

Women Taking the Lead: Race, Gender, and Labor

Spring 2025 (100% Virtual Synchronous Course)

<p>Social Justice Fellows Special Topics Course Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology Spelman College</p>		<p>Topics in Labor Study Labor Studies & Employment Relations School of Management & Labor Relations Rutgers University</p>
<p>Advancing Black Strategists Initiative Jobs With Justice W.E.B. DuBois Southern Center for Studies in Public Policy Clark Atlanta University</p>		
<p>Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30pm (CST); 6:30-9:30pm (EST)</p>		

Instructors

<p>Dr. Danielle Phillips-Cunningham (bio)</p>	<p>Dr. Sheri Davis-Faulkner (bio)</p>
<p>Associate Professor Labor Studies & Employment Relations School of Management & Labor Relations Rutgers University daphilli@smlr.rutgersu.edu</p>	<p>Assistant Professor of Professional Practice Labor Studies & Employment Relations School of Management & Labor Relations Rutgers University sheri.df@rutgers.edu; Sdavis30@spelman.edu Executive Director Center for Innovation in Worker Organization (CIWO)</p>

Office Hours: Students may schedule appointments by email.

Course Description

This course is a deep exploration of intersecting and systemic inequalities that have impacted the lives of Black workers historically and today. We will begin the course with an introduction to racial, class, and gender disparities in the US labor sector that the pandemic has exposed and further deepened. We will then delve into a historical analysis of systemic inequalities in relation to Black labor and how Black workers protested labor exploitation. We will trace these historical roots of systemic inequalities into the present by analyzing their impact on Black laborers today and organized Black labor resistance to these injustices.

Course Rationale: It is the expectation of faculty members in the Social Justice Fellows Program that students must be introduced to topics that engage the particular ways in which race, class, gender, and sexuality impact people's experiences. This special topics course takes a feminist theoretical approach to understanding how intersecting inequalities have shaped Black women's labor experiences historically and continue to do so today. Students who take this course must be prepared to deepen their writing, thinking, and reading of media sources and textbooks. They must also demonstrate effective writing and oral communication skills.

This course satisfies an elective requirement in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations at Rutgers University and in the Social Justice Fellows Program and the Department of Sociology & Anthropology at Spelman College.

Course Requirements:

- a. Class discussions- 25%
- b. Facilitations- 25%
- c. Mid-Term Project -25%
- d. Final Project – 25%

Goals and Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the social injustices that have impacted Black women workers since the nineteenth century
- Analyze how the pandemic has impacted the health, family lives, and labor experiences of Black women workers
- Examine how intersecting racial, class, and gender inequalities have shaped the labor experiences of Black people historically
- Trace the ways in which racial, class, and gender disparities shape Black women workers' lives today

- Explore Black women workers' organized resistance to labor exploitation historically and now

Assignments

1 & 2- Class Discussions and Facilitations:

All students are expected to come to class prepared to share their interpretation, analysis and synthesis of assigned readings and media materials. Each week, a group of students will be responsible for co-facilitating class discussion with their own discussion questions. The group is also expected to post their discussion questions and commentaries about the assigned readings in advance of class discussion. This assignment will rotate each week. **See Modules section in Canvas for facilitation guidelines and rubric.**

3- Mid-Term Project (Worker Profile Assignment–Part 1)

Students will complete a mid-term group assignment to demonstrate their knowledge of the information covered during the first half of the course. They will also present their group project in the form of an oral presentation.

4- Final Exam Project (Worker Profile Assignment–Part 2)

Students will complete a final exam group assignment to demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge of the information covered throughout the entire course. They will also present the assignment in the form of an oral presentation.

Course Structure

This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system (Canvas).

Spelman Students: SpeleLearn (Canvas). Log-in to your SpeleLearn (Canvas) account from the MySpelman Portal (my.spelman.edu) to access the course materials, activities, assessments, and resources. Course sessions are being delivered through the Zoom Platform.

If you need technical assistance, email stsservicedesk@spelman.edu or call 404-270-5400.

