



# RUTGERS

UNIVERSITY | NEW BRUNSWICK

## School of Management & Labor Relations

### Youth & Work

37:575:215:96, Fall 2025, Online Asynchronous

#### Course Description

This course will explore the experiences of youth in the labor market. We will begin by examining the work experiences of children and youth in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Our journey starts with a discussion of child labor, including its definitions within social and economic contexts. We will investigate several industries—such as manufacturing, textiles, homework, and agriculture—to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in U.S. history. We will explore why this topic matters both socially and economically, review the reform programs that emerged, and consider how the history of child labor in the U.S. can inform our understanding of current child labor issues, both domestically and globally. Next, we will review the contemporary experiences of young people in the labor market. This section will explore how young individuals prepare for work, their perceptions of education and workforce development pathways, and their aspirations for future careers. We will focus on the experiences of young workers across racial, socio-economic class, and gender lines, and analyze how public policy can address some of these inequalities. A significant topic will be the experiences of young people in the service sector, alongside various policies and programs designed to improve their experiences and economic security. We will also examine how the rise of technology and social media has transformed youth work in recent years.

In the third part of the course, we will address critical issues that are integral to young workers as they transition into adulthood. We will explore why student internships, even unpaid ones, have become a sought-after opportunity for students looking to gain an advantage in a competitive job market after graduation. We will discuss how this trend may further exacerbate inequalities based on gender, race, and ethnicity. Additionally, we will examine the role of youth involvement in collective action, including union formation, as a potential avenue for improving the economic status of young workers across the economy.

Finally, through a research project, we will compare child labor and youth work experiences globally. We will review the challenges faced by youth in other countries, compare these experiences to those of youth in the U.S., and investigate what global organizations are doing to improve the circumstances of young workers.

## Instructor Information

PATRICIA MCHUGH

Instructor

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Virtual Office Hours via Zoom

## Course Learning Objectives

- **I. Understand the History of Child Labor of the United States and compare its origins and reforms to the current child labor landscape both within the United States and globally.** Using the theories of Hugh Hindman, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of why industrialization was the catalyst for “problematic” child labor within the U.S. but also brought about its reform. They will also be able to apply these theories to specific industries that historically and currently use child labor.
- **II. Analyze the evolving landscape of youth employment:** Students will be able to critically examine historical and contemporary trends in child labor and youth labor force participation, including the impact of education, globalization, technological advancements, and economic shifts on opportunities and challenges for young workers.
- **III. Evaluate theoretical frameworks and policy approaches related to child labor, youth and work:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of major sociological, economic, and psychological theories explaining youth transitions into the workforce, and be able to assess the effectiveness of various policies and programs aimed at prohibiting “problematic” child labor and supporting youth employment and career development.
- **IV. Identify and address social inequalities in youth employment:** Students will be able to recognize how factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and geographic location influence access to quality employment for young people and propose strategies to promote equitable outcomes in the youth labor market.
- **V. Develop practical skills for navigating the contemporary world of work and advocating for youth:** Students will acquire foundational knowledge relevant to labor economics (g. understanding economic concepts and statistics such as demand and supply, unemployment, labor participation, and labor rights) and be able to articulate informed perspectives on the future of work for young people, engaging in discussions about policy and practice.

## Course Competencies

This course explores several questions, including:

- Historically, how and when did youth work and how did this change over time – especially with the advent of industrialization?
- Why do young people work now?
- What jobs/industries are youth likely to work in, and how has this changed in the more recent past?
- Why and how are young workers concentrated in specific industries/occupations?
- How does young people's role in the labor market today differ from that of previous generations of young workers?
- What are some of the challenges that young people face in obtaining a job and participating in work?
- How do the challenges that young workers face differ by cultural context, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, and gender, and also compared with adult workers?
- How has youth work changed with increased access to technology and social media?
- How can young workers and their advocates improve young people's experiences in the labor market?
- How has improved access to and the expectation that youth should obtain post-secondary education changed how youth think about work, their pathway to a career, and their lives once entering the labor market?

