



People, Work, and Organizations

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Fall 2025

Instructor: Dr. Laura Sosa

To Interact: Send a message via
Canvas Inbox messaging tool

Zoom Office Hours:

Monday 8-9AM

Tuesday 7-8PM

Or by appointment

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/my/las71?pwd=WVBnTm1DY0xEb1NFYVVQS1pHNEFFQT09>

This course is taught 100% online using Canvas.

Learning Objectives

Rutgers Core: SCL

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.

School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation. (Goal IV)
- Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions. (Goal V)
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)
- Demonstrate an ability to interact with and influence others in a professional

Get Help

Need Assistance with a technical question?

It is the student's responsibility to be able to perform technically in the course. Contact helpdesk staff if you need assistance using the **Canvas**. Your instructor cannot assist you with technical issues – but the helpdesk staff can!

Helpdesk: Rutgers Office of Information and Technology

Email: <https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support>

Call: 833-OIT-HELP

Student resources

If you are in need of help in the areas of (a) mental health, (b) academic coaching, and (c) financial assistance: <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/about-smlr/fall-2022-information-smlr-students>

SMLR Scholarships

<https://smlr.rutgers.edu/academic-programs/scholarships>

manner, and to effectively present ideas and recommendations. (Goal VII)

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization. (Goal 1).
- Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments. (Goal 2).

Course Description

This class will look at the key issues in the management of people, primarily in for-profit corporations in the United States. It will not teach detailed management techniques and methods. Instead, we will discuss theoretical concepts that will help us understand and analyze real world challenges in the changing workplace.

Key questions and themes include:

- What is work, what is a workplace and what is an organization?
- Why should organizations put people first for success and sustainability?
- How and why are organizations changing? What does the future of work look like given changes in technology, such as AI?
- What are the incentives in the workplace for workers and managers?
- What are the effects of new forms of work organization such as temping, freelancing and outsourcing on workers and organizations?
- What is the effect of virtual and multinational teams in the workplace?

Course Requirements

Readings and Other Resources

There are no required books for this course. Readings will be posted on Canvas. The schedule below includes the core material. *However, additional readings/videos may be added throughout the term in the Canvas weekly module.* Students are encouraged to share relevant news articles with their peers as part of the Course Conversations. The *Wall Street Journal*, *NY Times*, *Bloomberg*, and *The Economist* are excellent sources to begin a daily practice of keeping up on issues related to the management of people. These are also excellent sources for the midterm project which connects a company to our course material throughout the first seven weeks.

Assessment of Learning

<i>Midterm Project - Corporate Study - Recorded Presentation</i>	15 points	Study will address questions related to Topics from Weeks 2 – 7.
<i>Connecting to the Topics</i>		
Individual Assignments	14 points	2 @ 7 points each
LinkedIn Learning	14 points	2 @ 7 points each
Small Team Assignment	7 points	1 @ 7 points
<i>Course Conversations (Discussion Forums on Topics)</i>	15 points	5 @ 2 points each 1 @ 1 point (Introduction) 1 @ 4 points (Hofstede Data)
<i>Final Interview Project</i>		
<i>Part 1 - Interviews, Written Analysis</i>	25 points	Total Points = 35
<i>Part 2 - Small Team Recorded Discussion</i>	10 points	
TOTAL	100 points	

Midterm and Final Projects

- The midterm project will be a corporate study focusing on the topics of CSR, corporate culture, organization, unionization, and people strategy. Students will read about their company throughout the first 7 weeks, connect it to the material, and then present their findings through a recorded slide presentation using a 5x5 format for each slide (five words/5 bullets). Citations from our course material are required for each bullet.

The final “interview” project serves as a form of a cumulative final exam as interview questions encompass all course topics. Students will interview a manager in the workforce with at least twenty years of experience. Following the interview, students will analyze/synthesize their responses relative to the course material.

- t h e After the written analysis is turned in, small teams will conduct a recorded roundtable discussion on the collective interviews.

