

This course is taught 100% online using Canvas.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals:

Rutgers Core

- 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 questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

School of Management and Labor Relations Core

- SMLR- IV: Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them, given the background context of a particular work situation.
 - o Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories, and concepts in their field of study.
 - o 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.
 - o Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience of and perspectives on work.
 - o Analyze a contemporary global issue in their field from a multi-disciplinary and intersectional perspective.
 - o Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts.
- SMLR – VI: Application – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance.
 - o Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge to understand contemporary developments related to work.
 - o Understand the legal, regulatory, and ethical issues related to their field.

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Core

- 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 at work.

Course Description

Youth at Work encompasses child labor and labor by young workers. In this course, we will examine definitions, theories, and examples of child labor, as well as efforts to end it. We will also explore trends in the work of young workers, including precarious work, employment in leisure and hospitality (e.g., food and beverage, hotels, entertainment), and efforts by young workers to improve the terms and conditions of their work through collective action. At the conclusion of the semester, we will combine our knowledge and perspectives to develop solutions to current child labor problems while predicting the future of the youth experience in the labor market.

Course Requirements

There are no required books for this course. Readings will be posted on Canvas.

Assignments and Assessments

Research Papers	40 points	Midterm Paper: 20 points Final Paper: 20 points
Short Assignments	28 points	4 @ 7 points each
Forums	32 points	8 @ 4 points each
TOTAL	100 points	

Midterm and Final Papers

Worth 20 points each and 40 points total

Short Assignments

Worth 28 points

Four short assignments, each 7 points

Short Assignment Essays should combine personal reflections with academic sources and evidence to create a more rigorous and insightful piece. It involves critically analyzing experiences, connecting them to relevant theories and research, and using this combination to draw meaningful conclusions and show personal growth. Be sure to cite the readings and videos from the week (you do not need to reference all the readings, but enough to support your thoughts). Throughout the semester, you will write 4 short evidence-based reflection essays, each of which is about 500 words. Specific directions for each paper will be provided.

Forums

Worth 32 points

Forums 1 – 8 – each 4 points

Students are organized into discussion groups of 6 – 10 members.

For Forums open Tuesday; Closes Monday 11:59 pm. **(No late submission will be accepted)** Each week, you are expected to post one original response to the weekly prompt and reply to at least two of your classmates' posts. Your initial post should be 150–250 words and submitted by Thursday at 11:59pm. Replies should be between 75–150 words each and are due by Monday at 11:59 pm.

When writing your posts, use complete sentences and maintain a college-level writing style. Support your points with examples, evidence, or references when appropriate. A strong reply goes beyond agreement; it might ask a follow-up question, offer a new perspective, or respectfully challenge a viewpoint. Avoid short or vague comments like "I agree" without explanation. Posts should be respectful and on-topic. Because the forums are real-time, you cannot complete the late ones.

Course Policies

Message Checking Policies

Messages Sent to Instructor's Canvas Inbox

Unless students receive advance notification, the instructor will check his Canvas Inbox by 18:00 pm ET on regular workdays. (This excludes Weekends and Holidays) If a student sends a comment or question, the instructor will address the message within 24 hours.

Messages Sent to Student Canvas Inbox

It is the student's responsibility 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 is sent to their Canvas inbox. Forgetting or being unable to check for messages in one's Canvas inbox is not an excuse.

Weekly Messages

A weekly message will be posted in the course announcements area on Tuesday mornings. Reviewing the weekly message is required. Weekly Messages present timely information on course activities/assignments and content.

Forum Engagement

All students are responsible for offering 3 comments in forum discussions. When a student does not participate fully or at all by 11:59 pm on the day the commenting period closes, points cannot be made up.

Late Submission Policy – Short Assignments

Assignments can be submitted up to 11:59 pm on the stated due date without penalty. Late assignments will be accepted. But your grade for a late assignment will be lowered by 20% for each day past its due date.

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 take the quizzes, submit a Forum comment, or upload a Portfolio or 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.)

Grading

Each assignment is worth a specific number of points, as listed in the assignments section of the syllabus. The highest number of points a student can earn is 100. Points accumulate to determine the 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.

