

# **Writing in Labor Studies & Employment Relations**

Fall 2021—Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey

Class Meets Asynchronously Online

Sections: 37:575:300:92

37:575:300:93

Instructor: Omar Montoya

**Online Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:**

**helpdesk@rutgersonline.net or call 1-877-7 RUTGER (1-877-778-8437)**

**or you can also contact me directly via the Canvas message tool.**

## **COURSE GOALS:**

The goal of this class is to enable students to produce well-argued, grammatically correct papers with the degree of sophistication required by college essay writing. Students will achieve this end through reading, writing, revision, and peer editing.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW:**

Research has shown that the best way to improve one's writing skills is through reading, writing, and revising. Throughout the semester, students will be asked to provide written responses to assigned readings, both formal and informal. Reading topics will be on issues in labor studies. Students will also edit peer papers and excerpts. This course will focus on some of the major qualities of good writing:

## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES--GOALS:**

The following learning objectives of the course are based on Rutgers University's "Permanent Core Curriculum Learning Outcome Goals" (May 2017) and relate to the overall objective of a liberal arts education. "A Rutgers SAS graduate will be able to:"

- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, &/or supervisors, through success drafts and revision.
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

These learning objectives will be assessed through the standard Core Curriculum rubrics applied to the final paper for the course.

## **CLASS MEETINGS:**

**Class begins August 31, 2020**--Students should log in as soon as possible to familiarize themselves with the Canvas online platform. Most commonly, we will have regular due dates on Thursdays and Sundays of each week. Occasionally, due to breaks and other scheduling issues,

these days may change. This document, along with a course schedule available on our Canvas course site, will be your guide for due dates. It is your responsibility to keep up on these due dates and times and reach out to your peers or your instructor should you be unsure.

It is important to keep up with the assignments, which means students should check their Canvas at a minimum of four (4) times a week. If you are ill from Covid-19, please ensure that you follow proper campus guidelines and protocol for isolation, if needed. If you are unable to perform class work, due to an illness, please contact me so we can determine an alternate working schedule.

## COURSE COMMUNICATION:

All students are enrolled in the course with their Rutgers address. Each week, I will place an announcement on eCollege about what you should accomplish that week and/or update you on new information. **You are responsible to CHECK Canvas and message me, using the message tool on Canvas.**

If you believe that you are not receiving messages from me, it is *your* responsibility to reach out to me as well as IT and figure out how to fix that.

**Proper etiquette:** When communicating with classmates, proper etiquette is required at all times. All comments and all interactions should be courteous. This is an online course, which means there is a great deal of writing, responding, and working together online. As such, your responses to your peers must be well thought out and carefully crafted. A response that repeats the words of another student is plagiarism and unacceptable—it may also result in failure of this course as well as disciplinary action from the college. A response that bullies, uses name-calling, or directly attacks or threatens another student may have the same outcome as mentioned for plagiarism. Just because this course is online does not mean that you should treat your peers in any manner that you would not treat them in person. This is, above all else, a safe learning environment and must be treated as such.

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: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. 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>

**Learning Centers:** Rutgers is committed to your success, and offers free academic services to all students. The Learning Centers provide tutoring, study groups, and review sessions for your

courses. They also host workshops and provide individual academic coaching to help you further develop your study strategies and self-management skills. To learn more about how the LCs can help you succeed, visit [rlc.rutgers.edu](http://rlc.rutgers.edu).

## COURSE COMPETENCIES:

At the conclusion of the course, students should demonstrate an increase in their knowledge and skills in writing/revising academic essays. Specifically, student should be able to

- enter into a dialogue with specialists in a particular field of study
- read essays and extract and explain key points and terms
- organize a paper from thesis, to topic sentence, to conclusion,
- interact with texts by using meaningful citations in their papers
- use a range of sentence structures
- write meaningful, clear, and organized papers.
- thesis development
- logic and organization
- tone, vocabulary, and spelling

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND SCHEDULE:

All assignments and due dates are listed week by week. All should be completed by 11:59pm, eastern standard time, on the date the assignment is due. Further details about each assignment are below and on Canvas—Please see Canvas for full schedule and any announcements or messages with course schedule changes.

## ASSIGMENT CATEGORIES:

**Discussions:** It is important to discuss course topics with each other to gain different perspectives, viewpoints, and ideas that might not otherwise be considered without discussion. Since this course takes place online, we will hold these types of conversations in threaded discussions we will call “Discussions.” Though I will interact with you in the discussions, overall this venue will be for you and your peers.

