



RUTGERS

School of Management & Labor Relations

**History of Labor and Work in the United States, 1880 to 1945. 37:575:202:96.
Fall 2026, Remote Synchronous**

Course Schedule and Delivery Format

The course delivery format is ***remote synchronous***; meaning that the learning activities take place virtually, in real-time (live class sessions), through Zoom.

We will be utilizing this Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) to access learning materials, announcements, submit writing assignments and exams, communicate via the Inbox feature, attend live sessions through Zoom. Be sure to check this site frequently as there will be announcements and instructions.

Be sure to review all the components of this course Syllabus below. Click on the Syllabus Navigation floating panel to jump from section to section. Review the Canvas Tutorials and How to Access Zoom sections of this Syllabus page if you are new to Canvas and Zoom and/or need a refresher.

Class Meets

- Class meets on **Saturdays, from 5:40 PM to 8:40 PM** (Eastern Standard Time). The live class sessions are conducted through Zoom. The course runs **from September 5 to December 5, 2026**.

Virtual Office Hour

- The Virtual Office Hour will be conducted through Zoom or via phone call upon request.

Instructor Information

Prof. Kenneth C. Wolensky. Ed.D
Email: kw753@smlr.rutgers.edu
Phone: 717-526-8911 (cell)

Office location: Remote

Virtual Office hours: By Appointment

Throughout the semester, I will communicate with you via either [Canvas Announcements](#) or your Rutgers email account. Please review the following link for [Accessing Rutgers Email](#).

Course Description

This course introduces the important development and themes in the U.S. labor movement from 1880 through World War II. We will take a close look at how American workers built labor unions, civil rights organizations, and social movements to defend their interests often in conflict with those who controlled wealth and capital. By focusing on these struggles, we will learn about some of the people, ideas, and institutions that shaped society, the labor movement, the workplace and the economy in political, social, and cultural terms.

Skills Development

This course meets the writing distribution requirement for the School of Arts and Sciences. In addition to developing writing skills through writing papers and exams students will learn to provide constructive feedback to their instructor. At the conclusion of the course, students will demonstrate an increase in their knowledge and skills in writing. Specifically, students should be able to:

- Enter into a dialogue with their instructor.
- Write 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, and
- Write meaningful, clear, and organized papers.

Learning Objectives

This course covers several School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), School of Management and Labor Relations (SMLR), and Labor Studies and Employment Relations (LSER) Department learning objectives.

School of Arts and Sciences:

Students will learn to:

- HST-1: Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time.
- SCL-1: Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- WCR: Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback.

- WCD: Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

School of Management and Labor Relations:

Students will learn to:

I: Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry-level professional.

IV: Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

Students will learn to:

1: Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations.

4: Make an argument using contemporary or historical evidence.

Accommodation Request

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](#).

Textbook & Reading Materials

Required Materials:

- Rosenzweig, Roy and Nelson Lichtenstein, eds. *Who Built America?: Working People and the Nation's History Volume Two: Since 1877*, Third Edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin Press, 2008.

Additional Course Resources:

In addition to the textbook, there are other required readings and videos that will be assigned. Most videos that will be viewed in-class. Additional reading assignments will be posted as PDF

files, Word documents, video files, or web links within the weekly modules on the course Canvas site. Some of the additional readings are primary source documents written in the past that provide perspectives and insight on historical developments and events. Other additional readings are secondary source commentaries and historical analyses written after the events have taken place.

Canvas Tutorials & Technical Support

If you are new to Canvas or need a refresher tutorial, visit:

- Visit the [Getting Started in Canvas page](#)
- Visit the [Canvas Video Guide](#)
- Contact [Rutgers IT Help Desk https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support](https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support) (call 833-OIT-HELP)

(Links to an external site.)

Computer and Other Technology Requirements

- Access to the internet
- Reliable computer
- Headphones/Headsets - highly 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](#)

How to Access Zoom

Our class session will be conducted through Zoom. If you have not activated your Rutgers Zoom account, follow the steps below:

- Follow instructions on [Creating Rutgers ZOOM Account \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Note: be sure to read what to do if you have an existing personal ZOOM account that uses your Rutgers email.
- 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.
- 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.

Course Topics & Schedules

- [Week 1 \(September 5\): Course Introduction, Historical Background, and Knowledge Check](#)
- [Week 2 \(September 12\): Republicanism, Producerism, and The Knights of Labor and Knowledge Check](#)
- [Week 3 \(September 19\): Industrial Capitalism and Conflict in the Gilded Age and Knowledge Check](#)
- [Week 4 \(September 26\): The IWW, the UMWA and Mother Jones](#)
- [Week 5 \(October 3\): Race, Immigration, Exclusion and Knowledge Check. Paper 1 Final Due](#)
- [Week 6: \(October 10\): Writing Conferences \(optional\)](#)
- [Week 7 \(October 17\): The Uprising of the 20,000 and the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. Start Mid-Term Exam](#)
- [Week 8 \(October 24\): World War I and The Red Scare. Mid Term Exam Due](#)
- [Week 9 \(October 31\): Work in the Roaring Twenties and Knowledge Check](#)
- [Week 10 \(November 7\): The Great Depression and the First New Deal. Knowledge Check](#)
- [Week 11 \(November 14\): The Rise of the CIO and the Second New Deal; Paper 2 Draft](#)
- [Week 12 \(November 21\): Working in the Arsenal of Democracy. Knowledge Check. Paper 2 Final Due.](#)
- [Week 13 \(December 5\): City of Steel, The Great Disney Revolt, Final Exam Review](#)

