LABOR & THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
FALL 2025

<u>This class is listed under two different titles and course numbers:</u>
Labor & the Global Economy (Labor Studies and Employment Relations 575:363)
Globalization & the Future of Employment (Labor and Employment Relations 578:555)

SYLLABUS

<u>Class Meetings:</u>
Room 107C
Janice Levin Building
Livingston Campus
Wednesday, 5:40–8:40pm

Prof. Tobias Schulze-Cleven
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Room 226, Janice Levin Building
Office hours by appointment
(both via Zoom and in-person)

<u>Course Overview:</u>
This course examines the influence of the shifting global economy on employment patterns and living standards across the world (though with a focus on the rich democracies). Contemporary challenges facing American workers are put into comparative perspective to delineate alternative strategies for dealing with deepening economic globalization. The course will closely examine how political and economic factors have interacted in producing globalization. Particular attention will be paid to deepening tensions between the goals of further economic integration and democratic governance.

In class discussions, we seek to answer such questions as: How has the global economy evolved? How much are growing inequalities in the labor market driven by economic globalization? Are we witnessing a global race to the bottom in social standards? What measures could be taken to improve labor market outcomes? – After taking the course, students will have a better understanding of how socio-economic systems around the world have been affected by and have engaged with the global economy.

<u>Learning Objectives:</u> The student is able to…

21C Core Curriculum:

- Analyze contemporary social justice issues and unbalanced social power systems (Contemporary Challenges, Diversity and Social Inequalities - 2).

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (Goal 8).

School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions (Goal V).

Additional Course Objectives from the Instructor

- Analyze the tensions between global capitalism and democratic governance.
- Call on improved professional competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving; verbal and written communication; and interpersonal skills.

Course Requirements (details at the end of the syllabus):

In-class Participation	20% of the course grade
Quizzes	20%
First Exam	30%
Second Exam	30%

I reserve the right to adjust these numbers to support teaching and learning. In-class participation includes "active" contributions and attendance. In general, "active" contribution is about speaking up (based on reading, thinking, and good listening). Participation in the in-class debate during week 14 counts toward the regular in-class participation grade.

Required Class Materials:

Dani Rodrik. 2012. *The Globalization Paradox*. *Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*. New York: Norton.

Week 1 (September 3) – Welcome & Introduction

Articles to be handed out and discussed in class

Steven Greenhouse. 2025. "'Pro-Worker Priorities?' Trump's Budget Bill Offers the Exact Opposite." *Guardian*, May 22

Eileen Sullivan. 2025. "Trump Orders Have Stripped Nearly Half a Million Federal Workers of Union Rights." *New York Times*, September 2.

Adam Dean. 2025. "Unions Raise Wages. Tariffs Don't." Economic Policy Institute, September 3.

Bret Stephens. 2025. "Mass Migration and Liberalism's Fall." *New York Times*, September 2.

Barry Eichengreen. 2025. "The Genius Act Will Bring Economic Chaos." *New York Times*, June 17

Henry J. Farrell and Abraham Newman. 2025. "This Is How Trump Will Smash the Machine of U.S. Economic Power." *New York Times*, February 17.

The Economist. 2025. "America's Financial System Came Close to the Brink." April 10.

Section 1: Understanding History – A Schematic Overview

Week 2 (September 10) – Early Patterns of Global Integration: Mercantilism

Colonialism and Mercantilism

Dani Rodrik. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: Norton, 3-23 (ch. 1: "Of Markets and States: Globalization in History's Mirror").

Optional: Ian Austen. 2025. A 355-Year-Old Company that Once Owned One-Third of Canada Is Shutting Down." New York Times, June 2.

Thinking at the Time: The Liberal Critique

Adam Smith. 1776. *The Wealth of Nations*, very short excerpt.

John Paul Rollert. 2012. "Sleight of the 'Invisible Hand.'" Opinionator, *New York Times*, October 21.

Week 3 (September 17) – The First Great (Liberal) Globalization – Quiz

The First Globalization
Dani Rodrik. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: Norton, 24-46 (ch. 2: "The Rise and Fall of the First Great Globalization").

Thinking at the Time: Marxism
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1848. *The Communist Manifesto*.

Optional:
Howard Zinn. 2005 [1980]. *A People's History of the United States, 1492-Present*. New York: HarperPerennial, 77-102 (ch. 5: "A Kind of Revolution").
Barry Eichengreen, 2019. *Globalizing Capital: A History of the International Monetary System*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1-40 (chapters 1 and 2).

Week 4 (September 24) – The 20th Century: Collapse of Trade to Social Embedding

The Second Globalization: Regulating Trade in a Politicized World
Dani Rodrik. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: Norton, 67-88 (ch. 4: "Bretton Woods, GATT, and the WTO: Trade in a Politicized World").

Thinking at the Time: Social Democracy
Sheri Berman. 2009. "The Primacy of Economics versus the Primacy of Politics: Understanding the Ideological Dynamics of the Twentieth Century." *Perspectives on Politics* 7(3): 561-575.

Welfare States, including an American Variant
Christopher Howard. 2008. *The Welfare State Nobody Knows*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1-26 (Introduction & ch. 1: "She's So Unusual").

Week 5 (October 1) – The Contemporary Global Economy

Dani Rodrik. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: Norton, 89-111 (ch. 5: "Financial Globalization Follies").
Richard Baldwin. 2016. The Great Convergence: Information Technology and the New Globalization. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1-15 ("Introduction").

Guest Speaker: Ursula Mense-Petermann (Bielefeld University, Germany) on "In Search of Global Labor Markets."

Week 6 (October 2-8) – First Exam

Please review material to date.