Connecting to the Topics

- Individual assignments - 4 @ 7 points = 28 points
 - Possible assignments are:
Essay, recorded
slide presentation,
Mixed Media, or
case study.
 - Two LinkedIn
Learning courses
will be assigned this
semester as an
assignment.
 - For written
assignments, use 12
point font, double
spaced; Times New
Roman
 - Pay attention to
grammar/paragraph
structure
 - Course readings and other material should ALWAYS be referenced in the
assignments with citations and a reference page included. See AI statement
below.
- One Small Team assignment worth 7 points
 - Students will be assigned to a team of 3-4 students early in the semester. The
group will have a designated Discussion Board for communication.
 - The first task is for the team to develop a working contract. **Although no
points are associated with the contract, the team must submit a
thoughtful document (guide provided) in order to be eligible to receive
credit for the first small team assignment.**
 - Team projects should be collaborative – work should be evenly distributed;
grades are determined by the contract agreed upon by the team.
 - ***To emulate a professional organizational setting, recorded team
assignments should have all team members ON CAMERA unless special
permission is granted by Prof. Sosa in advance of the course.***
 - Course readings and other material should be referenced in projects.
Always include citations and a reference page. See AI statement below.
 - Proper grammar is expected and will be considered in grading.
 - Prof. Sosa is happy to join team Zoom meetings at the request of the team.
 - This small team assignment is intended for students to become familiar
with working together in anticipation of the final project's roundtable
discussion. i.e. the same teams will be in place for both assignments.

Course Conversations (Begin on Tuesday and end on the following Monday)

- Five @ 2 points = 10 points; 1 @ 1 point (Intro); 1@ 4 points (Hofstede)
 - 150-200 words each
 - Due date is for the initial posting on Friday. Reply to a peer by Monday.
 - The intent of these conversations is to mirror a discussion in a physical classroom and to hear varying perspectives from your peers.
 - Located in Discussion Forums
 - Discussions are post first - students must make an original comment before viewing the content of other discussion group comments.
 - All postings should be Times Roman, 12 point font.
 - See Guidelines and Rubric in Canvas
 - Grammar counts – you are not conversing in a text message.
 - Use our **course material** as the primary source for your posting. Use an in-text citation (e.g. Ariely, 2012) within your posting to acknowledge the source of your ideas. You DO NOT need to include a full reference unless you bring in external material as a compliment to the course material. Keep in mind that external material should NOT be the single source that you use in your posting. In addition, be careful with the validity of the source. Use only academic sources. *****An initial posting that does not integrate any of the course material for the week, but relies solely on outside sources, will not earn points.***
 - ***Timeliness is important*** - a good discussion entails keeping the dialogue going (throughout the given week) with your classmates. In order to facilitate the dialogue, it is critical you adhere to the conversation post due dates below so you have sufficient time to respond to each other's posts. Please **do not wait until the last day** to post your responses. Due dates are as follows:
 - **By Friday of the week (this is the due date indicated in Canvas)**, post your initial response to the question(s).
 - **By Monday of the week**, read, and respond to one (or more) of your classmates' posts.
 - It is highly encouraged to return to the Course Conversation after your initial post and read responses given to you by other students. Continue the dialogue throughout the week. Be sure to adhere to the Guidelines (in Course Essentials).
- **Because it is unfair to your peers if you do not post your initial response by Friday, one point will be deducted from the total Discussion grade for every day that the initial post is late (assuming the post meets all requirements). e.g. If you post your initial post on Monday and then also reply on Monday, you will not earn any points.
- Note that Prof. Sosa will monitor the conversations and often comment or bring up other considerations. Be sure to read those comments and respond if appropriate. The purpose of my monitoring is to clarify and reinforce key points.

“Final” Project

- Worth 35 points in total
- Part I = 25 points - This is your opportunity to demonstrate a connection between research and practice. Each student will conduct an interview with one manager or professional who has been working at least twenty years. Interviewees should be in a professional or management position or else they may not be able to relate to the questions. Interview questions will be provided. After collecting interview data, the students will explore and synthesize the interviewee’s answers relative to the course material in a written paper. Details provided on Canvas.
- Part II = 10 points - The small team from the previous team assignment will meet again and read other teammates papers. The team will then have a (recorded) discussion about common themes, surprises, and connections to the course material.

Course Policies

Communication

Messages Sent to My Canvas Inbox

Unless students receive advance notification, I will check my Canvas Inbox by 6 pm EST on weekdays (M-F). If a student sends a comment or question, I will address the contents of the message within 24 hours. I will certainly try to respond immediately but messages sent after Friday at 6PM or on the weekends may not be returned until Monday morning. Please do not email me directly through Rutgers email – use Canvas.