## Core Curriculum Learning Goals

The Core Curriculum Learning Goals assessed in this course include:

- **CCD-1:** Analyze the degree to which forms of human differences and stratifications among social groups shape individual and group experiences of, and perspectives on, contemporary issues. Such differences and stratifications may include race, language, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, abilities or other social distinctions and their intersections.
- **SCL-1:** Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- **SCL-2:** Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.
- **SMLR- IV:** Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories, and concepts in their field of study
  - Evaluate and apply theories from social science disciplines to workplace issues
- **SMLR – V:** Understanding Context - Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions
  - Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of and perspectives on work

- Analyze a contemporary global issue in their field from a multi-disciplinary and intersectional perspective
- Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems
- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (LSER)
- Analyze issues related to the selection, motivation, and development of talent in a local and global context (HRM)
- **SMLR – VI: Application** – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance
  - Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work
  - Understand the legal, regulatory, and ethical issues related to their field
  - Develop human resource management functional capabilities used to select, motivate, and develop workers (HRM)
  - Understand the internal and external alignment and measurement of human resource practices (HRM)
- **LSER – 1:** Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives, theories and concepts
- **LSER – 2:** Apply those concepts, along with substantive institutional knowledge, to contemporary developments

**LSER – 6:** Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work.

## Course Delivery Format

**This course runs from September 2 through December 21.** It is delivered *entirely* online through the Learning Management System, Canvas. There will be no Face-to-Face, in-person classroom sessions, except for the optional weekly "office hour" sessions and by appointment with the professor.

The course is delivered in *asynchronous* mode. This means the learning activities and communication takes place outside of real-time. You do not have to log in at any specific scheduled time; you log in at your convenience. However, there may be times, if you're working in groups on an assignment, you would need to set up a live session via the **Canvas Conferences, WebEx, or ZOOM.**

**Note:** Even though you don't need to log in at any specific time, **you are required to adhere to all course work due dates.**

## Virtual Office Hour

- The Virtual Office Hour will be conducted through Zoom on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. or upon request.

## How to Access Zoom

Virtual office hours are conducted through scheduled ZOOM meeting. If you have not activated your Rutgers ZOOM account, you will need to do so prior to class starts. Follow the steps below:

1. Follow instructions on [Creating Rutgers ZOOM Account](#). Note: be sure to read what to do if you have an existing personal ZOOM account that uses your Rutgers email.
2. Once you have activated your Rutgers ZOOM account you will then need to make sure your Canvas default email is in the format **netid@rutgers.edu**. Follow instructions on [How to check and set your Canvas Default Email](#) if needed. Then you can access the scheduled ZOOM class sessions.
3. To access and join the scheduled class sessions, select the ZOOM tab from the left navigation menu, then select Join to join the scheduled session. If you are new to ZOOM, review the tutorials under [Course Tools Tutorials](#) or at [Rutgers ZOOM Homepage](#).

## ZOOM etiquettes:

- For audio clarity, mute your microphone when not speaking, unmute only when you are speaking.
- Allow for the brief delay that happens when a conversation from one speaker transitions to another. Be patient and allow the person to speak.
- You have the option to turn on/off your webcam.
- You can use the Chat box to ask questions, share your thoughts.

## Accommodations

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 ([See Documentation Guidelines](#)). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you and your instructor with a Letter of Accommodations. Please discuss the accommodations with your instructors as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the [registration form](#). I am happy to facilitate the process if you need me to. Just let me know.

## Office of Disability Services contact and address

**Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8045.**

- E-mail Address: [dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu)
- Phone: (848) 445-6800 • Fax: (732) 445-3388
- [Office of Disability Website](#)

## Rutgers Diversity Statement

The Division of Student Affairs works to create an environment of **inclusion** which respects and affirms the inherent dignity, value, and uniqueness of all individuals, communities and perspectives. Our practices reflect awareness and understanding of the complexity of identity and the increasing interconnectedness of our world. It is our **responsibility** to promote and maintain a community of compassion, embracing the rich dimensions of **diversity**, and facilitating opportunities for understanding and the expression of both individual and shared truths.