Optional:
Mark Blyth. 2019." Global Trumpism and the Future of the Global Economy." Long Video (Roughly 1 hour 40 minutes).

Section II: Examining Contemporary Challenges

Week 7 (October 15) – Financialization: Scale, Dimensions, and Consequences

Financial Liberalization & Financial Crises
Dani Rodrik. 2011. *The Globalization Paradox*. New York: Norton, 112-134 (ch. 6: "The Foxes and Hedgehogs of Finance").

Current Challenges
Economist. 2025. "American finance, always unique, is now uniquely dangerous." May 29.
Dan Davis and Henry J. Farrell. 2025. "Crypto Is a Threat to the U.S. Financial System. *New York Times*, May 23.
Charlie Eaton. 2025. "What is Private Equity? Corporate Raider, Main Street Invader, Monopoly Builder, Shadow Owner." Substack.

Week 8 (October 22) – China Rising in a Shifting Context

Stephen S. Cohen and J. Bradford DeLong. 2010. *The End of Influence: What Happens When Other Countries Have the Money*. New York: Basic Books, 91-117 (ch. 5: "Where Did All Their Money Come From?").
Robert E. Scott and Will Kimball. 2014. "China Trade, Outsourcing and Jobs." EPI Briefing Paper No. 385, Economic Policy Institute, Washington, DC
David Autor and Gordon Hansen. 2025. "We Warned About the First China Shock. The Next One Will Be Worse." *New York Times*, July 14.

Week 9 (October 29) – The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism – Quiz

Wolfgang Streeck. 2011. "The Crises of Democratic Capitalism." *New Left Review* 71(Sept/Oct), 5-29.
Jayati Ghosh. 2025. "Power, Control, Inequality, and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century." *Monthly Review* 77(4).

Week 10 (November 5): Responses to the Crisis of Democratic Capitalism

Tony Judt. 2009. "What is Living and What is Dead in Social Democracy?" *New York Review of Books*, December 17.
Arlie Hochschild and David Leonhardt. "It's Not Just Trump Voters. Both Parties are in Denial." *New York Times*, June 17.

Guest Speaker: Stefan Liebich (Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, New York) on "Transatlantic Relations from a Leftwing Perspective"

Week 11 (November 6-12) – Second Exam

Section III: Labor Strategy in the Contemporary Global Economy

Week 12 (November 19) – Unions in Rich Democracies under Cross-Pressures

Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. 2025. "Labour Struggles for Social Justice." Dossier available at: https://www.rosalux.de/en/dossiers/labour-struggles

Guest Speaker: Knut Panknin (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Washington, DC) on "Unions in the Climate Transformation"

Week 13 (December 3) – Worker Strategies in Global Value Chains

Mark Anner. 2021. "Three Labour Governance Mechanisms for Addressing Decent Work Deficits in Global Value Chains." *International Labour Review* 160(4): 611–627.

Optional:
Tobias Schulze-Cleven and Patrick Witzak. 2025. "Transnational Labor Activism in Global Value Chains: Combining Strategies across Realms of Governance." Ms.

Week 14 (December 10) – Wrap-up & In-class Debate

Appendix I – Further Information on Course Assignments & Class Rules:

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE

Be prepared for class and always read the assigned materials before our meetings. You are expected to bring questions and comments about the course material so that you can participate in class discussions. With much of our time spent learning through discussion, it is necessary for everybody to participate. I might ask students to use their questions to stimulate discussions and will ensure broad participation. It is critical that we respect one another's thoughts and address our comments at others' ideas, not at people themselves. This course is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language. Rather than measuring the frequency with which you speak in class, your participation grade reflects how you balance reasoning, reading, and listening. Also, do not forget to take careful notes to complement the PowerPoint slides.

Students should plan to attend every course session. If for some unavoidable reason you must miss a class, please let me know in advance through the university's absence reporting website (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/) so that your absence will not remain unexplained. If you are late or leave early repeatedly, and if you miss class unexcused, your participation grade will suffer.

QUIZZES

There will be two short take-home quizzes during the semester (administered via Canvas). If you do the assigned readings, you should have no problem doing well on the quizzes. There will be no trick questions, nor will a complete understanding of the reading be required. Rather, the quizzes are geared to helping you engage with the provided materials by asking you to answer some very basic questions.

EXAMS

Both exams will be given through Canvas. They are designed to be two hours in length, but I will give you more time. You will again be able to independently pick the most suitable time for you to take it.

GROUP DEBATES

Our last session on December 10 will be used for in-class group debates. Groups will be formed and time will be provided in class the week before for groups to coordinate their preparation for the debates. Your performance in the debate will become part of your in-class participation grade.

COMMUNICATION

Students are expected to check their Rutgers email accounts regularly for class announcements. Students are responsible for all information communicated to them via email by the instructor. Feel free to contact the instructor via email with questions or concerns about the course. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. When emailing the instructor, always include "Labor & Democracy" in the subject line of your email.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

While I encourage students to work together to understand theories and concepts, all written work must be your own. If you cite an author or use his/her ideas, please cite properly. Plagiarized assignments or evidence of cheating will result in a failing grade in the assignment and possibly in the course. Moreover, plagiarism may result in disciplinary action by the university.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation.

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Helpdesk: Rutgers Office of Information and Technology
Email: https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support
Call: 833-OIT-HELP

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As the instructor for this course, I have the responsibility to protect students' right to privacy. Classroom recordings of students will therefore be treated as educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the U.S. federal law that governs access to educational information and records. Instructors and students must provide notification if any part of online sessions are to be recorded, and such recordings cannot be circulated outside the course.