Office Hours – The link for my Zoom office hours listed above is also embedded in the course. I am also happy to meet with you at a pre-arranged time.

Messages Sent to Student Canvas Inbox

It is the responsibility of the student to regularly check for incoming course messages. Messages are always sent through the Canvas messaging system. Students will receive a notification when a new message has been sent to his/her Canvas inbox. Forgetting or being unable to check for messages in one’s Canvas inbox is not an excuse.

Weekly Announcements

A weekly message will be uploaded into the announcements area of the course Tuesday mornings. Reviewing the weekly message is a required activity. Weekly messages present timely information on course activities/assignments and content.

Late Submission Policy – No late assignments are accepted without **prior** approval of Prof. Sosa.

Things happen. When you don't have to attend a class session in person, it's easy to let a situation in your personal or professional life get in the way of online course work. In addition, remember the first rule in computer use: the computer or Internet connection will act up at the most critical time. Because "things happen" it's a best practice not to wait until the last minute to submit a Forum comment or upload a writing assignment.

Contact the Canvas 24/7 toll free helpdesk if you experience any technical problems that prohibit you from completing an assignment. **Technical problems are not a valid excuse for missing a due date.** Contact information is located on the front page of the syllabus and in various locations in the course. (Course Homepage, Course Tools page.)

If you are having personal difficulty during the semester which will impede your ability to turn in work over a long period of time, please reach out to the Dean of Students Office for guidance.

Grading Policy

Each assignment is worth a certain number of points as identified in the assignments section of the syllabus. Highest number of points a student can earn is 100. Points accumulate to determine final grade. ***Decimal points will not be rounded.*** For example, your final grade is B+ if you earn 89.99. It is your responsibility to monitor your grade and take steps to improve it. The grading scale is as follows:

A	= 100 – 90
B+	= 89.99 – 85
B	= 84.99 – 80
C+	= 79.99 – 75
C	= 74.99 – 70
D	= 66.99 – 60
F	= 59.99 – 0

Students with Disabilities

To receive consideration for an accommodation, students with a disability must send their letter of accommodation to their instructors and discuss the needed accommodation(s) as early in the semester as possible. For more information regarding the process of applying for a letter of accommodation:

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

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>

Academic Integrity

Conduct yourself in accordance with the Rutgers University Academic Integrity policy. <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at->

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in submissions

Unless specified in the assignment, representing AI generated work as your own is considered plagiarism and a violation of academic integrity policy at Rutgers University. Upon suspicion, the assignment will not be graded, and the possible violation will be reported through the university's Academic Integrity process.

Grammar and Citing Work

Grammar counts in written work. Submitting poorly written assignments will result in a lowered grade. All work must include accurate in text citations and a reference page (except Course Conversations) or will receive a zero. If AI is allowed in an assignment, you must also include a citation in APA or MLA format (e.g. for Chat GPT). If you are unfamiliar as to how to cite references and produce a reference page, be sure to contact a Rutgers librarian.

Schedule by Week (Weeks begin on a Tuesday and end on the following Monday)

****Note that additional material may be added during the semester. Always check the folder at the start of the week.**

Week 1: Introduction

- Go over the syllabus and familiarize yourself with the course requirements.
 - Take some time to learn basic functions on Canvas. Make sure if you have any Canvas related issues you resolve them prior to the beginning of Week 2.
- Watch the instructional videos about the use of Canvas.

Assignments

- Course Conversation #1: Meet your learning community - Introduce yourself and answer the icebreaker questions by Friday. Reply to a peer's response by Monday.

Week 2: What is a “people” strategy?

Readings

- Lecture slides
- Pfeffer & Veiga.(1999) Putting people first for organizational success. Academy of Management Executive, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 37-48.
- Ton, Zeynep. (2012). Why “Good Jobs” Are Good 4 Retailers. Harvard Business Review, January-February, 2012, 124-131.
- Cappelli, Peter. (2020). “Stop Overengineering People Management.” Harvard Business Review, September to October, 2020, pp. 56-63.

Videos

- Ton, Zeynep. 2013. The Good Jobs Strategy. TED.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD67LKqXGrg>

Assignment:

Begin to think about the company which you will use for the midterm project. Part of the project will focus on People Strategy.

