

Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations
Internship in Labor Studies, 37:575:496:90
COURSE ACCESS: sakai.rutgers.edu
FALL 2017

Instructor: Michele Ochsner, Ph.D.

mochsner@smlr.rutgers.edu; 609-924-1166 (home office); 609-731-6892 (cell)

This is a highly detailed syllabus, so please read carefully and download a copy for your reference. In addition, check the announcement tab in Sakai regularly for any updates on assignments.

Your first assignment is to meet with me by phone or in person to provide an update on plans for your internship. Depending on your internship start date and schedule, we will determine whether we need to create individualized deadlines for the assignments.

Course Overview:

This online course combines academic work with experiential learning in the internship placement. Internships can be arranged with a variety of host organizations including labor unions, community organizations, government agencies and private industry. *A minimum of 120 hours* of substantive work in the placement setting is required.

This is a *three credit* class: SMLR allows *one credit* for internships as a stand-alone course; the *additional two credits* available for this class are based on completing the online reading and writing assignments. This course satisfies LSER's requirement that majors take at least one upper level (i.e. 400 level) class. The assignment topics are tailored to the internship experience and are intended to encourage critical thinking about key areas in the field of labor studies. The number and length of assignments consider that students are balancing the demands of the class with hours in their internship organization as well as the fact that the academic part of the course is two credits rather than three. Nevertheless, students should allow roughly three hours *per assignment* for analyzing readings, drafting responses to the readings and careful editing.

Each intern works under a site supervisor at the host organization. The role of the site supervisor is to oversee the student experience providing structure and mentorship throughout the internship, Supervisors are also required to submit midterm and final evaluations of the intern's work. I will be in touch with your internship supervisor at the beginning of the semester, at midterm and at the end of the class. *If there is a problem with the internship, inform me immediately, so I can intervene or help you make arrangements for a different internship.*

Learning Outcomes:

Through the internship and the online learning assignments, students should have the opportunity to:

- Observe, analyze and think critically about professional behavior and conditions, culture and systems within their work organizations and compare their experiences to their peers
- Apply theories and principles related to the field of Labor Studies and Employment Relations to their experiences in the internship setting
- Gain practical work experience and develop skills relevant to their career goals under professional supervision and guidance

I encourage you to meet with me in person or by phone during your internship to discuss how the internship and the class are going. I will also email and/or call you during the semester if I have questions or concerns. The academic portion of this course is run on Sakai.

Announcements

Please check for new announcements *including updates on class assignments* when you log onto Sakai.

Assignments, Course Expectations and Grading

Your course grade will be based on the following:

- Three short papers (minimum two pages) and four online forums – 7 points each (49% of total grade)
- Final Reflection - 20 %
- Supervisor feedback and evaluations – 31 %. If your supervisor’s feedback is incomplete, I will weigh class assignments more heavily.

Graded papers with comments and all initial forum entries will be returned to you on the assignment page. Writing is a critical skill in a professional environment and an important part of this course. Although content is important, clear and grammatical expression of thoughts and ideas, good sentence and paragraph structure, and correct spelling are expected in an upper level undergraduate course.

My expectation is that students seeking an “A” in this course will read the articles for each week carefully, critically analyze their internship experiences in the context of the readings, and cite specific points made in the readings. In participating in forums, please read and thoughtfully respond to classmate’s posts. A paper or forum will not receive an “A” if grammatical rules are ignored and/or thoughts are not clearly expressed. Re-read and edit your work—no one writes great first drafts!

Format for Papers

Please include your name, the assignment name (e.g. Paper 1), and the date at the top left side of the page. Papers should follow standard rules of format: 12-pt Calibri or Times New Roman font, 1” margins, double spaced.

Citations

Rules of academic integrity dictate that when you are referring to another source or even your own previous work, you must cite it.

- For “outside” sources not listed in the syllabus, you will need to use both an *in text citation* and a full citation. In text citations allow you to note a source in parenthesis at the end of the quotation as shown here: (author’s last name, name of article if there are multiple articles by this author listed in the syllabus, and publication date). The in-text citation should follow the quoted or paraphrased section. Full citations for outside sources should be listed at the end of the paper or forum post. There are endless websites that provide guidance on in text and full citations – one particularly clear source is :
<http://sites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k70847&pageid=icb.page363223>
- When quoting sources listed on the syllabus or your own work from a previous assignment, only in-text citations are needed. If you cite a course reading, you can put the author’s last name and publication date in parenthesis at the end of the relevant sentence, or simply use the authors’

names when you explain their point of view. If you are quoting from your own work, simply include the name of the assignment (e.g. Paper 2) in parenthesis following the quoted section.