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-rutgers/>

Use of "AI" in this course

AI tools can be a powerful resource for learning, especially when used thoughtfully. In this course, you are welcome to use AI to help you:

- Brainstorm ideas and topics
- Create outlines or mind maps
- Explore different ways of approaching a question or problem
- Generate study questions or summaries of concepts

However, the actual writing you submit—whether it's a paper, discussion post, or other written assignment—must be your own original work. Think of AI as your brainstorming partner, not your ghostwriter. If you use AI at any stage, be sure to:

- Indicate which AI tool(s) you used
- Briefly explain how you used it (e.g., “used ChatGPT to generate a list of potential subtopics, then created my own outline”)
- Revise and adapt any AI-assisted material into your own words and ideas

By using AI in this way, you can take advantage of its strengths—speed, variety of ideas, and fresh perspectives—while still developing your own voice, critical thinking, and writing skills.

Example of Proper AI Use Disclosure

For this assignment, I used ChatGPT to generate a list of potential subtopics for my paper on work and life. I selected three that I found most relevant, revised them, and created my own outline. All writing, analysis, and examples in the final paper are my own.

Schedule by Week

Week 1 Introduction (Sept.1-Sept.7)

- Go over the syllabus and familiarize yourself with the course requirements.
- Take some time to learn basic functions on Canvas. Make sure to resolve any Canvas-related issues for your convenience and the instructor's. Watch the instructional videos about the use of Canvas.

Assignments

- Forum 1: Introduce yourself in a few sentences and share your First experience with labor as a youth. How old were you? What was it like?

Week 2 What is Child Labor? (Sept.8-Sept.14)

Readings

- Hindman, Hugh. 2002. Child Labor: An American History. Chapter 1.

Videos

- U.S. Child Labor, 1908-1920
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pw1PovXvvhg>
- Child Labor in the Industrial Revolution
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2M9i1Wy6IU>

Assignments

- Short Assignment 1: In our reading this week, Hindman Child Labor Chapter 1, the author introduces us to the idea that children have always worked. The below quote is used to support the idea that child labor is almost an inevitability: "Global child labor is correctly perceived as a problem of economically underdeveloped nations. But we know of no major advanced nation that did not go through a stage of pervasive child labor on the path to advancement." Do you agree or disagree with this idea? Please share your thoughts on child labor in a modern, developed society, and whether it is necessary for the advancement and industrialization of nations in our time.

Week 3 Explanations of Child Labor (Sept.15-Sept.21)

Readings

- Hindman, Hugh D. 2002. "Global Child Labor: Past as Prologue" In Child Labor: An American History. Armonk, NY: Routledge, p. 320-343.
- López-Calva, Luis F. 2001. "Child Labor: Myths, Theories and Facts." Journal of International Affairs. 55(1): 59-73.

Videos

- Tenement Museum
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4pyX4RwOp4>

Assignments

- Forum 2: What would you do? Imagine what it was like to be a child working, as well as a parent with a child working, in the places and conditions you've been reading about. Share your thoughts with the group on the following three hypothetical questions.
 1. What type of job or industry do you think you would have survived/thrived in and why?
 2. What type of job or industry would have been your least desirable and why?
 3. If you were a parent at this time and were dependent on your child's income, what

type of job or industry would you try to have your child work? As we have learned, it was common for families to depend on their children's income.

Week 4 Economic Development and Child Labor (Sept.22-Sept.28)

Readings

- Edmonds, Eric V. 2016. "Economic Growth and Child Labor in Low Income Economies." GLM/LIC Synthesis Paper No. 3. Bonn: Institute of Labor Economics.
- Mark, Brendan Skip, Huei-Jyun Ye, Andrew Foote, and Tiffani Crippin. 2021. "It's a Hard-Knock Life: Child Labor Practices and Compliance with IMF Agreements." *Social Sciences* 10:171.

Videos

- Diaz, Philippe. *The End of Poverty*. Cinema Libre Studio and the Robert Schalkenback Foundation. To view the film, select the following link and then sign in to the Rutgers Library system.
- Mother Jones and the March of the Mill Children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LJBWhPKWWc>

Assignments

- Forum 3: Why does child labor persist? Consider the definition of child labor and its scope over time (its persistence over many years) and across space (its occurrence in many locations).

