

Employment Law

Course Number: 37:575:315:94

Spring 2025

Instructor: Carla A. Katz, Esq. carla.katz@rutgers.edu

Office Hours by Appointment: Students are encouraged to meet with me to discuss any matters of concern or interest. I am available to meet with you virtually by appointment. Please send me a message to arrange a time to talk.

Required Books (please purchase books in advance of the class)

Employment Law in a Nutshell 5th Edition Robert N. Covington and Joseph A. Seiner ISBN: 9781636593838

Students can save **15%** and receive free ground shipping when they purchase their book directly from West Academic at www.westacademic.com by using the Discount Code: **HESTUDENT**. <https://www.westacademic.com/Covington-and-Seiners-Employment-Law-in-a-Nutshell-5th-9781634606196>

Other Required Reading will be provided on Canvas.

Course Description: This course provides an exploration of the laws and regulations governing the workplace, focusing on the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees. Students will examine the workplace legal landscape including an overview of the court system, anti-discrimination laws, harassment issues, workers compensation employment related torts, workplace safety, and wrongful termination. Through case studies, forum discussions, and other exercises, students will gain a foundational understanding of the legal frameworks shaping modern employment relationships.

Course Structure: Our online asynchronous course week runs from Thursday at 10 a.m. through Wednesday night at midnight on Canvas. Unless I have indicated otherwise, all work for each week must be completed within that week. Every Thursday morning students will receive a “weekly message” from me that outlines the expectations and assignments for the week ahead. Make sure to open and read that message in its entirety.

Expectations and Participation: You are expected to stay up to date with the course work, complete assignments on time and participate in all exercises. Participation may require that you arrange and spend time with other classmates for synchronous

exercises. Assignments include cases, forum posts, journal entries, exams and discussions. **For technical assistance**, contact the help desk at 833-OIT-HELP or by **email**: <https://it.rutgers.edu/help-support>.

No Late Assignments: Students should complete all assignments on time. Late assignments will not be accepted unless approved in advance. All assignments must be submitted in Canvas, not by email.

Rutgers University Disability Policy: 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 website at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted in this course. Students are also expected to report any incident of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean. Students are expected to be familiar with all Rutgers University policies regarding academic integrity. Some assignments in this class may be processed through Turnitin.

Rutgers Academic Integrity policy here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is not permitted in this course

Use of AI, including but not limited to ChatGPT, is not permitted in any stages of the writing process on any assignment. All work submitted in this course must be the student's own and created with the aid of impermissible technologies (such as AI), materials, or collaborations.

The Rutgers University Code of Conduct specifies as follows:
<https://policies.rutgers.edu/10213-currentpdf>

Changes to Syllabus and Course Content: This syllabus is not a contract and is only intended to give the student guidance in what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as practicable. The professor reserves the right to modify, supplement, and make changes to the syllabus and the course as course needs arise.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to: Apply employment relations legal concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work; Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance.

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department: Apply employment relations legal concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2).

School of Management and Labor Relations: Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance. (Goal VI)

Grading:

Midterm Exam:	250
Final Exam:	300
Forums and Assignments:	300
Project: Hot Topics in Employment Law:	150
Total Possible Course Points	1000

Midterm and Final Exams will be objective (multiple choice, true/false). Forum discussions will require that students make an initial post by Sunday and a second responsive post to another student's post before Wednesday night. The course project is described below.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introductions, Understanding the Court System 1/23-1/29

Week 2: Briefing Cases, Anatomy of a Lawsuit, 1/30-2/5

Week 3: Employment at-Will and Exceptions, 2/6 – 2/12

Week 4: Whistleblower and Restrictive Covenants, 2/13-2/19

Week 5: Who is an Employee and Private Sector or Public Sector? 2/20-2/26

Week 6: Workplace Privacy, 2/27-3/5

Week 7: Midterm Exam, 3/6-3/12 Open from Monday, March 10-Wednesday March 12

Week 8: Title VII; Theories of Discrimination and the EEOC 3/13-26

SPRING BREAK: March 15-23

Week 9: Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and religion, 3/27-4/2

Week 10: Discrimination on the basis of Sex (including Sexual Harassment), Age, and Disability, 4/3-4/9

Week 11: Workers Compensation, FMLA and NJ FLA, 4/10-4/16

Week 12: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), 4/17-4/23

Week 13: Course Wrap Up, Final Exam Review, 4/24-4/30

Week 14: Final Exam: Exam will be open from Monday, May 5 at 10 a.m. to Tuesday May 6th at midnight.

All readings (other than the Nutshell book readings), media, discussions, and assignments may be found in the module for that week.

Employment Law Hot Topics Project

Project Description: For the entirety of this course, you will explore current trends in employment law by researching “hot topics” in the law that are in the news. These topics may include anything from discrimination and wrongful termination, artificial intelligence at work, paid leave, pay transparency, privacy, non-competition agreements, mandatory arbitration, workers compensation, return to office mandates, layoffs, or any other employment law related topic that interests you. The goal is to help you develop a deeper understanding of current issues in employment law and their real-world implications.

Topic Selection: By the third week of the course, you will choose one topic or area in employment law which you feel is currently in flux or unresolved. To avoid duplication, no more than two students can use the same topic. We will use a discussion forum to manage topic selection on a “first come, first serve” basis, so it is important to have a backup option (or two) in mind in case your first choice is taken.

Research: Throughout the semester, you will conduct ongoing research on your chosen topic. This research will become a bibliography that reflects the most relevant and

current materials, including cases, statutes, articles, or other resources. This bibliography should be organized and submitted as a document or folder with your final project.

Final Project Content

1. Begin by describing the topic you have selected, including an explanation of the issue and any recent developments, such as changes in laws, regulations, or court decisions.
2. Discuss the impact of the changes, or potential changes, and analyze how they affect employees. Consider the implications for their rights, responsibilities, and workplace experiences.
3. Discuss how these changes or potential changes impact employers. This analysis should include considerations such as compliance, costs, and workplace management.
4. Conclude by offering your proposals/recommendations for what should happen next to improve the law in this area. Think critically about how the issue could be resolved or improved to benefit workers and workplaces overall.

The final project should be submitted as a 4–5-page double spaced paper or as a PowerPoint. You must include the bibliography you created. We will be sharing our projects with the entire class.