AND

Course conversation #2**Week 3: What is work?****Readings**

- Lecture Slides
- Budd, J. (2011). The Thought of Work. Cornell University Press. Pp. 19-42.
- Joe Moran. "Out of office: has the homeworking revolution finally arrived?" The Guardian, July 11, 2020.
- Cutter and Bindley. "Enough Bosses Say: This Fall, It Really is Time to Get Back to the Office". Wall Street Journal. September 3, 2022.

Assignments

- Individual Assignment #1

Week 4: Why do people work?**Readings**

- Lecture slides
- Jeffrey, P. (1998). Six Dangerous Myths about Pay. Harvard Business Review
- Ledford Jr, G. E., Fang, M., & Gerhart, B. (2013). Negative effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation: more smoke than fire. World at Work Quarterly.

Videos

- Ariely, D., (2012), What makes us feel good about our work?, TED
https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_what_makes_us_feel_good_about_our_work
- Pink, D. (2009). The Puzzle of Motivation., TED
https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation

Assignments

- Course Conversation #3 – Monetary Incentives in Pro Football
- Small teams are created and work on the "Team Contract".
- LinkedIn Learning Assignment #1: complete *Daniel Pink on Motivation* through RU LinkedIn Account.
Upload certificate to Canvas and connect to your LinkedIn Account.

Week 5: What is an organization?**Reading**

- Lecture Slides
- Nohria, Nitin "Note on Organizational Structure."
- Sorensen, J. "Note on Organizational Culture"

Videos

- Seth Godin 2014. This is broken.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZiDS-4Xd2k>
- Org. Culture - Why Zappos Pays New Employees to Quit
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RrxnRRaR7M>

Assignments

- Connecting to the Topic: Individual Assignment # 2

Week 6: The Unionized Workplace

Readings

- Lecture Slides
- Sherk, J., (2014), The Argument that Most Workers are Better off without Unions, Washington Post
- Pfeffer, J., (2007), In Praise of Organized Labor: What Unions Really Do.

Videos

- Labor Unions: History of Unions & Collective Bargaining <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yZFcskizd4>
- Milton Friedman – The Real World Effects of Unions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xzYgiOC9cj4>

Assignments

- Connecting to the Topic – Small Team Assignment #1

Week 7: Corporate Social Responsibility

Readings

- Lecture Slides
- Friedman, M. 1970. The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits. New York Times Magazine 32, no. 13: 122-126.
- Evan, William M., and R. Edward Freeman. "A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation: Kantian Capitalism." In Contemporary Issues in Business Ethics. 5th ed. Edited by Joseph R. DesJardins and John J. McCall. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005, pp. 76-84.
- Bonini, S. M. J., L. T. Mendonca, and J. M. Oppenheim. 2006. When Social Issues Become Strategic. McKinsey Quarterly.
- World Economic Forum (2022). The Good Work Framework: A New Business Agenda for the Future of Work

Videos

- What is a corporation?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMNZXV7jOG0> (watch 11:00-17:00)
- Porter, M. (2013). The Case for Letting Business Solve Social Problems.
https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_porter_why_business_can_be_good_at_solving_social_problems

- Milton Friedman on Self-Interest and the Profit Motive
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPqdRqacpFk&index=3&list=PLEDBC45346CFEE362>
- IBM Study
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdkYieDuVvY>

Overview of CSR

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/search?keywords=Corporate%20Social%20Responsibility&u=76115650>

Assignments

- Midterm Project Released (based upon company research)
- Confirm interviewee for final project and set interview date

Week 8: Mid-Term - Prepare Presentations

Week 9: Resource Decisions (Restructuring, Outsourcing, Offshoring)

Readings

- Lecture slides
- Victor, R. H., Rivkin, J. W., & Seminerio, J. (2008). The Offshoring of America. Harvard Business Review.
- Doig, S. J., Ritter, R. C., Speckhals, K., and Woolson, D. (2001). Has Outsourcing Gone Too Far? The McKinsey Quarterly.
- Girod, S., and Karim, S. (2017). Restructuring or Reconfiguration? Harvard Business Review.

