

EMPLOYMENT LAW
(Thursday Class)
Fall 2025

Prof. James M. Cooney, Esq.
Rutgers University, Labor Studies & Employment Relations Department, SMLR
Course #37:575:315:01 (3 Credits)
Class Meets: Thursdays, 8:30 AM–11:30 AM (U.S. Eastern Time)
Class Location: Beck Hall, Room 253 (Livingston Campus)
Contact Info: Canvas messaging system preferred or you can send email to:
jacooney@rutgers.edu
Campus Phone: 848-932-8560
Virtual (or Actual) Office Hours: By appointment

(Please note that this is an abbreviated version of the course syllabus. More detailed information can be found on the Canvas course site.)

Course Description: Overview of employment-at-will and its limitations; wages & hours; medical/family leave; privacy; drug testing; workers' compensation; and fundamental anti-discrimination law.

Grading Criteria:*

- (1) Personal Introduction (5%)
 - (2) Academic Integrity Quiz (5%)
 - (3) Mid-term Exam (45%)
 - (4) Final Exam (45%)
- (*Credit is also earned for in-class contributions)

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class on a timely and regular basis. Please note that excessive unexcused absences will lower your grade. Unexcused absences in excess of 3 classes may result in a failing grade. Students arriving to class late or departing early must sign-in/out with the TA and will receive partial credit for attending that class.

Course Materials: Course reading materials are found on Canvas. The Instructor reserves the right to supplement, substitute, and/or modify the listed reading selections.

Use of “AI” Strictly Prohibited: The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc., is not permitted at any stage of the writing process during exams or on any assignment. **GPTZero or similar tools will be used to detect student use of AI.**

No Individual “Extra Credit:”

I do not offer extra credit to individual students upon their request, since this is unfair to other students who do not receive the same opportunity. However, I sometimes may offer extra credit to the class as a whole, since that is fair to all students.

Academic Integrity: The conduct of all students is governed by the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy. Students will take a graded quiz to demonstrate their knowledge of the policy and the course syllabus.

Recording: Students are not permitted to videotape or otherwise record any lecture or course activity, absent prior express consent and authorization by the Instructor.

Disability 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 they are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide supporting documentation. *See the Canvas course site for further details and to view other applicable policies.*

Learning Objectives: At the end of the course, the student is able to:

Labor Studies & Employment Relations Department:

-Apply employment relations legal concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2)

School of Management & Labor Relations:

-Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)

Additional Course Objective(s) from the Instructor:

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of employment-at-will and the various exceptions.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of the policies underlying common-law, constitutional, and statutory employment law principles.
- Demonstrate ability to comprehend court decisions on employment law issues.
- Apply employment law concepts to a given fact pattern.

COURSE TOPICS & CLASS SCHEDULE:

- SEPT. 4: Course Overview
Post Your Personal Introduction (**due by Sept. 10th**)
Take Academic Integrity Quiz (**due by Sept. 10th**)

READINGS:

Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy
Course Syllabus
Become familiar with Canvas course site

- SEPT. 11: Federal & State Court Systems
Anatomy of an Employment Lawsuit
Remedies

READINGS:

"Understanding the Federal Courts"
"Remedies for Employment Discrimination"

- SEPT. 18: Employment at Will & Exceptions

READINGS:

Pierce v. Ortho Pharmaceutical
Woolley v. Hoffman-LaRoche

- SEPT. 25: Title VII; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Proving Discrimination
Race & Color Discrimination

READINGS:

McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green
Griggs v. Duke Power

- OCT. 2: Constitutional Issues

READINGS:

Pickering v. Board of Education
City of Ontario v. Quon

- OCT. 9*: Sex Discrimination
***IMPORTANT: This class only will be conducted on an asynchronous basis. There will be no live in-person class.**

READING

Bostock v. Clayton County

OCT. 16: MID-TERM EXAMINATION

NO READINGS

OCT. 23: Sexual Harassment
Movie: "North Country"

READINGS

"Sexual Harassment" (EEOC website)
Lehmann v. Toys 'R' Us, Inc.

OCT. 30: Family & Medical Leave

READINGS:

Gerety v. Hilton Casino Resort
Cruz v. Publix Super Markets, Inc.

NOV. 6: Polygraphs
Disability Discrimination

READINGS:

Polkey v. Transtecs Corp.
Karraker v. Rent Center Inc.

NOV. 13: Non-Compete & Confidentiality Agreements
Drug Testing

READINGS:

Nike, Inc. v. McCarthy
Treasury Employees v. Von Raab

NOV. 20: Whistleblower Protection
Employment-related Torts

READINGS:

Abbamont v. Piscataway Twp.
Taylor v. Metzger

NOV. 25: To Be Determined
(TUESDAY)

DEC. 4: FINAL EXAM (not cumulative)

(Dated: 08/15/2025)