IT professionals staff the Service Desk Monday through Friday from 8 AM through 11 PM; Saturday, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, and Sunday, 1:00 PM -4:00 PM. Service Desk staff provide phone support for College enterprise applications, including the MySpelman portal, SpeleLearn (Moodle) Learning Management System, and Microsoft Office 365.

Rutgers Students and ABSI Fellows:

This course will be conducted asynchronously via Canvas (occurring at different times rather than at the same place and time). Canvas can be accessed through <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>. You can mark this URL as a bookmark in your computer system. Canvas is a course delivery system that provides private space on the web server that is used for members of this course. No one has access to the “space” except for those who are registered for the class. The space that is set aside for our course includes

places to post comments and questions, access course grades, send email messages to your colleagues and me, view links to outside resources, and submit assignments.

To access the Canvas system, you'll need a Rutgers user ID and password. If you have difficulty accessing Canvas or course materials, contact Rutgers Canvas Help.

Support Website: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/canvas-help/>

Email: help@oit.rutgers.edu Call: 833-648-4357

All Students & Fellows: Throughout the semester, you will participate in a blend of individual and group activities accessed thru Canvas. The Canvas course site will house links to assigned articles and chapters, YouTube clips, Zoom and other Internet-based technologies. Course activities will consist of reading books, articles and speeches; viewing videos and films; and engaging in discussion forums and group assignments.

Technology Requirements

- A wired Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection is desirable with Bandwidth of 512Kbps for connecting to SpeleLearn (Moodle) course management system is recommended).
- [System Requirements](#) (Click to view)
- Webcam with microphone

Attendance Policy

Consistent and attentive participation is vital to academic success and expected of everyone in the course. This is a synchronous, online, and discussion-based course. Therefore, it is important that all students are expected to conduct themselves as serious and engaged scholars at all times.

This means that computer cameras must be turned on with students sitting in a quiet and formal study area. If your camera is off, we will place you in the waiting room until your camera is turned on.

Three or more weeks of non-participation will likely result in a failing grade. If you cannot participate in a class session due to an emergency, you should contact Drs. Phillips-Cunningham and Davis-Faulkner in advance.

Grades are determined by academic performance and the level and quality of participation. If you cannot participate in class discussions for more than one week because of a personal emergency, it is your responsibility to inform instructors. Incompletes are not issued unless you are unable to finish the course due to dire and extreme circumstances and you have completed more than 80 percent of the required course assignments.

Late Assignments

Students will know of all due dates early in the semester. It is expected that students will work on assignments throughout the semester. Late assignments will not be accepted, except in cases of emergency. The professors are not responsible for assignments that are not submitted in accordance with

classroom instructions and communications. All assignments will be submitted through Canvas as word documents. If the professor cannot access the submission, the student will receive a grade of zero (0).

Academic Honesty

At the heart of Spelman College's mission is academic excellence, along with the development of the intellectual, ethical and leadership qualities. These goals can only flourish in an institutional environment where every member of the College affirms honesty, trust, and mutual respect. All members of the academic community of Spelman College are expected to understand and follow the basic standards of honesty and integrity, upholding a commitment to high ethical standards. Students are expected to read and abide by the Spelman College Code of Conduct (see Spelman College Student Handbook) and are expected to behave as mature and responsible members of the Spelman academic community. Students are expected to follow ethical standards in their personal conduct and in their behavior towards other members of the community. They are expected to observe basic honesty in their work, words, ideas, and actions. Failure to do so is a violation of the Spelman College Academic Integrity Policy. **Plagiarized materials will receive a grade of "F" and will be referred to the Office of the Academic Dean.** Violators will be subject to the sanctions outlined in the Spelman College Bulletin.

Rutgers University also adheres to standards for academic integrity. Review the academic policy here: <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> for details regarding the Academic Integrity Policy.

Disability Statement

Spelman College is sensitive to the special needs of students with disabilities. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services privately to discuss her specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 404-270-5289 in Mac Vicar Hall to coordinate reasonable 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 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 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/getting-registered>.