Week 5 What is the Current State of Child Labor? (Sept.29-Oct.5)

Reading

- International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Child Labour: Global estimates 2024, trends and the road forward*, ILO and UNICEF, Geneva and New York, 2025.

In this report, the ILO and UNICEF provide an overview of child labor worldwide as of the end of 2024. The report is also available at the following website in English, French, Spanish, and Turkish: <https://www.ilo.org/publications/major-publications/child-labour-global-estimates-2024-trends-and-road-forward>

Videos

Child Labour: Global estimates 2024

https://youtu.be/8DxspDUEApY?si=0coTCweNUt_zbCmO

In this video, representatives of the ILO and UNICEF present the report that you have read for this week. Their explanations provide further depth to the report.

Assignments

- Short Assignment 2: Write an essay (the length should be around 500 words) summarizing the main findings and your questions about the report by the ILO and UNICEF, *Child Labour: Global estimates 2024, trends and the road forward*, assigned for this week's reading. In your essay, respond to the following questions:
 1. What are the current trends in the incidence and prevalence of child labor worldwide?
 2. What are some axes on which the incidence and prevalence of child labor vary?
 3. What are some of the impacts of child labor?
 4. What questions do you have about the information presented in the report and/or the video in which representatives of the ILO and UNICEF presented it?

Week 6 Contemporary Child Labor in the United States (Oct.6-Oct.12)

Readings

- Fields of Peril: Child Labor in US Agriculture. Human Rights Watch. 2010.
- "Alone and Exploited, Migrant Children Work Brutal Jobs Across the U.S." Hannah Dreier. New York Times.

Videos

- Made in the USA: Child Labor and Tobacco
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-8TBceaO5Q&t=2s>
- Children of the Fields?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRKmR-qtIlg>

Assignments

- Forum 4: Compare child labor in the period of industrialization and the contemporary period in the US, and answer: How are they different in terms of their roles, work performed, working conditions, and pay? How are they similar in terms of their roles, work performed, working conditions, and pay? What factors explain the similarities and differences?

Week 7 Child labor in agricultural supply chains: the chocolate industry (Oct.13-Oct.19)

Readings

- "White Man's 'Burden' and the New Colonialism in West African Cocoa Production." Bama Athreya. 2011. Food Justice (Autumn 2011), 51-59.
- "The Intersection of Corporate Social Responsibility and the Non-Profit Industrial Complex Exploitative Child Labor in Côte d'Ivoire's Chocolate Industry." Gabrielle Cole. 2014. Columbia Social Work Review V: 53-63.

Videos

- The Dark Side of Chocolate. U. Roberto Romano and Miki Mistri. 2010. Helle Farber, Monday Media, Danish Broadcasting Corporation.

Assignments

- Forum 5: Why is child labor so prevalent in agriculture? In your answer, please consider different perspectives and the interests of different parties, including the youth workers, their parents, the business owners invested directly, as well as business owners affected indirectly, as well as YOU, the consumer.

Week 8 Mid-Term Research Week (Oct.20-Oct.26)

Week 9 Child labor in global supply chains, the gold industry (Oct.27-Nov.2)

Readings

- No Golden Future: Use of child labour in gold mining in Uganda. Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations SOMO. 2016. Amsterdam.
- "Moral Economies and Child Labour in Artisanal Gold Mining in Ghana." Samuel Okyere. In International Child Protection, N. Howard and S. Okyere (eds.) Palgrave, p. 231-259.

Videos

- Special report: Inside the Congo cobalt mines that exploit children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcJ8me22NVs>

Assignments

- **Short Assignment 3:** The connection between poverty and child labor has been a theme throughout this course, with this week's readings and videos offering numerous examples of this relationship in global supply chains. Write a short essay (the length should be around 500 words). and answer the following questions: 1. Does "throwing money at developing country governments" help solve child labor issues in global supply chains? Why or why not? 2. What actions can developed countries and global lead firms take to solve child labor issues in global supply chains?

