

**Youth and Work: 37:575:215:01**  
Spring 2021 Labor Studies and Employment Relations  
Tuesdays 1:40-4:40

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### **Course Overview**

This course examines the current situation of young workers, reviews the history and policy responses to child labor in America and considers the challenges of youth and work today.

Some of the core questions we will explore include: What counts as “work”? Why do young people work and how has that changed over time? How does young people’s preparation for and participation in the labor market differ from that of previous generations? What are some of the challenges that young workers face at work? What kinds of policies, organizational practices, and legal changes can improve young worker’s experience in the work force?

We will also explore how young people prepare for work, view their education and workforce development pathways; and view their work and future careers. Here we will focus on the experiences of young workers across racial, class and gender lines and pay particular attention to the growing working poor in the youth labor market, and how public policy can address some of these inequalities. Central to this will be an analysis of the experiences of young people in the current economic recession, and various policies and programs that can improve their experiences and economic security, especially in the midst of the current economic crisis.

### **Relationship to School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Learning Goals**

- A. This class has the following 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenge objectives:
  - a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience and perspectives on the world.
  - b. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.
  
- B. It also has the following Social Analysis objectives:
  - a. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
  - b. Understand different theories in social and historical analysis.
  - c. Apply Concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of these concepts via class readings, discussions, assignments, and exams which focus on historical and contemporary issues of youth and work.

**Academic Integrity.** Familiarize yourself with the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy which can be found online at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. Your written assignments will be submitted to “Turnitin.com” to insure that your assignment is yours and not gleaned from the web, another student or source. Use proper citations and quote marks around any material that is not yours. Be careful not to “copy” phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words.

### **Course Requirements**

*Class attendance and participation:* This class will meet once a week at the appointed time via a Zoom call set up via our class Canvas site. Roll will be taken at the start of each class. You are expected to attend each class, and repeated absences will result in a downgrade. I understand that we are all facing unique challenges due to the current pandemic, and I am attuned to all that you may be experiencing. Please let me know if you ever experience any special circumstances, as I will work with you to make this semester go smoothly and to help you accomplish your best work. In addition to attendance, you will have opportunities to participate in weekly discussions, both in the class meeting, and occasionally, in threaded discussion posts.

*Exams:* Due to the remote nature of our class, our exams—one midterm and one final (really, a second midterm, as it is not cumulative)—will be open book take home exams. You will have an extended number of days to complete the exams, which consist of short essays based upon what is covered in the class content.

*Accommodations:* This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirement for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of disability should refer to the Rutgers Office of Disability Services and then contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible.

"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>.

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> The Rutgers Office of Disability Services can also be reached at 848-445-6800.

Due to the extended amount of time provided for the exams in the class, there should be no reason for such accommodations, but please ask if you would like further clarification.

### **Class Grade Distribution:**

Your final grade is based on the following distribution:

Class Exercises/Participation	10%
Discussions	10%
Policy Paper	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

### **Required Books**

*Other course readings are available on the Sakai course website or from me directly. Please note that additional readings—mostly contemporary op-ed essays from newspapers, magazines and the web will be introduced to weekly class sessions.*

*The following books are available as eBooks via Rutgers University Libraries. You may also chose to purchase the books if you prefer reading the old-fashioned way...*

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. **The Cost of Being a Girl: Working Teens and the Origins of the Gender Wage Gap**. Temple University Press, 2018

Silva, Jennifer M. **Coming Up Short: Working Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty**. Oxford University Press, 2015

### **Weekly Course Schedule**

**Week 1**—January 19: Introduction to Studying Youth and Work; Syllabus Review

**“First Work Experiences”**. We are going to start to get to know each other and also start to think about our own work experiences. We will discuss our first paid work experiences, how we got hired, how we felt about it, how much we earned, etc.

**Week 2**—January 26: The Current Situation of Young Workers

Boston College Center for Work and Family Briefing Paper, “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: The Expanding Role of Millennials in the Workplace.”

Lauren Hough, “I was a Cable Guy. I Saw the Worst of America,” *HuffPost.com*, December 30, 2018.

Elsie Gould and Melat Kassa, “Young Workers hit hard by the COVID-19 economy,” *Economic Policy Institute*, October 14, 2020

**Week 3**—February 2: Historical Perspectives: What is “Child Labor?”

James Marten, *Childhood and Child Welfare in the Progressive Era: A Brief History with Documents*, pp. 1-24

Videos: *Fingers to the Bone: Child Farmworkers in the U.S.* and other short films.

Posted Photos of Louis Hine.

**Week 4**—February 9: Working and Growing Up in America

AFL-CIO Working America Briefing Paper: “Young Workers: A Lost Decade.”

Andrew J. Cherlin, (2014) “The Fall of the Working Class Family: 1975-2010,” from *Labor’s Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class Family in America*.

**Week 5**—February 16: Young Workers and the New Risk Society

Silva, Jennifer M. *Coming Up Short: Working Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. Oxford University Press, 2015, Chapters 1-3.

**Week 6**—February 23: **Midterm Take Home Exam**

**Week 7**—March 2: The Intern Economy

Guest Carlos Flores, Rutgers SMLR Career Counselor.

Ross Perlin. *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*. New York: Verso. Chapter 2, “The Explosion”

*The Economist*. 2014. “The Internship: Generation I.” *The Economist*, Sept. 6, International 1-9

Josh Eidelson, “Legal Protections for Interns: A Guide”

**Week 8**—March 9: Young Workers: Service Sector Employment

Stuart Tannock, “Why Do Working Youth Work Where They Do?” A Report from the Young Worker Project.

Stuart Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 2: On the Front Lines of the Service Sector

Workplace Hazard Mapping exercise with Anna Barcy, New Labor

**Week 9**—March 16: **Spring Break**

**Week 10**— March 23: The Risk Society: Young Workers and the Mood Economy

Silva, Jennifer M. *Coming Up Short: Working Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. Oxford University Press, 2015: Chapter 4-5 and Conclusion:

**Week 11**— March 30: Youth and the Gender Pay Gap

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. *The Cost of Being a Girl: Working Teens and the Origins of the Gender Wage Gap*. Temple University Press, 2018, pp. 1-79

Think Progress.org, “There’s Even a Gender Gap in Children’s Allowances”  
<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/04/23/3430025/gender-gap-allowance/>

**Week 12**—April 6: Youth and the Gender Pay Gap, Continued

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. *The Cost of Being a Girl: Working Teens and the Origins of the Gender Wage Gap*. Temple University Press, 2018, pp. 80-150.

**Week 13**—April 13: Education, Stagnant Pay and Increasing Debt Load

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapters 1: Higher and Higher Education; Chapter 2: Paycheck Paralysis; and Chapter 3: Generation Debt

**Week 14**—April 20: How Young Workers Will Change Work

Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 7: “The Youth Union”

Ray B. Williams, “How the Millennial Generation Will Change the Workplace”

Lauren Stiller Rikleen, Esq., “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace”

Policy Papers Due

**Week 15**—April 27: An Agenda for Change

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 7: Changing Course: An Agenda for Reform

Final Take Home Exam provided April 27. Details to follow.