Appointments

The professors encourage students to make virtual office hour appointments to discuss course materials and/or other matters related to the course. Students are also strongly encouraged to take advantage of the

e-mail system for communication. Many matters can be addressed through e-mail: Sheri Davis-Faulkner (sheri.df@rutgers.edu) or Dr. Danielle Phillips-Cunningham (daphilli@smlr.rutgers.edu).

Netiquette & Discussion Expectations

Netiquette stands for network etiquette. In other words, it is the code of behavior when communicating online. In your online course, you will have many opportunities for social interaction. However, you will not always have the opportunity to observe facial expressions, body language and voice tone. Some general netiquette guidelines are:

1. Even though this is a virtual space, please bring your best self to each classroom engagement. **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ONSCREEN UNLESS PERMISSION TO BE OFF-SCREEN HAS BEEN GRANTED BY PROFESSOR**
2. The virtual classroom is a sacred teaching space. While it is clear that your physical location will be in your home, you must be fully present and prepared to present a scholarly posture. You must be seated upright and must not wear anything that suggests you are either still in bed or just getting up from sleeping (no pajamas, head bonnets, rollers or other hair adornments) that suggest you are not prepared to present yourself as a young scholar.
3. **Be Brief:** Make sure your comments are concise. Don't stray from the discussion topic.
4. **Don't Shout!** TYPING IN ALL CAPS IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING ON THE INTERNET.
 - a. If your goal is to emphasize a point, **bold** the word(s) that you want to stand out.
5. **Respect Privacy:** Your class discussion board is open only to those enrolled in the class.
 - a. Do not forward postings or comments from your classmates to others without permission.
6. **Check Your Tone:** Read your post a second time before pressing submit. Read your post again during the thirty minutes you are allowed to revise posts. This is your opportunity to *Re-do*. Remember that there's a person or a whole class at the receiving end of your post.
7. **Use Correct Spelling and Grammar** when composing your message. Do not use acronyms that not everyone would understand and know. Although very popular, the excessive use of acronyms and emoticons can make your message difficult to read. *Examples: BTW =by the way, :---) =smile,---D=laughing, :(=frowning, sad* – Also, don't use extra punctuation. (??????, !!!!!)

8. **Participate:** This is a shared learning environment. It is not enough to log in and read the discussion thread of others. For the maximum benefit to all, everyone must contribute.
9. **Your Password is Private:** Never give your password to another person. Please note that IT administrators will **never** ask you for this. This is not really a netiquette rule but very important to protecting your identity online.
10. **Report System Issues:** If for any reason you experience difficulty participating in the course, please call the Spelman Technology Help Desk. Others might be having the same problem. This helps the entire community.

For more information about netiquette, refer to the following:

- The Core Rules of Netiquette – <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Required Books

1. Tamara L. Lee, Sheri Davis-Faulkner, Naomi R. Williams, Maite Tapia, eds. [*A Racial Reckoning In Industrial Relations: Storytelling As Revolution From Within*](#). Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2022.
2. Danielle T. Phillips-Cunningham. Nannie Helen Burroughs: [*A Tower of Strength in the Labor World*](#). Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2025 (30% discount code: TGUF).

<u>READING SCHEDULE</u>		
1/21	Week One: Advancing Black Strategists Initiative & Intersectionality Framework	<p>Introduction & Review to the Syllabus</p> <p>Overview of course and ABSI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class-discussion and overview of the Advancing Black Strategists Initiative (ABSI). • Introduce students to Kimberlé Crenshaw’s theoretical framework of intersectionality and how it relates to Black labor histories and experiences. <p>IN CLASS READING: Crenshaw, Kimberlé. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist</p>