Online discussion forums

The four online discussion forums offer the opportunity to discuss and compare your internship experiences and opinions about the readings with other members of the class. The first post is expected to be substantive (*minimum* 400 words). You will respond to a question or set of questions in your first post; at least two subsequent posts (*minimum* 150 words) allow you thoughtfully compare and contrast your views to your classmates. Therefore it is important to read your classmates' posts. There is no minimum word length for additional posts (beyond the first three).

To encourage careful writing and editing, the first and longest post should first be written in word (or other writing program) and then pasted into the forum page. Writing and editing the first post in word tends to result in clearer writing and better marks on assignments; the shorter follow-up posts should also be carefully proofed and edited.

The assignment schedule provides specific due dates for each post. You must post at least three times per assignment to receive full credit for each forum.

How are the forums graded?

- **Comment quality.** The first post will count as 70 % of your grade for forum assignments, and the remaining posts 30%. The first post should offer a thoughtful discussion of your perspective on the assigned readings based on your internship. Comment quality and clarity is also consider in your additional posts.
- **Clear, grammatical writing.** This is as important in forums as in papers.
- **Use of Citations.** See section above
- **Participation.** Follow up posts should demonstrate that you **have read your classmates' posts** and pose thoughtful questions for other members of the class.
- **Timeliness.** If you always post at the last minute it will be hard for other members of the class to respond. Specific due dates are posted for the online discussion forums—late assignments will not only lose credit but diminish the opportunity for dialogue.

Submission/Late Submission

All forums and papers should be uploaded to the specific assignment tab on Sakai. If you have a problem with uploading a paper, you can submit it to me by email. Specific deadlines are provided for all assignments. Please let me know in advance if you anticipate a problem with a deadline. If you need to arrange to hand in an assignment late because of illness or an unanticipated emergency, please give me as much notice as possible. If you haven't spoken to me to explain the problem, your late assignment will lose 1.5 points for each day it is handed in past the initial due date.

Respect the privacy of individuals in your host organization: In referring to your internship supervisor and other staff in your host organization in your papers and online forums, please respect their privacy by using their initials and/or job titles rather than full names.

Resources provided by the writing coach. I *strongly* encourage you to work with Dr. Shawn Taylor, a writing coach at the Learning Center, on a minimum of one or two assignments early in the semester and longer if feedback suggests it is needed. Even if you are a confident writer, it is an opportunity to take your writing to the next level. Working with Dr. Taylor will help you do well in a course in which regular writing is required and clear grammatical writing is an expectation. He is flexible about setting up phone or in person consultations--please see his contact information below:

Shawn Taylor, D.Ed.,
Kreeger Learning Center, Room 122, 151 College Avenue
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901
Email: sktaylor@rutgers.edu

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

The assignment schedule below creates a schedule for readings and assignments. Assignments are due at seven to 14 day intervals. As this is an online course, you will not receive regular face-to-face reminders about submission deadlines. Please keep track of and abide by posted deadlines. **ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS MAY BE CHANGED. CHECK THE ANNOUNCEMENT POSTED ON SAKAI. ALWAYS MAKE SURE YOU ARE COMPLETING THE VERSION OF THE ASSIGNMENT POSTED ON SAKAI.**

Week of Sept. 5th – Schedule check in call

Especially since this is an online course, I'd like to start the semester by setting up a time to talk with you individually to learn more about your internship and go over the syllabus. Please call or email me to set up a "check in" conversation by phone or in person on Sept. 5th or 6th or Sept. 13th – 20th. (If you have a question about the first assignment, I'll be available by email 9/7 – 9/12). To prepare, review the entire syllabus carefully including assignment deadlines.

Writing Assignments:

1. Sept. 11 –20 - FORUM 1 – Introductions, Internships and Workplace rights. *For full credit upload your first post to the forum page no later than Sept. 18; upload at least two additional forum posts to Sakai no later than Sept. 20.*

The short readings below discuss basic workplace rights and things every worker (not just young workers) should know. The brief readings by Donna Ballman are drawn from her blog (employeeatty.blogspot.com) which has received recognition from the American Bar Association.

