

Syllabus
Introduction to Labor Studies and Employment Relations 37:575:100:02
School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University
Fall 2015
(Draft)

Course Number: 37:575:100:02
Day and Time: Tuesdays, 10:20AM to 1:20PM
Location: Janice Levin Bldg. RM 003

Professor: Carmen Martino
Office Location: Labor Education Center, 50 Labor Center Way,
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

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Office Hours: By appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to the Labor Studies and Employment Relations major. Our primary focus will be work, workers and the organizations and institutions that shape and define the employment relationship. We will examine how class, race, ethnicity and gender impact work; the role of corporations; the role of unions and worker centers; the global economy; and the future of work.

II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course we will:

- Know and understand fundamental social science, historical, and legal perspectives, theories, and concepts relating to work, employment relations, and worker movements;
- Know the fundamental laws/institutions governing employment relations including government, labor unions, corporations and other key institutions;
- Understand how the global economy impacts work and employment relations;
- Understand how our diverse backgrounds and cultures shape our experiences and perspectives on the world of work; and
- Improve our critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

III. EXPECTATIONS

Preparation

We will be covering a lot of ground in a very short time so please read and bring the assigned material to each class and take good notes.

Participation

Class sessions will include short lectures, small group discussions and group exercises. The expectation is that everyone will actively participate in the class.

When participating in discussions use your experience and the information you get from the readings. When you take a position try to back it up with facts, data and examples. And above all, be respectful and listen when others are speaking. You do not have to agree but you must give full attention and consideration to other points of view.

Texting, or talking on cell phones and emailing are all prohibited during class.

Attendance

It is vitally important to attend every class. Failure to sign the sign-in sheet will result in a loss of attendance points. You can only be excused for an illness, death in the family or other *real* emergencies.

Students who are late to class will lose attendance points so please be punctual. *Also*, if you leave early without permission you will be marked absent for the entire class.

Communication

I will communicate with you via email on a weekly basis. Most of the time I will be providing you with updates, reminders, adjustments and/or reworking of the syllabus so please check your Rutgers email regularly. Feel free to contact me via email with questions or concerns about the course. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours.

When emailing always include “Intro to Labor Studies and Employment Relations” in the subject line of your email.

IV. EVALUATION

Attendance

Eleven points (11pts) of your final grade will be based on attendance so it is vitally important that you come to every class. Failure to sign the sign-in sheet will result in a loss of attendance points. You can only be excused for an illness, death in the family or other *real* emergencies.

Students who are late to class will lose attendance points so please be punctual. *Also*, if you leave early without permission you will be marked absent for the entire class.

Class Preparation

It is vitally important that you come to class ready to contribute to the discussion. With this in mind, everyone will be required to hand in a 1-page summary (approximately 300 words) for each class reading/viewing assignment—including weeks 2-13. **Each summary is worth 1 point of your final grade (for a total of 12pts)**. One-page

summaries should be delivered to the Sakai drop box prior to the start of each class. (Note: I will read them and keep in touch on an as needed basis.)

Class Participation

Another fourteen points (14pts) of your final grade will be based on your in-class participation. Class sessions will include short lectures, small group discussions, group exercises and large group discussions. The expectation is that everyone will have an opportunity to actively participate in each class.

Family Member Oral History Project

The Mid-Term Oral History project will be due by **September 15, 2015**. All papers turned in after this time will be marked late. Late papers will be marked down one full letter grade for each day that they are late. **The Oral History Project is worth 10 points (10pts).**

Mid-Term and Final Exams

The mid term and final will be worth 25pts each and they will be written take-home exams that will cover all course readings, lectures, discussion questions, films, group exercises, etc. You will have one week to complete the mid-term and one week to complete the final exam.

Final grades will be based on the following:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Class Prep | (12pts) |
| 2. Class attendance/participation | (28pts) |
| 3. Family Member Oral History Project | (10pts) |
| 4. Mid-Term Exam | (25pts) |
| 5. Final Exam | (25pts) |

V. COURSE READINGS

Text: Stephen Sweet and Peter Meiksins. Changing Contours of Work: Jobs and Opportunities in the New Economy. **Second Edition**, Sage Publications Inc. 2013

All other materials are available on the course Sakai website. Students can access the course Sakai site by following these directions:

- Go to <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>
- To log on, enter your Rutgers net ID and password in the upper right hand corner.
- Look for the tabs at the top of the next page. Click on the tab: 37:575:100:02 Fall15.
- Click on “resources” on the menu on the left hand side of the next page. You should see a folder for each class and inside each folder you will find all of the course readings.

VI. SYLLABUS

PART I: WORK, CLASS, RACE, ETHNICITY AND GENDER IN THE U.S.

(WEEK 1) TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2015

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
 The syllabus

In-Class: Introduction: Our expectations for the class, review syllabus

 For Group Discussion: What is a union? Why are unions in decline? Does it matter?

