical insight, debating ideas, and communicating with others. Students should all be labor studies majors or minors with 15 credits or more in labor studies; if you are not in this category, then you need permission of the instructor to enroll.

Learning Objectives

Several objectives of the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department for its majors are ones that are relevant to this course. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Identify and explain the core concepts of the field of labor & employment relations
- Apply those concepts to understanding contemporary developments in work
- Synthesize information from multiple sources to generate new insights

How will you learn in this online course?

Most weeks you will:

- Review a power-point and material written by the professor on the page in the online shell. These are like lectures but much shorter, so you have more time for other learning activities.
- Read theorists with a variety of perspectives.
- Answer questions regarding their ideas.
- Participate in an online threaded discussion with other students, posting at least 3 times a week (by Friday; by Sunday and by Tuesday evenings).
- Read a message from the professor (sent by email on Wednesday). These are also posted in the document sharing portion of the shell – look for it there if you do not receive the email.

Some weeks you will also have the opportunity to review a video or videos, or listen to a audio file. Some weeks you will take a unit quiz (open book).

Evaluation. Grades will be based on all of the following activities:

	Value	Points
Personal information sheet:	00.5%	5
Pretest (receiving all points for taking this)	01.0%	10
Online discussion forums (7 out of 9 @ 25 each)	17.5%	175
Written questions on readings (5 out of 7 @ 35 each):	17.5%	175
Collaborative writing assignment (1)	16.0%	160
Collaborative power-point (1)	15.0%	150
Unit quizzes (3 @ 50 each)	15.0 %	150
Final exam (1 in 2 parts)	17.5 %	175
Total	100%	1000

You will notice that you are able to “skip” any two weeks of online discussion and any two written questions on the readings. Use these choices wisely and remember, you are still responsible for all concepts covered in any particular topic. **Notice that the two collaborative assignments cannot be skipped even though they replace weekly assignments.** Students who do not use any of their “skips” instead will be allowed to “drop” any two scores (or any one score if they only use one skip). No, these additional grades cannot be used as extra credit. However, there is one 60 point extra credit option during the two weeks that includes spring break.

Points have no “absolute meaning,” – in the end, the professor will use judgment in translating points into grades for the course. Implicitly, that means that grades are “curved” in the sense that they are comparative. The comparison is both to other students taking the class this semester and with those who took the class in the past.

Keep current – avoid being late!

This is an interactive class – you need to keep current in the reading and forums so that you can interact with others in the class.

An online class is somewhat flexible with regard to your schedule but if you must be responsible for managing your time and for getting online each week no matter what else is going on in your life. **In general, you should sign into the class AT LEAST 3 times a week (by Friday, by Sunday and by Tuesday evenings) and check your email each day.**

You should inform the professor of serious personal emergencies that arise – for instance, hospitalization that makes it impossible to get online. A trip associated with your job is not such an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels and in campus computing facilities.

Assessment of online forums

It is possible to earn up to 25 points by excellence in participation in each weekly forum. A forum is an interactive threaded discussion. In this class it will start each week on Wednesday, and end on Tuesday. Your contribution will be evaluated as follows:

- **How much you participated in a substantive way.** In general, you can think of this as 1 point per substantive post that adds to the discussion (5 points).
- **Was your participation ongoing and interactive?** You should have at least one substantive post by Friday night and another by Sunday night for full credit here. You can interact with others by asking or answering questions, or by agreeing or disagreeing with them, but remember you must add to the discussion, not simply agree. (5 points).
- **Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings?** Did you understand the theorists' ideas correctly or did you make errors? Did you connect the ideas of one theorist to those of others? In other words, what was the quality of your comments? (5 points)
- **Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence?** Persuasive opinions are backed by a variety of types of evidence – from other academic sources, from current events, and from personal experience (5 points).
- **Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately?** Please don't "flame" in these forums. Informality is OK, but use standard written English of the sort that would be appropriate in a work setting (5 points).