## Course Materials

Textbooks:

***Please Note: You DO NOT need to purchase these books. They are available within each model and in the Reading List tab to the left. You will just need to enter your NetID and Password. You will only be reading select chapters from these books.***

1. Hindman, Hugh. 2002. *Child Labor: An American History*. M. E. Sharpe.
2. [Besen-Cassino, Yasemin. 2014. \*Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America\*.](#)
3. Besen-Cassino, Yasemin, 2018. *The Cost of Being a Girl: Working Teens and the Origins of the Gender Wage Gap*

Lecture videos, multimedia, and any supplemental materials to enhance textbook readings are provided in the Readings, Multimedia, and Lecture sections of each Module.

## Computer and other Technology Requirements

- Access to the internet
- Reliable computer
- Headphones/Headsets - recommended
- Webcam - optional
- Microsoft Word
- [Basic Computer Specifications for Canvas \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

For convenience, you can also download/install the Canvas Student App for Android or iOS devices. Follow the instruction on the respective app centers:

- [Canvas Student App for Android \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Canvas Student App for iOS](#)

## Course Structure & Schedules

This course is structured in a weekly module format. A Module is a chunk of the course content broken out by usually topic. Each Module equates to a Week. Each week starts on a Monday and ends on a Sunday. Exceptions are the 1st the last week of the semester.

The weekly/module activities are noted in the Modules section under the corresponding **Week # Overview & Activities** pages. Each page includes:

- Topic introduction of the week
- Learning Materials
  - Readings
  - Multimedia (Audio, and/or Videos, Lecture recordings)
- Learning Activities - what activities you will be doing to help you learn
  - Discussion
  - Project work
  - Assignments
- Assessment - the activities that will be assessed (graded)

The course is divided into 14 Weeks as follows:

- [Module 1 \(September 2 - 7\): Introduction](#)
- [Module 2 \(September 8 - 14\): Introduction: Yes -- Child Labor Still Exists!](#)
- [Module 3 \(September 15 - 21\): Is Child Labor Inevitable?](#)
- [Module 4 \(September 22 - 28\): Comparing Child Labor Historically in Specific Industries](#)
- [Module 5 \(September 29 - October 5\): The Child Labor Reform Movement](#)
- [Module 6 \(October 6 - 12\): Defining Child Labor and What's different about Child Labor in Agriculture?](#)
- [Module 7 \(October 13 - 19\): Resurgence of Child Labor in the U.S.](#)
- [Module 8 \(October 20 - 26\): First Work Experiences](#)
- [Module 9 \(October 27 - November 2\): Should Adolescents Work?](#)
- [Module 10 \(November 3 - 9\): Contemporary Issues in Youth and Work: Branding, Aesthetic Labor and Child Labor in the Age of Technology](#)
- [Module 11 \(November 10 - 16\): Disparities in Youth Employment and Impact of AI on Youth Employment](#)
- [Module 12 \(November 17 - 23\): The Intern Economy](#)
- [Thanksgiving: \(November 24 - December 30\): Enjoy your Holiday!](#)
- [Module 13 \(December 1 - 7\): Youth and Unions](#)
- [Module 14 \(December 8 - 14\): Global Child Labor Project](#)
- [Final Exam \(During Final Exam Period\)](#)

## Assessments

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Required Readings and Visual Materials

1.
  - **You are NOT required to purchase/rent any reading/visual materials for this course.**
  - **ALL** of the reading and visual materials required for this course will be posted online on the course website on Canvas in the Modules section of this course,



under the respective weekly To-Do pages **OR** in the Reading List Function, which you may access at <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/Links to an external site>.