Writing Assignment: Understanding Your Family's Work and Economic History
Due September 15, 2015

(WEEK 2) TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015

WORK, CLASS, MOBILITY AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, The Changing Contours of Work, Chapters 1, 2 and 3 (pp. 1-74)

Sakai Folder:
Robert D. Putnum, Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-45)

Optional:
From the *New York Times* website on social class,
<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/national/class/>
1. Overview article, "Shadowy Lines That Still Divide" and Interactive Graphic, "A Closer Look at Income Mobility"
2. Day 3: Marriage (Tamar Lewin, "Up from the Holler")
3. Day 5: Education (David Leonhardt, "The College Dropout Boom")

Bob Herbert's "Mobility Myth" Op-Ed linked to the site; (See Readers Opinions Box on the right) and
4. Interactive exercise in the website which you can do using your family of social origin: "Interactive Graphics: Where do you fit in" (top middle, in between Slide Show and Income and Education)

Optional (in the Sakai Folder):

Studs Terkel, "Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do" (New York: Random House Inc., 1972), interviews with steelworker Mike LeFevre, pp. XXXI-XXXVIII, farm worker Roberto Acuna, pp. 7-13, and waitress Delores Dante, pp. 293-298.

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on inequality and stratification in the U.S.
Group discussion about individual work history, family economic history

Documentary: People Like Us: Social Class in America

(WEEK 3) SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

WORK, GENDER AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 6, "Gender Chasms in the New Economy" (pp. 125-160)

Sakai Folder:

Virgina Valian "Gender Schemas at Work" in Why So Slow? (pp. 1-22)
Virgina Valian "Evaluating Men and Women" in Why So Slow? (pp. 125-144)

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on gender, equal pay and "women's work"

Documentary: Rosie the Riveter

(WEEK 4) SEPTEMBER 29, 2015

WORK, RACE, ETHNICITY AND EQUALITY

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 7, "Race, Ethnicity and Work" (pp. 161-194)

Sakai Folder:

Upton Sinclair, The Jungle (pp. 21-52)

Immanuel Ness, Immigrants, Unions, and the New U.S. Labor Market, Chapter 2: *The Political Economy of Transnational Labor in New York City: The Context for Immigrant Worker Militancy*

Charlie LeDuff "At a Slaughterhouse Some Things Never Die" (pp. 96-114)

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on race, ethnicity and inequality in the workplace
Group Discussions about Race, Gender and Equality in the workplace

Documentary: At the River I Stand

PART II: CORPORATIONS AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

(WEEK 5) OCTOBER 6, 2015

THE CORPORATION

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Joel Bakan, The Corporation, Chapters 3-4

In-Class Lecture/Discussion on the evolution of the corporation
Group discussion on the role of corporations in society

Documentary: The Corporation

(WEEK 6) OCTOBER 13, 2015

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY PART 1

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Brown, Lauder and Ashton, The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Jobs and Income, Chapter 2, *The False Promise* and Chapter 5, *Digital Taylorism*

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion–“Good” jobs and Digital Taylorism
Group Discussion–Will You Survive the Global Economy?

(WEEK 7) OCTOBER 20, 2015

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY PART 2

Jeffrey Kaye, Moving Millions, Chapter 3, *Migrants in the Global Marketplace*

Martino and Bensman, *Regular Work in an Irregular Economy*, American Prospect, Sept. 2008

Nicholas D. Kristof, *Where Sweatshops Are a Dream*, New York Times, January 15, 2009.

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion–Sweatshops, low-wage labor and the movement of capital and human beings in the global economy
Group Discussion–Are sweatshops good for developing countries?

Documentary: China Blue

(WEEK 8) OCTOBER 27, 2015

WORKER RIGHTS AND UNIONS

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Jeremy Brecher, Strike, Chapter 1, “The Great Upheaval”

Joe Burns, Reviving the Strike, How Working People Can Regain Power and Transform America, Chapter 7, “The Principles of Labor Rights”

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on development of labor unions, Knights of Labor, AFL, IWW and “Are You a Commodity?”

PART III: UNIONS, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

(WEEK 9) NOVEMBER 3, 2015 INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Thomas Geoghegan, Which Side Are You On, Chapter 3, “Before the Lean Years”

Jeremy Brecher, Strike, Chapter 5, “Depression Decade”

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on the Depression, CIO, WWII and Industrial Unionism

Documentary: Sitdown and Fight—Walther Reuther and The Rise of the Auto Workers

(WEEK 10) NOVEMBER 10, 2015 UNIONS, WORKER CENTERS AND NEW MODELS OF ORGANIZATION

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Immanuel Ness, Immigrants, Unions, and the New U.S. Labor Market, Chapter 2: *The Political Economy of Transnational Labor in New York City: The Context for Immigrant Worker Militancy*

In-Class: Guest Speakers/Discussion with Reps from New Labor who are organizing low-wage temps in central NJ.

(WEEK 11) NOVEMBER 17, 2015 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PART 1

Read: **Sakai Folder:**
Michael Yates “Collective Bargaining” in Why Unions Matter (pp.53-80)

Joe Burns, Reviving the Strike, How Working People Can Regain Power and Transform America, Chapter 6, “The System of Labor Control”

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on Collective Bargaining and Prep for Mock Bargaining
Documentary: The Final Offer

(WEEK 12) NOVEMBER 17, 2015
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PART 2

In-Class: Mock Bargaining

(WEEK 13) DECEMBER 1, 2015
THE FUTURE OF WORK

Read: Sweet and Meiksins, Chapter 4, “Whose Jobs Are Secure?”
Sweet and Meiskins, Chapter 5, “A Fair Day’s Work”

In-Class: Lecture/Discussion on the Future of Work
Group Discussion What Do You Want?

Review for Final

(WEEK 14) DECEMBER 8, 2015
FINAL EXAM