		<p>Politics.” University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989: Issue 1, Article 8, 138-167 https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8/</p> <p>VIEW: “The Urgency of Intersectionality,” Crenshaw lecture</p>
1/28	<p>Week Two</p> <p>Dominant Narrative & Counter-narrative Part I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-depth class discussion and review of intersectionality as a theoretical framework. ● In-depth class discussion and analysis of the labor case studies in Crenshaw’s journal article “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race & Sex.” <p>Reading Due: Crenshaw, Kimberlé. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.” University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989: Issue 1, Article 8, 138-167 https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8/</p> <p>IN CLASS GROUP WORK: Reading #1 Jamboard Exercise</p>
2/4	<p>Week Three</p> <p>Dominant Narrative & Counternarrative Part II</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Facilitation #1 (3 students/group) ● In-depth class discussion and review of intersectionality as a methodological framework. ● In-class activity of applying the intersectional framework to analyses of contemporary labor stories. ● Introduce Worker Profile Assignment (link to survey) <p>Readings Due:</p> <p>Erica Smiley & Sarita Gupta,. <i>The Future We Need</i> (introduction and chapters 1-2) PROVIDED</p> <p>Tami L. Lee & Maite Tapia, “Confronting Race and other Social Identity Erasures: The Case for Critical Industrial Relations Theory.” PROVIDED</p>
2/11	<p>Week Four</p> <p>Historical & Political Contextualization: Black Women’s Lives and Labors After Emancipation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Facilitation #2 (3 students/group) ● In-class discussion and exploration of women’s labor resistance and post-slavery worker experiences. ● Professors introduce students to historical context of early Black women’s labor movement post-emancipation. <p>Readings Due:</p>

		Tera Hunter, <i>To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War</i> . Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997. (chapters 2 and 4) PROVIDED
2/18	Week Five Historical & Political Contextualization: Studying Labor with an Eye Towards Disruption & Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Facilitation #3 (3 students/group) ● Explore the origins of labor studies and contemporary labor and political struggles ● Learning to incorporate racial and gender justice framework and lens ● Discuss Worker Profile Assignment <p>Readings Due: Sheri Davis-Faulkner, "Labor Tales of Critical Race Theory: Disrupting Normative in Search of the Transformative." <i>A Racial Reckoning In Industrial Relations</i> (Chapter 2).</p> <p>Naomi R. Williams, "Origin Stories: Labor History and Industrial Relations." <i>A Racial Reckoning In Industrial Relations</i> (Chapter 1).</p>
2/25	Week 6 Historical & Political Contextualization: Disparities in Labor and Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Facilitation #4 (3 students/group) ● Discuss assigned readings. ● Discuss Worker Profile Assignment <p>Readings Due: Danielle Phillips-Cunningham, "Slaving" Irish Ladies and Black "Towers of Strength in the Labor World": Race and Women's Resistance in Domestic Service," <i>Women's History Review</i>, Special Issue: "Women, Work, and The State," (2020): 190-207. PROVIDED</p> <p>Danielle Phillips-Cunningham, "'The World Will Get a Correct Estimate of the Negro Woman': The Intellectual Work of Early Black Women Labor Organizers." <i>A Racial Reckoning In Industrial Relations</i> (Chapter 3). PROVIDED</p>
3/5	Week 7	In Class Presentations: Present Your Worker Profile (3min)
3/12	AUC Spring Break No Class	

	Historical & Political Contextualization: Disparities in Labor and Quality of Life	
3/19	Rutgers Spring Break No Class Historical & Political Contextualization: Disparities in Labor and Quality of Life	
3/26	Week 9 Contemporary Worker Organizing	Rutgers Professors in Residency in Atlanta, GA Reading Due: Danielle Phillips-Cunningham, <i>Nannie Helen Burroughs: A Tower of Strength in the Labor World</i> . Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2025. https://press.georgetown.edu/Book/Nannie-Helen-Burroughs *Read entire book. You will have plenty of time to read it because of Spring Break :-).
4/2	Week 10 Contemporary Worker Organizing	New Labor Resistance & Organizing Guest Speaker Readings Due: TBA

4/9	Week 11 Contemporary Worker Organizing	Guest Speaker Readings Due: TBA
4/16	Week 12 Contemporary Worker Organizing	Guest Speaker Readings: TBA
4/23	Week 13 Contemporary Worker Organizing	Guest Speaker Readings: TBA
4/30	Week 14	Readings: TBA Final Presentation / Paper Prep
5/8	Final Paper Due	11:59pm ET Wednesday May 8th