

# RUTGERS

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department  
School of Management and Labor Relations • 50 Labor Center Way  
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## TOPICS IN LER: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS IN ENTERTAINMENT

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### SYLLABUS

#### FALL 2015

**Professor Brian J. Manetta, Esq.**

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**Course Location: College Avenue Campus, Scott Hall Room 221**

**Course Time: Wednesday, 7:40-10:30 p.m.**

**Office Hours: Before or after class or by appointment**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The entertainment industry in the United States is a multi-billion dollar enterprise. The business is comprised of a diverse labor force and constantly evolving ways to deliver content to consumers. Technological change has historically made employee relations in this field volatile. This course will explore employee-employer dynamics of specific industries such as stage, radio, television and movies.

This class will provide the basic outline for the multifaceted employment relationships in the entertainment industry. The class will focus on employment relations in the entertainment industry, including the labor / management relationship as well as the relationship between management and talent. Whether you are the talent, or representing the talent as a union, agent, or manager role or an employer seeking to retain the services of anyone in the entertainment field, this class is a must.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** 1) final exam, 25% of grade, 2) midterm exam, 25% of grade 3) class participation, 15% of grade 4) negotiations project, 10% of grade and 4) assigned topic paper, 25% of grade.

The assigned topic paper will require each student to write a 5 to 10 page paper. The subject of the paper will be a labor union representing individuals in the entertainment industry. Students will be expected to provide a brief history of the union and to discuss recent rounds of bargaining for a collective bargaining agreement.

The class project will consist of students being put into groups and each group being assigned the role of either representing an actor or representing a studio and negotiating a contract of services. The group will be required to present the final contract and then explain their position to the class as if the class were either the actor they represented or the studio heads.

### **BOOKS/READINGS:**

All readings will be available on Sakai. Be sure to check Sakai frequently as additional readings not set forth below will be added on a regular basis.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week 1 Sept. 2, 2015	Introductions & Course Overview
Week 2 Sept. 9, 2015	Introduction to the law of contracts and their importance to the entertainment industry.  Basic labor law and employment law overview within the entertainment industry.
<b>Reading:</b>	<i>Examples and Explanations – Contracts</i> . Ch. 1, The Meaning of Contract and the Basic Attributes of the Contractual Relationship  <i>Contracts for the Film and Television Industry</i> , Ch. 1, Basic Principles of Contract Law.
Week 3 Sept. 16, 2015	History and analysis of live theatre and the 100 years of the Actor's Equity Association.  Introduction to the art of negotiations with emphasis on collective bargaining and negotiating for individual talent.  Begin working on class projects.
<b>Reading:</b>	<i>Under the Stars</i> , Ch. 1, The Industry and the Unions: an Overview.
Week 4 Sept. 23, 2015	A history of the Screen Actors Guild and analysis of its recent merger with the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

**Reading:** *The Politics of Glamour, Ideology and Democracy in the Screen Actors Guild*, Ch. 1, A Union of Screen Actors.  
*SAG-AFTRA Merger Agreement*

Week 5  
Sept. 30, 2015 Radio industry history and analysis of current Collective Bargaining Agreements in the entertainment Industry

Review for mid-term exam

**Reading:** *Under the Stars*, Ch. 4, Transformation of Industrial Relations in the Motion Picture and Television Industries: Craft and Production

Week 6  
Oct. 7, 2015 Mid-Term Exam

Week 7  
Oct. 14, 2015 Interplay of Collective Bargaining Agreement and individual contracts for television and motion pictures

**Reading:** *Deal Making in the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 1, Introduction, Ch. 2, Deal Making, Ch. 3, Permission to Portray People and Places

Week 8  
Oct. 21, 2015 Individual contracts in the entertainment industry.

**Reading:** *Deal Making in the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 6, Employment Contracts.

Week 9  
Oct. 28, 2015 Labor unrest in the entertainment industry, including an in-depth look at the Writers Guild Strike of 2007 – 2008.

**Reading:** *Introduction to 2007 Writers Guild West Strike*  
*Rules Writers Strike of 2007 – 2008, The Economic Impact of Digital Distribution*

Week 10  
Nov. 4, 2015 Discussion regarding industry financing, production and distribution

**Reading:** *Contracts for the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 7, Financing, Ch. 8 Production, Ch. 9, Distribution, Ch. 10, Merchandizing

Week 11      A look towards the future-how new technology will shape the face  
Nov. 11, 2015      of labor relations in the decades to come.

**Reading:**      *Under the Stars*, Ch. 2, Technology Transforms

Week 12  
Nov. 18, 2015      Projects due, presentations to be made in class

Week 13  
Dec. 2, 2015      Breach of contract, remedies and alternatives.

Week 14  
Dec. 9, 2015      Review for Final Exam

FINAL  
EXAM      TBD