Week 10 Ending child labor (Nov.3-Nov.9)

Readings

- "Worker Voice and Organizing in Efforts to Eliminate Child Labor," by Samuel Okyere.
- "Drivers of Child Labour: Socio-Economic Insights from the 15 Worst-Affected Countries," by Tharaka Magammana, Ayodhya Perera, Amanda Bandara, Himashi Muthugala, and Ruwan Jayathilaka.

Assignments

- **Forum 6:** Understanding child labor specifically as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental health, what actions would end child labor? This is a further reflection after last week's assignment. In your response, consider the material that we have examined in this course, including current tendencies of child labor, explanations of why it occurs, and factors that have contributed to increases and decreases in child labor.

Week 11 Precarious work, internship, and the labor market for young workers (Nov.10-Nov.16)

Readings

- "Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition," Arne L. Kalleberg. American Sociological Review (2009) 74(1): 1-22.
- "Labor Market Uncertainties for Youth and Young Adults: An International Perspective," Wei-June Jean Yeung and Yi Yang. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 688(March 2020): 7-19.
- Why We Still Haven't Solved the Unpaid Internship Problem. NY Times. 2022.

Videos

- BBC Documentary: Unpaid Internships
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDaNnARoz1A>
- We will not be the unpaid intern generation any longer
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79K9Q-6Nw9Q>

Assignments

- **Forum 7:** Do you think unpaid internships are beneficial for both students and companies? Why do you think unpaid internships are still so common? Do you think unpaid internships will continue to be a part of "on-the-job" training, or is the cost of living too great to allow this system to continue?

Week 12 Digital, platform-mediated work and young workers (Nov.17-Nov.23)

Readings

- Anwar, Mohammed Amir and Mark Graham. 2022. "Digital Taylorism: Freedom Flexibility,

Precarity, and Vulnerability," in M.A. Anwar and M. Graham, *The Digital Continent*. Oxford University Press, pages 107-153.

- Brynjolfsson, Erik, Bharat Chandar, and Ruyu Chen. 2025. "Canaries in the Coal Mine? Six Facts about the Recent Employment Effects of Artificial Intelligence." Stanford Digital Economy Lab and the National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper

Videos

"Guest lecture," sociologist Vivek Chibber and host Melissa Nasche

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6KnKBnko2tgrNSmvtFqAhh?si=6AyYQGnrS5ycOueo7BOZ7Q>

Assignments

- Short Assignment 4: Write an essay (around 500 words in length) on precarious work from your own lived experience, which may include your own employment experiences, employment experiences of family or friends that you have observed, or employment experiences of workers that you do not know personally but have become familiar with through your studies. In your essay, respond to the following questions:
 1. What is the job that you are describing as precarious work (include the industry, product, title, and tasks of the job)?
 2. What specific terms and conditions of the job that you are describing make it precarious? Refer to the definition provided by the article assigned for Week 11 by Arne Kalleberg.
 3. Whose interests might be served by the precarious character of the job that you are analyzing? How so?
 4. What were/have been some of the implications of precarious work for you or the worker whose job you are analyzing?

Week 13 Young workers' asserting dignity in the United States (Nov.24-Nov.30)

Readings

- Kallas, John. 2025. "Deepening Our Understanding of Labor Action: Examining How Workers Organize Different Types of Strikes in the United States." *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society* 65:64-79.
- Logan, John. 2025. Corporate union busting in plain sight: How Amazon, Starbucks, and Trade Joe's crushed dynamic grassroots worker organizing campaigns. Washington: Economic Policy Institute, epi.org/295158.

Videos

- How we can help young people build a better future | Henrietta Fore
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iw7nPE2jioU>

Assignments

- Forum 8: Recall your answer to Short Assignment 1. How do your thoughts from week 2 compare to today regarding the influence of child labor on a society and whether it is a necessity for the advancement and industrialization of nations in our modern time? Many answers mentioned that advances in technology have eliminated the need for child labor, but after all the readings and videos, do you feel the same way? Have your week 2 views been strengthened with weeks of evidence, or did something this semester change your views? Include examples from any of the modules this semester to support your answers.

Week 14 Final Research Week (Dec.1-Dec.7)