- Donna Ballman. June 10, 2016. 10 Things Every Teen And Young Adult Should Know About Workplace Rights
<http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=10+Things+Every+Teen+And+Young+Adult+Should+Know+About+Workplace+Rights>
- Donna Ballman. July 13, 2012. Top Six Illegal Policies in Your Employee Handbook.
<http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=Top+Six+Illegal+Policies+In+Your+Employee+Handbook>

- Donna Ballman. June 7, 2013. Top Six Signs Your Unpaid internship should Be Paid. <http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=your+internship+should+be+paid>
- Fortman, Laura. 2014 When Experience Pays: Paid vs. Unpaid Internships. Workplace Rights Blog. <https://blog.dol.gov/2014/04/11/when-experience-pays-paid-vs-unpaid-internships/>

IN YOUR FIRST POST: (400 word minimum)

- Introduce yourself and your internship
- In selecting your internship, how did you weigh the trade-offs between a paid and unpaid placement?
- How do the points raised in the readings relate to your current and previous work experiences? If you were a peer counselor to young workers, what issues about workplace rights and reading the employee handbook would you stress? Is there anything that surprises you?

IN YOUR ADDITIONAL POSTS (150 word minimum/each post): Compare your personal goals *and perspectives on the readings* to those of other members of the class.

2. Sept. 20 - 27 - Short paper 1- Traditional vs. Learning Organizations *For full credit, upload paper to Sakai no later than Sept. 27.*

In the first reading below, Amy Edmondson is describing ideal prototypes: most organizations combine features of both “traditional” and “learning” organizations although they may be weighted in one direction or the other. Read the Edmondson article and then review the summary fact sheets.

- Amy Edmondson. 2008. The competitive imperative of learning. Harvard Business Review. http://www.marshwhiteinc.com/HBR_The_Competitive_Imperative_of_Learning.pdf
- Fact sheets on learning organizations in the resources tab.

In your two page paper, relate what you have observed in your host organization to the specific characteristics of “traditional” and “learning” organizations. Do you think your internship setting could be improved by adopting one or more “learning” or “traditional” practices?

Note: Look ahead to Forum 2 and set up interviews with two full time staff at your host organization.

3. Sept. 27 - Oct. 4 - Short Paper 2- How Relationships Shape Communication at Work. *For full credit, upload paper to Sakai no later than Oct. 4.*

Readings:

- Christine Porath. Dec. 2017. The hidden toll of workplace incivility. McKinsey Quarterly. <http://bit.ly/2kakGHI> (Downloaded version available on resources tab)

- OPTIONAL: Charles Duhigg. Feb. 28, 2016. What Google learned from its quest to form a perfect team. The New York Times. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html?ref=collection%2Fbyline%2Fcharles-duhigg&action=click&contentCollection=undefined®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=2&pgtype=collection&r=0
- Fact sheets (relational coordination, psychological safety and challenges to communication) – see resources tab on Sakai

Discuss relational coordination, psychological safety, and factors that promote good communication in the context of the three assigned readings and what you have observed in your host organization. How do relationships and the quality of information flow at your worksite affect your sense of being part of your internship organization and your ability to perform your work effectively?

4. Oct. 4–16 - FORUM 2 - Analysis of Worksite Interviews. *For full credit upload your first post to the forum page by Oct. 12. Upload at least two additional forum posts to Sakai no later than Oct. 16.*

For this forum, interview two colleagues within your host organization about their history and perspectives on your host organization. If possible, select individuals with different roles, who have been in the organization at least six months. Your questions should include: 1) their personal background (areas of undergraduate study and graduate study, their initial jobs, why they chose the career they did, how they got to their present position, etc.); 2) how would they characterize decision making, relationships and communication in your internship organization; and 3) what they enjoy most--and least--about the work they do. To prepare for the interview:

- Think carefully about the potential interviewees, and identify individuals whose career path you would like to know more about. You may find that conducting the interview is helpful in establishing a stronger rapport with your internship supervisor.
- Explain the reason you are doing the interview (class assignment), and request the interview a few days ahead of time.
- Set a time and place to talk. If your work situation allows, schedule a time to sit down and talk in a quiet place even if it is only 10 minutes.
- Re-write the list of questions in your own words and think about flow and what you would like to add first.
- Give your full attention to the person you are interviewing and ask follow up questions.
- Jot down notes and take a few minutes after the conversation to add details that you didn't have time to write down.
- Don't forget to thank your colleagues for their time!
- Review "Tips for Conducting Qualitative Interviews" in the resources tab.

IN YOUR FIRST POST (MIN. 400 WORDS): *In discussing individuals in your workplace, refer to them by initials and/or general titles to protect their confidentiality. Share your observations from these interviews with specific attention to the following questions:*

- Did hearing about your co-workers' career path give you any insight into your future employment

perspectives or path?

- Summarize their comments on decision-making, relationships and communication in your host organization. Are their views consistent with your observations (summarize the perspective you shared in your papers on learning organizations and relational coordination)?
- What did you find especially interesting or surprising?