Assessment of weekly written questions

You will be asked to answer a series of questions about the reading on most weeks. It is possible to earn up to 35 points by doing so. These assignments are designed to insure that you understood the most important aspects of the reading. The answers should not be any longer than they need to be to fully answer the question; in most cases, 2-3 pages in total should suffice.

Scores on these weekly assignments reflect whether or not you have achieved an accurate understanding of the various readings and whether or not you reflect those ideas well in written English. Scores will range from minimally adequate (22) to truly exceptional (35) with most responses being in the good (28) to excellent (33) range.

Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity! Your written questions will be submitted to "Turnitin.com" to insure that your answers are yours alone – not answers from another student, from the web, or another source. Be careful not to "copy" phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words!

Opening Week: Wed January 18 - Tues. January 24. All material is due at 11 p.m.

Receive the professor's message. Log into the course shell and review the material in the course home. Undertake the first posting about yourself. Take the pre-test this week.

Unit 1: Wed. January 25- Tues. February 14 (3 weeks)

Classical Economics & Marx, Scientific Management, and the Division of Labor

Topic 1-1: Jan. 25 to Jan. 31

Robert Heilbroner, The Worldly Philosophers, revised 7th ed. (NY: Touchstone, 1999). Portions of chapter on Smith (pp. 50-63).

Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, (Originally 1776; Prometheus Books, 1991), Chapter 1-2 (pp. 109-121).

Frederick Taylor, Scientific Management (New York: Harper and Row, 1947), pp. 39-73.

Topic 1-2: Feb. 1 to Feb. 7

Robert Heilbroner, The Worldly Philosophers, revised 7th ed. (NY: Touchstone, 1999). Portions of chapter on Marx (pp. 144-48 and pp.154-169).

Rius, Marx for Beginners (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), pp. 127-140.

Deepa Kumar, Outside the Box: Corporate Media, Globalization, and the UPS Strike. (Urbana & Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2007), Preface (pp. vii-xv) and part of Chapter 6, pp. 155-157 midpage. The rest of the excerpt from Chapter 6 (pp. 157 midpage – 163 is optional reading).

Topic 1-3: Feb. 8 to Feb. 14

Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century (New York: Monthly Review, 1974), Part of Chapter 3, pp. 78-83 and Part of Chapter 5, pp. 124-131.

Richard Edwards, Michael Reich, and Thomas Weisskopf, The Capitalist System, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), "Alienation," pp. 265-268.

Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Exploring the Managed Heart," in The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, pp. 3-12

UNIT 1 QUIZ – take in any 50 minutes on FEB 15.

Unit 2: Wed Feb. 15 - Tues. March 6 (3 weeks)

Markets and Institutions

Topic 2-1: Feb. 15 to Feb. 21

Bruce E. Kaufman, "Labor Markets and Employment Regulation: The View of the 'Old' Institutionalists," in Bruce E. Kaufman, ed. Government Regulation of the Employment Relationship. (Madison, Industrial Relations Research Association, 1997), pp. 11-39.

Topic 2-2 Feb. 22 to March 6 (Two weeks).

[Note: You can complete the writing project for this topic either individually or using a group of 2 or 3 people. This is a larger project that cannot be "skipped." You have two weeks for the writing project but it is important to watch the video, read the material, complete the forum, and start the project the first week.]

Professor Jerry Z. Muller, Catholic University, 30 minute video lecture, "The Rise of Welfare-State Capitalism," in the series Thinking about Capitalism (The Great Courses, 2008).

John W. Budd and Stefan Zagelmeyer, Excerpt from "Public Policy and Employee Participation," in The Oxford Handbook of Participation in Organizations, edited by Adrian Wilkinson, Paul Gollan, David Marsden, and David Lewin, 2007, pp. 1-6.

