

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

Spring 2011
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

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

	Value	Points
Personal information sheet:	00.5%	5
Online discussion forums (8 out of 10 @ 25 each)	20.0%	200
Written questions on readings (6 out of 8 @ 35 each):	21.0%	210
Collaborative writing assignment (1)	16.0%	160
Collaborative power-point (1)	15.0%	150
Unit quizzes (3 @ 25 each)	07.5 %	75
Final exam (1):	20.0 %	200
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 50 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. For full credit, you need to participate in a forum in the week that it is open and hand in the written questions on the readings on the day that they are due. 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.

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 and check your email each day.**

Assessment of online forums

It is possible to earn up to 25 points by excellence in participation in each weekly forum. The forum is like a class discussion. Each forum has a set of questions to get you started – you may choose to discuss one or all, or to comment on some other aspect of the week’s topic, or to ask or answer a question.

A forum is an interactive discussion and your contribution will be evaluated on a scale from minimally adequate (14 points) to truly exceptional (25 points), with more typical responses being in the good (18 points) to excellent (24 points) range.

The score reflects:

- **How early & how often you participated.** Signing on twice to interact with other students regarding one of the questions is minimally adequate, whereas more extensive participation earns you more points. Earlier participation in the week is rewarded as long as it is thoughtful. The first three students who

participate in a substantive way in any forum receive an additional 2 points for this alone.

- **Was your participation interactive?** Remember, this is a discussion – it is better to demonstrate understanding of the ideas of others before going on to your own opinion than to just “splash” your own ideas onto the page. On the other hand, passively “agreeing” with what others have written doesn’t contribute much to a discussion.
- **Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings?** Did they reflect an accurate understanding of the material being discussed or were they riddled with errors regarding the course material.
- **Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence?** Did you draw on readings from other courses, current news, or online sources of information in a manner that contributes to the discussion?
- **Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately?** Do they show mastery of persuasive written English? *Please do not “flame” in these forums; be courteous of others who will be reading your comments.*

The weighting of these components is approximately equal.

Assessment of weekly written questions

You will be asked to answer a series of questions about the reading each week. It is possible to earn up to 35 points by doing so. These assignments are designed to insure that you paid attention to the most important aspects of the reading. The answers should not be any longer than they need to be; 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 19 - Tues. January 25. 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.

Unit 1: Wed. January 26- Tues. February 15 (3 weeks)

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

Topic 1-1: Jan. 26 to Feb. 1

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. 2 to Feb. 8

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. 9 to Feb. 15

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 16.

Unit 2: Wed Feb. 16 - Tues. March 8 (3 weeks)

Markets and Institutions

Topic 2-1: Feb. 16 to Feb. 22

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. 23 to March 8

[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 read this material, complete the forum, and start the project the first week.]

Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Industrial Democracy. London: Longmans, Green, 1902 and 1920. "The Higglings of the Market," excerpted in E. Bakke, C. Kerr, and C. Anrod, Unions Management and the Public, 2nd ed. 1960, pp. 267-271.

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.

EXTRA CREDIT READINGS AND FORUM Wed. March 9 – Tues. March 22

This two week period includes Spring Break. This option may be used to earn up to 50 points of extra credit.

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 2 QUIZ – Take in any 50 minutes on March 23rd

Unit 3: Wed. March 23 – Tues. April 19 (4 weeks)

Organizations and Humans Who Work in Them

Topic 3-1 March 23 to March 29

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 30 to April 5

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 6 to April 19

[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 April 20

Unit 4 Wed. April 20 – Mon May 2 (2 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 20 to April 26

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 27 to May 2

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," IRRRA 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 5 and 11 p.m. on Friday May 6; Take home portion due Monday May 9 at 11:00 p.m.*