IN YOUR ADDITIONAL POSTS (MIN 150 WORDS/EACH): In your follow-up posts, compare and contrast the findings from your interviews with those of your peers. What themes do you see emerging from the various work histories shared in this forum?

Feel free to ask questions to create a dialogue. Make sure to check back to see what questions that I or other students ask you about what you have shared.

5. Oct. 16 – 25 – Short Paper 3. Discrimination and Harassment *For full credit upload your paper by Oct. 25.*

Diversity is a value that many organizations officially embrace and yet individuals who do not represent the dominant culture may feel subtly or not so subtly excluded because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual preferences, age, gender or disabilities or other “differences” including pregnancy. And in many settings workers face overt abuse, discrimination and harassment from co-workers and supervisors. The readings below are generally short:

- Drew Harwell. Feb. 27th, 2017. Hundreds allege sex harassment, discrimination at Kay and Jared jewelry company. The Washington Post. (Attached with link below)
https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/hundreds-allege-sex-harassment-discrimination-at-kay-and-jared-jewelry-company/2017/02/27/8dcc9574-f6b7-11e6-bf01-d47f8cf9b643_story.html?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main_sterling-7pm%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm_term=.8cedc6aa5f8d
- Donna Ballman. March 31, 2011. I Reported Harassment and Now HR Wants to Meet With Me. What Do I Do? <http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search/label/meeting%20with%20HR>
- American Association of University Women (AAUW). Know Your Rights: Workplace Sexual Harassment. <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources/know-your-rights-at-work/workplace-sexual-harassment/> (review the expanded article)
- EEOC Releases 2015 Enforcement and Litigation Data.
<https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/2-11-16.cfm>

IN YOUR PAPER: *Reflect on the questions below.*

- Have you encountered discrimination or watched it unfold against others in your internship or in any previous work settings?

- Why are harassment and other forms of discrimination and abuse tolerated in some work settings and not in others? (*Consider the first article by Drew Harwell. Consider leadership and relational norms. Do NOT simply attribute harassment and discrimination to “workplace culture.”*)
- What is the impact of discrimination on individual workers and society? (Consider both prevalence—*see EEOC link*--and the impact on individuals (*see Harwell*.)
- How is HR likely to view a harassment complaint? (See Ballman blog—“I ...now HR wants to meet with me”)
- What can work organizations do to prevent or end harassment? (Be specific about both the limits of HR’s powers and, again, the role of leadership.)

6. Oct. 25 - Nov. 3. FORUM 4 – Aspiring to Diversity. *For full credit upload your first post to the forum page by Oct. 31 and at least two additional forum posts to Sakai no later than Nov. 3.*

Note that diversity doesn’t refer only to racial and ethnic minorities but to class, age, disabilities, sexual preference and other aspects of identity. And if diversity is concentrated in the lowest ranks of an organization, rather than at all levels, this reflects very limited opportunities for excluded groups. Age differences has come up in a number student comments about their internships in previous semesters, so I’ve included an article on multi-generational workplaces. Feel free to relate your discussion to gender, ethnicity or other aspects of diversity.

Reading Assignments:

- Lauren Rivera. May 30th, 2015. Guess who doesn’t fit in. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/31/opinion/sunday/guess-who-doesnt-fit-in-at-work.html?mcubz=0>
- Rebecca Knight. 2014. Managing people from five generations. Harvard Business Review, Sept. 25th. <https://hbr.org/2014/09/managing-people-from-5-generations> Also attached/and available on Resources Tab.
- Joe Gerstandt. Diversity: What it isn’t. Workforce Diversity Network. http://www.workforcediversitynetwork.com/docs/Articles/Article_WhatDiversityIsnt_Gerstandt.pdf
- Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev. Why diversity programs fail. Harvard Business Review, July-August 2016. The article is easy to understand but long, *so skim the first half – and read the second half, “Tools for Managers,”* more carefully. <https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail> Attached and available on Resources Tab.

IN YOUR FIRST POST (400 WORDS MIN):

- Based on the readings and your own experiences, consider the *appeal* and the *limitations* of working with “people like me” in terms of your own preferences and values and from an organizational perspective, e.g. the appeal and limitations of “cultural fit”
- *Drawing on the readings from last week*, how do you view the relationship between diversity and discrimination

- Based on the readings, what are the lessons for building relationships in inter-generational workplaces or creating more successful diversity programs?

IN YOUR ADDITIONAL POSTS (150 WORDS MIN): Compare and contrast your views, observations and interpretations of the readings with your peers.

