

# History of Labor and Work in the United States, 1880-1945

Rutgers University – School of Management and Labor Relations 37:575:202

Spring 2020

Fridays, 9:50 am - 12:50 pm, January 24 – May 1, 2020  
Campbell Hall (Room A-5), 617 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1176

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## Course Description

This course introduces the major developments 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 during wars, depressions, and periods of 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 the labor movement, while also exploring the workplace and the economy in political, social, and cultural terms. Importantly, this course will challenge some of the assumptions you may have about how U.S. society works and will require you to step outside of your comfort zone in thinking about the relationship between historical and contemporary social problems and possible solutions and alternatives. The course is designed to equip students with the critical thinking skills to challenge conventional wisdom, myths, and misconceptions and will provide a solid foundation for exercising their rights and responsibilities as global citizens.

## Skills development

This course meets the writing distribution requirement for the School of Arts and Sciences. In addition to developing writing skills through writing successive drafts, students will learn to provide constructive feedback to their peers. The course has additional writing instructors who will read and comment on drafts, meet with students for one-on-one conferences, and assess final papers. At the conclusion of the course, students will demonstrate an increase in their knowledge and skills in writing and revising academic essays.

## Course Requirements

Read the entire syllabus and make sure you understand it. This is your contract with your instructors. Be prepared for class. Always complete any reading and writing assignments for a class day before the class meets. For instance, complete the reading for January 31 before our class meets that day. Bring reading and writing assignments to class with you in case you need to refer to it (for instance, for an activity or for a discussion). Check your email regularly for class announcements.

Be present and be on time. Students are expected to attend all classes. Please note: the grade for attendance and participation will decline each time a student is absent, late, or leaves early. If you are late or leave early, you will be charged with one half of a class absence. If you have a legitimate reason for your absence, lateness or need to leave early, it must be provided to us in writing in advance or immediately after the occurrence using the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> (Links to an external site.). Not all absences will be excused.

## **Participation**

This course will utilize a variety of formats, including class discussions and group activities. Class participation includes active, respectful listening as well as talking. Note: the course may also have periodic homework assignments and unannounced quizzes based upon assigned readings. These grades will be evaluated as part of the overall participation grade. The use of phones is prohibited during class. Computers may only be used for note-taking or other designated in-class activities. Computers may not be used during full-class discussions or during documentary film showings.

## **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/> (Links to an external site.)

## **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> (Links to an external site.)

## **Disability Statement**

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: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines> (Links to an external site.). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form> (Links to an external site.).

## **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.

## **Missed Exams**

All students are expected to take the scheduled in-class exams (midterm and final) at the designated times.

## Canvas

This course uses the Rutgers Canvas course management system, accessible at <https://canvas.rutgers.edu> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Click “NetID Login” on the right side of the main Canvas site. Once you log in, you can access the course site by clicking the “Courses” tab. The course site features the syllabus and weekly modules with the reading, viewing, and writing assignments.

## Written Assignments

All drafts of Papers 1 and 2 will be collected at the beginning of class the day they are due. You will submit all drafts of your papers electronically on Canvas and they will be checked using Turnitin. You must also bring a hard copy of your first drafts for the peer review exercises.

**Lateness Policy:** All late paper assignments will be marked down. Ten (10) points will be deducted for every 24-hour period (or portion thereof) your final paper is late. If you have a severe personal emergency that makes it impossible for you to meet the deadlines, please contact your instructors. Computer problems do not constitute personal emergencies, as there are computer labs in the Rutgers libraries.

## Required Readings

Many of the reading assignments will be chapters from the following textbook, which has been digitized and is available for you on the course Canvas site. You may purchase a copy of the third edition of the textbook if you prefer:

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.

In addition to the textbook, there are other required readings that will either be assigned to read before a class meets or read and discussed during a class meeting. These will be posted as PDF files, Word documents, or web links in the resources section of the course Canvas site. Some of the additional readings are primary sources: documents written in the past that provide perspectives and insight on historical developments and events. Other additional readings are secondary sources: commentaries and historical analysis provided after the events have taken place.

## Evaluation\*

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Paper 1: 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Paper 2: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

## Additional Help with Writing

[The Rutgers Learning Centers](#) offer writing coaching services to students enrolled in this course, including brainstorming topics, organizing ideas, formulating a thesis, structuring paragraphs, and developing an argument.

## Student Affairs

[The Office of the Dean of Students](#) provides support to students who may be facing exceptional difficulties that could jeopardize their education. Visit their website to learn more about the type of support they offer and/or to schedule an appointment.

## Health & Wellness

[Student Health & Wellness Services](#) provides health services to students on its various campuses through Student Health Centers.

## Technical Support

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas:

Visit the [Canvas Video Guide](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Contact [Rutgers IT Help Desk](#)[Links to an external site.](#) (1-877-361-1134, accessible 24/7)

Visit the [Getting Started in Canvas page](#)

## WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE\*

### **Week 1: Introduction to the Course**

Jan. 24: Syllabus, Review of pre-1880

### **Week 2: Industrial Capitalism and Workers in the Gilded Age (Part 1)**

Jan. 31: Progress and Poverty

[Prologue, Ch. 1, Ch. 2, Gourevitch]

### **Week 3: Industrial Capitalism and Workers in the Gilded Age (Part 2)**

Feb 7: Community and Conflict

[Ch. 2, Ch. 3, Gompers, Carnegie]

### **Week 4: Race, Immigration and Exclusion**

Feb. 14: Producing Classes and Money Power

[Ch. 3, Wells]

### **Week 5: Writing Conferences**

### **Week 6: Mass Production and Scientific Management**

Feb. 28: Change and Continuity

[Ch. 4]

### **Week 7: Radicals and Reformers in the Progressive Era**

Mar. 6: Radicals and Reformers

[Ch. 5, Gorn, Golan]

### **Week 8: Midterm Exam**

### **Week 9: World War I and the Red Scare**

Mar. 27: Wars for Democracy

[Ch. 6, McCartin]

### **Week 10: Working in the Roaring Twenties**

Apr. 3: Paper 2 Peer Review; A New Era

[Ch. 7]

### **Week 11: The Great Depression and the New Deal - Pt. 1**

Apr. 10: The First New Deal

[Ch. 8, Nelson]

### **Week 12: Writing Conferences**

### **Week 13: The Great Depression and the New Deal - Pt. 2**

Apr. 24: Labor Democratizes America

[Ch. 9]

### **Week 14: World War II and the Arsenal of Democracy**

May 1 (May Day): A Nation Transformed

### **Exam Week: final exam date and time to be announced**

*\*The syllabus, schedule, and assignments are subject to change as the course evolves.*