- Once you are registered for the course, you will be granted access to the site. It is your responsibility to access course materials, including the reading assignments.
  - The syllabus, schedule and assignments are subject to change as the course evolves, and sometimes due to unforeseen schedule changes due to weather. Please note that additional sets of readings that highlight contemporary issues that develop during the course of the semester may also be added to our activities.
  - **Note: Each Module contains a week's "To Do."**
    - Within this page will be the readings and assignments you should have read for that week.
2. **Reading Annotations: (10%)**
    - During the semester, you will be asked to annotate and interact with your classmates for several readings that will be due in a particular week. This will ensure that you are grasping the important concepts contained in those readings.
  3. **Essay – U.S. Child Labor History (10%)**
    - The essay will be open notes/books. NO sources, other than those provided in class or on our class Canvas site, may be used to inform your answers on the exam. This includes the internet and any AI-generated sources of information.
  4. **Reflection Journal Assignments (20%)**
    - A number of times during the semester, you will be asked to prepare a short essay responding to questions or a prompt related to the readings for that week's module.
  5. **Discussion Forums (15%)**
    - You will participate in 6 discussion forums with smaller groups of members of the class. Please note that 2 of the forums are worth fewer points than the other 4.
  6. **Kidfluencer Paper: Technology/Social Media and Child Labor (15%)**
    1. You will be asked to write an argumentative paper on the current topic of child labor in social media and make connections to arguments made in the past seeking to reform child labor.
  7. **Global Child Labor Presentation (15%)**
    - For this assignment, you will research and prepare a slide presentation and an awareness piece on a child labor issue in an industry outside the United States.
  8. **"Final" Exam (15%)**
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    - Your final assignment will be a short essay discussing one of the contemporary issues youth workers face today. Based on the readings/videos and other materials we have reviewed on the topic, you will provide a context for the issue, describe why youth workers, in particular, are impacted, and make proposals, based on the readings, on how this issue might be resolved.



## Grading Structure

Grading components with points and percentages

| Grading Components              | Number of Points | Percentage towards Final Grade |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Child Labor History Essay       | 100              | 10%                            |
| Kidfluencer Argumentative Essay | 100              | 15%                            |
| Global Child Labor Presentation | 100              | 15%                            |
| Final Exam                      | 100              | 15%                            |
| <b>Discussion Forums:</b>       | 400 Points total | 15%                            |
| Welcome Forum                   | 50               |                                |
| 3 Industries                    | 100              |                                |
| Should Adolescents Work?        | 100              |                                |
| Eliminate Unpaid Internships?   | 100              |                                |
| Global Child Labor Presentation | 50               |                                |
| <b>Reflection Journals:</b>     | 600 points total | 20%                            |

### Grading components with points and percentages

| Grading Components                              | Number of Points        | Percentage towards Final Grade |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Invisible Hands                                 | 100                     |                                |
| Reform - Media Tools and Messaging              | 100                     |                                |
| Why has Agriculture Resisted Reform?            | 100                     |                                |
| Why Can't US Eliminate Problematic Child Labor? | 100                     |                                |
| Job Ads Review                                  | 100                     |                                |
| AI's Impact                                     | 100                     |                                |
| <b>Annotations:</b>                             | 300 total               | 10%                            |
| Hindman Chapter 2, 3, and 10                    | 100 points each chapter |                                |

### Grading Scale

Grading scale with point ranges and letter grades

| Range      | Grade |
|------------|-------|
| 90 - 100   | A     |
| 85- 89.99  | B+    |
| 80 - 84.99 | B     |
| 75 - 79.99 | C+    |
| 70 - 74.99 | C     |
| 60-69.99   | D     |
| <59/99     | F     |

## **Rutgers Support Resources for Your Well-Being**

### **Rutgers Student Health Services:**

- Rutgers Student Affairs is dedicated to health for the whole student body, mind and spirit. It accomplishes this through a staff of qualified clinicians and support staff. [Health, Counseling, and Wellness services](#) are available at several locations throughout Rutgers University.