There are 8 graded Discussions throughout the semester. In order to receive maximum credit for the discussion you must **interact substantively** each time you enter the discussion—just simply responding does not guarantee maximum points. Discussion responses should demonstrate critical thinking, ask questions, and push your peers to be more engaged with the work and more. This type of interaction is what I am looking for to demonstrate “engagement” with the subject at hand.

For each Discussion, you should follow directions as to the number of times you must interact and the minimum word counts. Keep in mind that discussions are asynchronous,

which means that within the given time frame—one week—you can respond to questions at any time during the day or night. Take advantage of the discussion and interact with your classmates. If you miss a discussion, you cannot make it up and you will lose valuable interaction with your classmates as well as grade points. If you submit all your posts on one day, you will not receive higher than a C on any given discussion.

**Journals:** There are four (8) graded journals that will take place throughout this semester. I will ALWAYS check that you completed your journal and addressed the topic. I will only respond to journal entries, however, once or twice throughout the semester. It will not be announced when I will respond so always treat your journal as if it is a direct piece of communication to me. Your peers cannot see any responses that you write within your journals. Like discussions, journals will be graded holistically in terms of the degree of your engagement with the assignment.

**Peer Review:** You will be required to critique the papers of two of your peers for each of our papers this semester—that is a total of six (3) peer reviews—per paper. Keep in mind that proofreading/editing is looking for grammatical and mechanical errors, while revision is making substantive suggestions for change that affect concepts, thesis, organization, style, and so forth, along with error—this is where your focus should be as a peer reviewer. This is not just busy work, but rather by being able to recognize how another can improve their writing, you are learning where your strengths are and growing as a writer as well. Reviewing peer papers does train you in another way as a writer, so know that you will be gaining from this type of work as well as receiving comments from others with helpful suggestions as to how to improve your own work.

Each paper we write for this class will respond to an issue in a reading, and each paper will build on issues from the previous paper. The final papers should demonstrate substantive revisions from draft 1 and draft 2. You will receive comments on your final drafts from me and comments on either draft 1 or draft 2 from your peers—the other draft will take place during a week where we work on a writing skill that you can apply to improve your work. These will help you understand your strengths and weakness in writing and give you places to focus on growth as you move into the next paper.

## **PAPERS:**

**Uploading papers:** **Upload completed drafts and final papers to Canvas within the folders provided—named after the corresponding assignment.** This is the **ONLY** place I will go to grade your papers so do not submit them elsewhere as you will not receive credit for them.

## **Formatting Your Papers:**

Format your paper according to proper Chicago Manual of Style formatting requirements. Refer to the OWL at Purdue for how to do this: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/>

## **Response to Your Papers:**

Since this is a 300-level course, I will not read or comment on your drafts, but will do so for the final paper you submit for a grade as well as submit a rubric to you. My comments will be designed to help you improve on the next paper, so use the concepts therein and apply them to

your next assignment. If, however, you have specific questions or need help as you are moving through the drafting process, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or set up a time to chat in eCollege.

Engage with my comments as though we are actually talking to one another instead of as me just talking at you—you will learn more if it's less of me directing you and more of us working together. Think of my comments as the opening to a dialogue, since I am not in front of you. Ask me any questions you have after reviewing my comments.

I will also make grammar suggestions and point out types of error (if there are any that occur repeatedly). Once I point considerations out to you, it will be your responsibility to find similar issues in your following drafts.

### **POLICY ON LATE PAPERS, DRAFTS, DISCUSSIONS AND JOURNALS**

- ✓ Any grade-able item is considered late if it is submitted **one minute** after the due date and time. So please leave yourself enough time so even if there is a failed upload, it will not result in your paper being submitted late. I do not do this to be difficult, but simply because there needs to be a common and fair baseline for the entire class. Many of you live in different time zones, but due dates and times operate on the RU schedule, which is **Eastern Standard Time**.
- ✓ Any **discussion** or **journal** submitted after the due date **will receive a zero**.
- ✓ Late drafts of major papers in this course will not receive credit or be placed in a peer review group (which is part of a following week's discussion)—which basically means you will get no outside help in revising your paper as well as losing credit in multiple assignment areas (minus submission points, assignments [peer reviews and more] and final essay grade), so be sure to get drafts in on time as this is a significant component of this course.
- ✓ Drafts must be submitted, even when late; otherwise, a 10 percent penalty will apply toward the final essay of each unit, i.e. essay 1 90 percent minus a 10 percent deduction for missed draft 1, equals an 81 percent (a maximum of 20 percent deduction can be incurred if multiple drafts are not submitted).
- ✓ Late final papers receive **1 full letter grade off** for each day late. This means if you receive a B+ on a paper, but it was turned in 48 hours later, then it would get a C+. One third of a letter grade will be deducted from a final draft if it does not meet page requirements; a B+ would be a B if it were 3.5 pages instead of 4.