Videos

- **Planet Money Makes a T-Shirt
<https://apps.npr.org/tshirt/#/title>
- Apple Chinese Factory
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cRBBRwBKIE&t=704s>

Assignments

Course Conversation #4: Watch Planet Money Makes a T-Shirt. Ethics of outsourcing

Week 10: The Gig Economy

Readings

- Lecture slides
- Hyken, S. (2018), The Gig Economy Opens the Door for Employment Opportunities, Forbes
- Heller, N. (2017), Is the Gig Economy Working?, New Yorker
- Editorial Board, (2017), The Gig Economy's False Promise, New York Times

Videos

- Here's How the Gig Economy Could Work, CNBC
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V4jTJkOFEE>
- Uber Drivers: Are They Employees or Contractors?, Bloomberg <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umQQ-9c5XLU>
- Not Uber, Not TaskRabbit: Inside The Real Gig Economy, NBC news
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGCG6JTCK0c>
- Americans Future Job Market
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OVpafuJIYI&t=6s>
- Labor's Response: Freelancers Union
<http://vimeo.com/17438543>
- Labor's Response: Worker Centers
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3sqZXtoeI0w>

Assignments:

Course Conversation #5

Week 11: Cross Cultural Communication Within Organizations

• Readings/Websites

Erin Mayer (Interview with Adam Grant) <https://www.ted.com/pages/decoding-cross-cultural-communication-with-erin-mayer-transcript>Links to an external site.

- Implicit Bias - <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>Links to an external site.
- Hofstede Cultural Factor <https://www.theculturefactor.com/country-comparison-tool>Links to an external site.

• Videos

Blind Spots - <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/about-us/blind-spots.html>

Assignments:

LinkedIn Learning #2 - <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/communicating-across-cultures-2023/enhancing-cultural-acuity?autoSkip=true&resume=false&u=76115650>Links to an external site.

Course Conversation #6 –Dimensions of National Culture

Week 12: Skills and Jobs in the “New” Economy

Readings

- Lecture slides
- Kochan, Thomas, David Finegold, and Paul Osterman. (2012). “Who Can Fix the ‘Middle-Skills’ Gap?” Harvard Business Review, 2012 (December), 1-10.
- Weise, Michelle R. (2020). “Research: How Workers Shift from One Industry to Another.” Harvard Business Review, July 07, 2020.
- Work with the interactive map and related materials developed by NPR Planet Money to learn about the trajectory of the most common jobs in the U.S., over time and state by state.
<https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2015/02/05/382664837/map-the-most-common-job-in-every-state>

Videos

- Why Job Seekers Don't Land Jobs
<https://www.wsj.com/video/why-job-seekers-dont-land-jobs/7951AB32-2509-473A-AB14-09B09E6CBDC0.html>

Assignments:

Individual Assignment #3 Conduct Interviews

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13: Future of Work

Readings

- World Economic Forum (2022), Jobs of Tomorrow: The Triple Returns of Social Jobs in the Economic Recovery
- Manyika, J., (2017), Technology, Jobs, and the Future of Work, McKinsey
- Cowgill, B., Seamans, R., Ziv, O., The Future of Work, Kauffman Foundation
- Hyman, L., (2018), It's Not Technology That's Disrupting Our Jobs, New York Times
- Eliana Crosina and Beth Schinoff. (2020). “Technology in the Pandemic: Recreate the Office or Repurpose It?”. MIT Sloan Management Review, July 16, 2020.
- Work with the interactive map and related materials developed by McKinsey to learn about the potential impact of automation on work, sector by sector
<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/mckinsey.analytics/viz/AutomationBySector/WhereMachinesCanReplaceHumans>

Videos

- Susskind, D., (2017), 3 myths about the future of work, TED
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2j00U6IUC-c>
- March of the Machines

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeyn9zzrC84>

- 15 Jobs That Will Disappear In The Next 20 Years Due To AI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r211u89eUaY>

- LinkedIn Learning: <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/leading-talent-development-in-the-era-of-ai/key-challenges-for-organizations-in-the-ai-age-25129314?u=76115650>

You will need this information for your interviews. While this is not a LinkedIn assignment, I suggest watching all of the videos and adding it to your LinkedIn profile.

Assignments

- Course Conversation #7
- Write Paper/Share with your teammates

Week 14:

- **Record session of the team discussing the interviews and identifying themes.**