### **Academic Services:**

- For academic support including tutoring, visit the [Rutgers - New Brunswick Learning Centers](#).
- For coaching help with writing skills and assignments visit the [Rutgers - New Brunswick Writing Tutors in the Learning Center](#).
- Many library resources are available online. Assistance is available through phone, email, and chat. For information, check the [Rutgers Libraries website](#).

### **Veteran Services:**

- - Rutgers is proud to support veterans. If you are a veteran of the armed forces, please visit the [Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services website](#) for more information.

## **Course Communication & Conduct Expectations**

To help create a positive and inclusive learning environment, all students are expected to engage in the course with professionalism, respect, and courtesy. We value diverse perspectives and encourage thoughtful, constructive contributions to our shared learning experience.

Please keep the following in mind:

- Use respectful and inclusive language in all communications, including discussion posts, messages to classmates, and emails to the instructor.
- Avoid posting any content (e.g., videos, images, or links) that is unrelated to the course or could make others feel uncomfortable or excluded.
- Harassment, offensive language, or any behavior that disrupts a supportive learning environment will not be accepted.

When participating in discussions or other collaborative activities, please refer to the [Discussion Post Guidelines](#) to help guide your tone and contributions.

Let's work together to make this an engaging and respectful space for everyone.

## Academic Integrity

Be sure to review and abide by the [Rutgers Academic Integrity policy](#)

You should sign the Academic Integrity acknowledgement provided in Module 1.

There are serious consequences, including expulsion, for cheating and taking someone credit for someone else's work without attribution, **this includes, using text written by a generation system as one's own** (e.g., entering a prompt into an artificial intelligence tool and using the output in a paper), using the internet to answer questions on exams or on papers, when advised to use only class materials.. The university has clear, strict policies on these matters. They include signing in for another student. I will report all violations. If you have not done so already, please familiarize yourself with the university's academic integrity policy by visiting <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home-2/academic-integrity-policy/> The instructions are brief and straightforward. If you have any questions, please see me.

**NOTE:** Unless you are told otherwise, ***you always must provide a citation to a source when you utilized information or ideas from that source*** – even when it is not a direct quote. This is a requirement in ALL written assignments (including forums). This is true for every assignment you submit at Rutgers even if a professor does not specifically direct you to provide citations (no matter the format). If citations are not provided when you utilize ideas or writing from another person (even if you take from your own previous work from another class or from a fellow student), this is considered plagiarism and a violation of Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy.

**“Turn-It-In” will be used in this class to ensure Academic Integrity and make the grading of written material fair to everyone. “Turn-It-In” and other AI detection software will be used to detect use of AI bots as well as whether you copied material not just from academic sources, but also your own and others’ prior papers submitted to Rutgers or other institutions.**

## TurnItIn Statement

Students (You) agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to **Turnitin.com** (via Canvas Assignments Portal) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the [Usage Policy \(Links to an external site.\)](#) posted on the Turnitin.com site.

If you do not agree please contact me immediately.

## Staying on Track

Online learning requires a high level of discipline, dedication, and time management skills. While online learning offers you flexibility and convenience to learn from anywhere, anytime, ***you are still expected to adhere to the all due dates.***

To help you stay on track:

- Have access to a reliable computer, and access to the Internet
- Log in to Canvas for your course ***on a daily basis***
- Check for any announcements, update to the syllabus, assignments, and/or discussions and respond accordingly
- Actively participate in the Discussion Forum
- Complete the assigned readings and/or media
- Complete the assigned exercises and projects
- Adhere to all due dates

### **In case of computer failure**

Make sure you have an alternative plan of access to your Canvas course in case your computer stops working, is lost, etc. Additionally, back up your important documents and assignments on a flash drive, somewhere on the cloud, or another external device.