### **RU Grading System:**

GRADE	INTERPRETATION	PERCENTAGE
A	OUTSTANDING	90-100
B+	VERY GOOD	86-89
B	GOOD	80-85
C+	AVERAGE	76-79
C	SATISFACTORY	70-75

## **GRADING RUBRIC FOR THIS COURSE:**

I use a rubric to grade your papers (available on Canvas) and Journal entries. Review these, become familiar with them, and ask me any questions about these earlier in the semester rather than later so that I can clarify any concerns. Below is a breakdown of the general parameters for each grade range.

### **A = (90% - 100%)**

An “A” paper provides a clear original thesis that has evolved from the writer’s conversation with other experts in the field, along with his/her own experience/knowledge. The thesis is followed throughout the paper with original ideas and textual interaction in the form of a dialogue, i.e. the paper demonstrates purpose. The paper is well organized, with strong paragraph development—use of topic sentences, transition sentences and connects back to the thesis. Terms are also well defined and lead the reader through the paper. Quotations are introduced, take the paper in different directions, are integrated into the body of a sentence, and are interpreted by the writer. Overall, the paper exhibits a clear, simple yet elegant style, demonstrates a point with direction and logic through the use of different types of sentence structures and uses a rich vocabulary.

### **B+ (86% - 89%)**

The “B” paper, like the “A” paper shows, originality in the thesis. There is a dialogue between the writer of the paper and the writers of the texts, which is throughout the paper. Each paragraph will have a pretty clear topic statement that reflects the thesis statement. The student's paper may even go beyond his original thesis by introducing other possible outcomes. The student shows control in ideas, sophisticated sentence structure and vocabulary, though not to the extent of an “A” paper.

### **B (80% - 85%)**

The thesis is well articulated from the start of the paper, but it weakens as the paper progresses due to generalities or some disorganization. Overall, the paper is not as sophisticated or as complex as the A paper. The paper almost reaches complexity, but fails in areas of clear topic sentences, sustained originality, and use of causal relations. The paper demonstrates organization, some creative ideas, and good use of quotations, but more for support rather than for pushing ideas forward. There are few errors and the paper demonstrates an ability to write clearly though perhaps not elegantly.

### **C+ (76% - 79%)**

The C+ paper may be well articulated at the thesis statement, but it noticeably breaks down in terms or organization and vague use of terms that confuse the issues at hand. Ideas are not carried through or developed through the paper; they are mostly simply touched upon. The topic sentences typically do not organize or deliver meaning for the ensuing paragraph. Some quoted material may be used too much for proof rather than taking the paper in different more complex directions. Sentences may be similar and need to be connected in order to show causal relations. While writing may not be filled with errors, it's somewhat repetitive and not complex.

### **C Satisfactory (70% - 75%)**

A “C” paper’s thesis is typically too general, vague, and perhaps slightly confusing. The

paragraphs that follow touch on the topic but are typically too vague or general because they emanate from a thesis that is too vague or general. The quoted material is used for proof or to substitute for the student's own writing. Rather than lead the discussion in the paper, the student's voice is lost in the material, which is presented with little to no interpretation. Sentences are not sophisticated and do not display causal relations. Although error isn't overwhelming, there's enough to add to a reader's confusion

\*\*Maximum total points possible differs for each paper, so grades are calculated using percentages of the total maximum points possible, i.e. 70 out of 75 points, would result in a 93%, which according to the course rubric would warrant an "A" paper.

### **Point System: Total 1000 points possible**

Assignment	Amount	Total
Discussion	8 @ 25	200
Journal Reflections	8@25	200
Paper 1:		
Drafts	1 2@5*	100 10
	*10 percent deduction from final essay grade, if not submitted (maximum 20 percent deduction for 2 drafts)	
Peer Review	20* *Required response to two (2) peer papers @ 10 points each	20
Paper 2:		
Drafts	1 2@5*	150 10
	*10 percent deduction from final essay grade, if not submitted (maximum 20 percent deduction for 2 drafts)	

Peer Review	20*	20
	*Required response to two (2) peer papers @ 10 points each	
Paper 3:	1	230
Drafts	2@5*	10
	*10 percent deduction from final essay grade, if not submitted (maximum 20 percent deduction for 2 drafts)	
Peer Review	20*	20
	*Required response to peer papers and feedback from outside reviewer	
Conference	1 @ 30	30
		Total: /1000