UNIT 2 QUIZ – Take in any 50 minutes on Wednesday March 7

EXTRA CREDIT READINGS AND FORUM Wed. March 7 – Tues. March 20

This two week period includes Spring Break. This option may be used to earn up to 60 points of extra credit, 25 for the online forum, and 35 for the written questions. You can only participate in the forum during this time period.

Richard Freeman and James L. Medoff, Excerpt from "The Two Faces of Unionism," Public Interest, No. 57 (Fall, 1979), pp. 69-76.

Elaine Bernard, "Creating Democratic Communities in the Workplace," in A New Labor Movement for a New Century, ed. by Gregory Mantsios (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998).

Unit 3: Wed. March 21 – Tues. April 17 (4 weeks)

Organizations and Humans Who Work in Them

Topic 3-1 March 21 to March 27

J. Steven Ott, ed. "Motivation," in Classic Readings in Organizational Behavior (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1989), pp. 27-35.

Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," Chapter 2 in Motivation and Personality, 3rd edition. New York, Harper and Row, 1970, pp. 15-31 (note – the first version of this theory was published in the 1940s).

Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise" an excerpt from a book of the same title in J. Steven Ott, ed. Classic Readings in Organizational Behavior (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1989) pp. 66-73.

Alan Fox, "Managerial Ideology and Labour Relations," British Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Nov. 1966), pp. 366-378.

Topic 3-2 March 28 to April 3

Elton Mayo, The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization (New York: Routledge, 1949), excerpted in D. S. Pugh, ed. Organization Theory: Selected Readings (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 215-229.

Charles Heckscher, White-Collar Blues, Chapter 2, "The Meaning of Loyalty," pp. 13-36.

Topic 3-3: April 4 to April 17 (Two weeks)

[Note: You can complete the power-point project for this topic either individually or using a group of 2 or 3 people. This is a larger project that cannot be "skipped." You have two weeks for the project but it is important to read this material, complete the forum, and start the project the first week.]

Bruce Kaufman, Human Resources and Industrial Relations: Commonalities and Differences," Human Resource Management Review, 11(4), 2001, pp. 361-374.

Jeffrey Pfeffer, "Human Resources from an Organizational Behavior Perspective: Some Paradoxes Explained," Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol 21, No. 4 (Fall, 2007), pp. 115-134.

UNIT 3 QUIZ – Take in any 50 minutes on Wednesday April 18

Unit 4 Wed. April 18 – Mon April 30 (Almost two weeks)

Freedom and Democracy in a World of Multi-National Corporations

[Note: Tuesday May 3 is the first day of the reading period. Material in the final week is due on Monday, rather than on Tuesday – however, assignments for the final week will be accepted up to the usual time on Tuesday May 3 if you wish to work into the reading period.]

Topic 4-1 April 18 to April 24

Gay, Peter, “ Liberalism,” Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2008.

William E. Hudson, American Democracy in Peril, 3rd edition, (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2001), part of Chapter 1, “Models of Democracy,” pp. 1-18.

Milton and Rose Friedman, Free to Choose: A Personal Statement (New York: Harcourt Brace, Harvest edition, 1979), “The Power of the Market,” pp. 9-11 and 64-67.

Topic 4-2 April 25 to April 30

George Lakoff, Whose Freedom: The Battle Over America’s Most Important Idea, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), Chapter 5, “Progressive Freedom: The Basics,” pp. 73-81 and 85-94.

Jack Metzgar, Striking Steel: Solidarity Remembered (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000). “Getting to 1959,” first part pp. 17-39.

Paula B. Voos, "Industrial Relations and Democracy," IRRA Presidential Address, in Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting, Industrial Relations Research Association, San Diego, CA, January 3-5, 2004.

NO SEPARATE UNIT 4 QUIZ – This will be part of the online portion of the comprehensive final exam. That is unit 4 will have additional “weight” on that exam but it will cover the entire course.

Final Exam: Online portion of final exam to be taken between (9:00 a.m. on Thursday May 3 and 11 p.m. on Friday May 5; Take home portion due Monday May 7 at 11:00 p.m.