7. Nov. 3 – 17 - FORUM 4 – Job Quality and Occupational Stress. *For full credit, the first post is due by Nov. 14. Second and third posts are due no later than Nov. 17.*

Reading assignments:

- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Public Health Service Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). 1999. Stress at Work. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/99-101/pdfs/99-101.pdf> This is an older report but the concepts are still relevant and are clearly presented. You can skim much of the report – key concepts explained on pp. 8 – 15.
- Next check out NIOSH’s Quality of Work Life Questionnaire that reflects more recent research: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/stress/qwlquest.html#overview>. The PDF of the questionnaire can be downloaded at the bottom of the webpage.
- Teresa Tritch. 2015. Taking Note - The Editorial Page Editor's Blog. Stressful Workplaces, Shorter Lives. The New York Times, October 22, 2015
<https://mobile.nytimes.com/blogs/takingnote/2015/10/22/stressful-workplaces-shorter-lives/?mcubz=0>
- Anne-Marie Slaughter. 2015. A Toxic Work World. The New York Times,
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/opinion/sunday/a-toxic-work-world.html>

IN YOUR FIRST POST (MIN 400 WORDS):

A number of different factors are discussed in these readings including the role of social support, teamwork, good communication, and trustworthy supervisors. Other causes of stress considered in these readings include job demands, job insecurity, the characteristics of low wage jobs, and work/life/family balance. And the article by Anne- Marie Slaughter raises the issue of the social safety net. Respond to the following questions:

- Are there any concepts in the questionnaire or the articles that surprised you?
- Citing your sources, identify a few key concepts about work-related stress in the readings (cite sources) and discuss these perspectives in the context of your own experiences, for example, what are the key sources of occupational stress you’ve encountered during your internship, other jobs, or the “job” of being a college student?
- How have your experiences with occupational stress—or the experiences of family or close friends—shaped your goals for the kind of work you want to do and the type of organization you want to work in?
- Based on the readings and thinking about your own experiences, to what extent can occupational stress be avoided or controlled by an individual or through the intervention of HR? What factors relate to federal and state programs and policies?

IN YOUR ADDITIONAL POSTS (MIN 150 WORDS/EACH): Compare and contrast your views, observations and interpretations of the readings with your peers.

Thanksgiving Week – Have a good break!

8. Nov. 27 – Dec. 12 FINAL Paper – Due on or before Dec. 12

Prepare an 8 to 10 page paper in which you assess and reflect on your internship. The paper should build on the reflections and analyses you have shared over the course of the semester through your papers and forum posts and cite specific readings that are relevant to analyzing your internship organization.

Do not cut and paste from your previous papers. If you directly quote your previous papers, use quotation marks, *limit your quotation to three lines*, and include in-text citations indicating the assignment from which you are pulling your content, e.g. “Forum 2.” Review additional rules for citations on page 2.

The paper should use headings* to provide an organized presentation of the following:

1. Provide internship site information including the name, type of business/organization (purpose); location; internship supervisor; and mission of the internship site.
2. Summarize your responsibilities including the title of your position (if any); goals of the internship with examples of how these goals were achieved; specific tasks and/or assignments you were given, and any impact of your work on the internship site; etc.
3. Analyze and describe the strengths of your organization in terms of the concepts covered in readings and journals (for example, leadership, communication/relationships/teamwork, culture, diversity) and any positive lessons you hope to emulate and integrate into your own approach. Briefly describe your recommendations, if any, for how the organization could increase its effectiveness in advancing its mission. Reference relevant readings.
4. How did your accomplishments in the internship relate to your personal, professional and/or academic goals? What have you learned about the kind of work you enjoy and find meaningful from your internship experience? Have values related to the role you hope work will play in your life changed as a result of this internship? Read and refer to assigned readings shown below:
 - Robert H. Frank. July 22, 2016. The Incalculable Value of Finding a Job You Love, The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/24/upshot/first-rule-of-the-job-hunt-find-something-you-love-to-do.html?_r=0
 - Introduction to John Budd’s 2011 book, The Thought of Work ([see Resources tab](#)).
 - Optional: review of The Thought of Work by Brandon McCoy http://www.legacy-irc.csom.umn.edu/faculty/jbudd/research/tow_jei_review.pdf

5. Would you recommend your internship site to future students—why or why not? Would it be possible for the organization to provide a better experience for future interns? Explain how.

***Headings.** Here are a couple of websites that offer clear guidance on using headings and sub-headings in your final paper. Sub-headings are optional, but headings are required and useful in almost any report or longer paper!

1. <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2011/04/how-to-use-five-levels-of-heading-in-an-apa-style-paper.html>

2. <https://www.sophia.org/tutorials/headings-subheadings>