Course Requirements

1. **Read the entire syllabus** and make sure you understand it. This is your contract with your instructor.
2. **Be prepared for class.** Always complete any reading, discussion, and writing assignments by their due dates. Read the assigned *Who Built America* chapter prior to attending class. Read the supplemental readings (if applicable) prior to attending class. Check your email regularly for class announcements.
3. **Participation.** For this course weeks we will have synchronous (live) class meetings on Zoom. It is expected that you will participate in class by asking questions and/or offering your perspectives. If you have a legitimate reason for not being able to participate in course activities (due to COVID-19, serious illness, or another major reason), report it in writing in advance or as soon as possible by informing the instructor via email. Not all absences will be excused. The participation grade will be based on the completion of

seven "Knowledge Check(s)" based on assigned readings and videos throughout the semester, but points will be deducted (25) for unexcused absences from class meetings.

4. **Absences due to illness.** Please report absences in writing in advance or as soon as possible by emailing the instructor and using the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>. Medical documentation is not required for reporting absences. Students with excused absences will be able to make up missed course work.
5. **Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity requires that all academic work be the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and permitted by the assignment. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the university community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses. Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of this course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit. For more information on the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>
6. **Copyright:** The instructor for this course holds the copyright to the course teaching materials, including lecture slides, discussion questions, exams, and assignments. The copyrights to the readings and films belong to their rights holders (authors, producers, publishers, etc.). Students may not copy or distribute this material without the permission of the instructor. Unauthorized distributions of course materials are serious offenses. For more information on the Rutgers University Copyright Policy, see <http://policies.rutgers.edu/sites/policies/files/50.3.7-current.pdf>
7. **Statement on Academic Freedom:** Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. This course will introduce an array of sometimes-conflicting ideas and interpretations of U.S. history, and all who partake in the course should feel encouraged to express their views in an open, civic forum.
8. **Exams:** All students are expected to take the midterm and final exams. You will submit the exams electronically on Canvas and they will be checked using Turnitin.
9. **Paper Assignments:** All paper drafts and final papers must be completed. You will submit all drafts of your papers electronically on Canvas and they will be checked using Turnitin.
10. **Lateness Policy:** All late paper assignments will be marked down 10 points for every 24-hour period they are late. All paper assignments have point values (see the Grading Structure below). If you have a severe personal emergency that makes it impossible for you to meet the deadlines, please contact your instructor.
11. **Required Readings:** Many of the reading assignments will be chapters from *Who Built America* which has been digitized and are available for you in this course. Thus, there is no need for you to purchase a text or any supplemental readings.

Grading Structure

Assignments are assigned points (up to 1,000 total points for all course assignments)

The table shows the course grading components and their associated number of points

Grading Components	Total # of Points
--------------------	-------------------

7 Knowledge Checks, Attendance, Engagement during live class	200 (Knowledge Checks worth 175 points). 25 points for class attendance.
Papers 1 and 2	400 (200 each) • 50 points for the first draft • 150 points for the final paper
Midterm Exam	200
Final Exam	205

- **Poor or erratic class attendance or missing 2 or more classes without an excused absence throughout the semester will result in a final point reduction of 25 points since class attendance is a criteria listed in the Syllabus under Grading Components.**

Grading Scale

The table shows the grading scale, percentages in the first column, and letter grades in the second column

Points Range	Grade
900 - 1000	A
850 - 899	B+
800 - 849	B
750 - 799	C+
700 - 749	C
600 - 699	D
599 and below	F

- **Students who complete the Student Instructional Rating Survey (SIRS) can earn an additional 5 points on the Final Exam. You need to e-mail the instructor with a simple note that you completed the SIRS by December 10th. Do not reveal any specifics of your responses. All responses are anonymous.**
- **Poor or erratic class attendance, leaving class early or missing 2 or more classes without an excused absence throughout the semester will result in a final point reduction of 25 points since class attendance is a criteria listed in the Syllabus under Grading Structure. The instructor will take roll each week via the Zoom attendance list.**

Rutgers Student Support Resources

Rutgers Student Health Services:

- [Health, Counseling, and Wellness services](#)

Academic Services:

- [Rutgers - New Brunswick Learning Centers](#)
- [Rutgers - New Brunswick Writing Tutors in the Learning Center external site.](#)
- [Rutgers Libraries website](#)
- [University Academic Support](#)
- [Rutgers Student Affairs](#)

Veteran Services:

- [Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services](#)