

Topics In Labor Studies- Youth and Work
37:575:215:90
Labor Studies and Employment Relations
FULLY ONLINE COURSE

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Course Overview:

This course will focus on young peoples' experiences in the labor market. The course starts by examining the work experiences of children and youth in the 19th and early 20th century. We begin by exploring the idea of child labor, and how it is defined in social and economic contexts. We then investigate several industries including---coal mines, manufacturing, textiles, homework, street work and agriculture---to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in US history, why it matters both socially and economically, reform programs that emerged, and how the US history of child labor can contribute to understanding global child labor problems today.

The course next explores contemporary experiences of young people in the labor market. We will 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 half of the course 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.

Overall, the course explores several questions, including; why do young people work? What jobs/industries are youth likely to work in, and how has this changed over time? Why and how are young workers concentrated in specific industries/occupations? How does young peoples' role in the labor market today differ from the role of previous generations of young workers? What are some of the challenges that young people face at work? How are the challenges that young workers face different from or similar to those of adult workers? How can young workers and their advocates improve young peoples' experiences in the labor market?

Course Accessibility for Disabled Students

"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>."

Required Books:

All books available at online. In addition to books, course readings are available on the course website or from me.

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. 2014. **Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America**. Temple University Press

Hindman, Hugh. 2002. **Child Labor: An American History**. M. E. Sharpe

You should make yourself familiar with the features of ecollege during the first week of class.

How will you learn in this online course?

Most weeks you will:

- ✓ Review material written by the professor on the page in the online shell. These are like lectures but much shorter, so you have more time for other learning activities.
- ✓ Throughout the material are questions to guide you. You want to be sure you can answer them—they may show up on exams!
- ✓ Read a variety of research based papers and articles.
- ✓ Answer questions regarding the readings and forums in exams.
- ✓ Participate in an online threaded discussion with other students, posting at least 3 times a week.
- ✓ Write short papers
- ✓ Some weeks you will also have the opportunity to review a video or videos, or listen to an audio file. Some weeks you will take an exam (open book).

Keep current – avoid being late!

An online class is somewhat flexible with regard to your schedule but if you must be responsible for managing your time and for getting online each week no matter what else is going on in your life. In general, you should sign into the class AT LEAST 4 times a week and check your email each day.

You should inform the professor of serious personal emergencies that arise – for instance, hospitalization that makes it impossible to get online. A trip associated with your job is not such an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels, libraries, restaurants (Starbucks, Panera, etc) and in campus computing facilities.

Class Expectations—Yes it’s online but it is still very interactive!

I am strongly committed to a mode of learning that is shared and collective in an online environment. I want you to form a learning community for one another. Participating in class discussions is one of the best ways to learn and there will be forums EACH week we have readings. Contributing to class discussions can take a number of forms, and often each week you will be engaging in several of these different forms. You may answer a question that I ask. You may ask a question. You may comment on another person’s contribution. Or you may try to encourage others to speak. The goal is to participate in an intellectually rigorous manner that will help us advance the discussion. You cannot do this if you are not prepared for class. As such, you must begin each week of class with the readings done --- and done carefully. Our online weeks will begin on Fridays and end on Thursday nights. That means you should have the readings/videos completed by Sunday (unless I designate otherwise in the week), so that you can contribute to the forum throughout the week. If you neglect that responsibility the seminar will suffer. However, with responsible preparation the seminar will be interesting, informative and FUN!!

The materials we cover consider the relationship of gender to other important lines of differentiation in society, including race/ethnicity, social class, political orientation and geographic location. Some of the materials covered tend to be controversial, and I anticipate that we will sometimes disagree in our discussions of them. We all must be committed to work hard to create a class culture that will be congenial for each student’s participation. You will be expected to RESPECT each of your classmates and their comments, and demonstrate that respect at all times. Remarks that are dismissive of other students, personal attacks on anyone in the classroom, or excessive reliance on personal experiences (rather than the readings) will not be tolerated and will severely reduce your participation grade. Please do not be concerned that taking a perspective different from mine will in any way negatively affect your grade. What I seek to create in this seminar is an environment where you can be free to ask questions and share thoughts without fear of censure or ridicule.

Grade Distribution (out of 1,000 points)

Course Information Sheet:	5 points
IceBreaker Forum:	50 points
Forums	300 points (50 points each)
Mall Assignment	125 points
Briefing Paper to Secretary Perez	120 points
Quizzes (2 exams total)	400 points (200 points each)

Assessment of online forums

There will be forums EACH WEEK (except exam weeks) throughout the semester. A forum is an interactive threaded discussion. In addition, you will have an ICEBREAKER forum starting the FIRST day of class to help you get comfortable with the forum format and meet your fellow students. This first forum will give you an idea of how to use the discussion forum feature, and will be a graded "ice-breaker" forum to begin the day the class starts. The forums are found with each of the units they are associated with. Each of the forums will start on Friday of the week (the day the week begins) and end on the following Thursday (the day the week ends). There are specific dates and number of times within the week were you need to post for each forum. That information is explained in each forum. Forums are the MAIN way I will evaluate how you understand the materials and applying them each week.

NOTE—FOR ALL THE FORUMS YOU NEED TO POST YOUR COMMENT BEFORE YOU CAN SEE OTHER STUDENTS COMMENTS

Your contribution will be evaluated as follows:

How much you participated in a substantive way. In general, you can think of this as 1 point per substantive post that adds to the discussion.

Was your participation ongoing and interactive? You can interact with others by asking or answering questions, or by agreeing or disagreeing with them, but remember you must add to the discussion, not simply agree. EACH FORUM WILL HAVE SPECIFIC DATES AND NUMBER OF TIMES IN THE WEEK YOU NEED TO POST BY IN ORDER TO KEEP THE DISCUSSION FLOWING. BE SURE TO CHECK THIS IN THE FORUM.

Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings? Did you understand the ideas correctly or did you make errors? Did you connect the ideas of readings to those of others? In other words, what was the quality of your comments?

Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence? Persuasive opinions are backed by a variety of types of evidence –from other academic sources, from current events, and from personal experience.

Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately? Please don't "flame" in these forums. Informality is OK, but use standard written English of the sort that would be appropriate in a work setting.

Forum Groups--

You are assigned to a Forum group at the beginning of the semester. While there are often dozens of students enrolled in a course, you will only interact with your group.

To identify your group letter, look to the left of the screen under any unit tab in the course. You will only be able to see your group – Example: Group J. At the beginning of the course, make

sure you memorize your group letter. It may be referred to by the instructor in weekly messages when she wants to bring something from one group to all students in the class!

Quizzes:

Two quizzes are scheduled throughout the semester. These are based on the weekly readings and discussions. The quizzes will require you to construct informed and thoughtful answers to the questions.

Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity! Your written questions will be submitted to “Turnitin.com” to insure that your answers are yours alone – not answers from another student, from the web, or another source. Be careful not to “copy” phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words!

Mall Assignment:

You will conduct a fieldwork project in a local mall to analyze the work experiences of young people today. Details for this assignment are located on the course website

Briefing Paper to Labor Secretary Perez

You will write a briefing paper to US Labor Secretary Thomas Perez on the challenge of young workers with a focus on race and socio-economic status. Details for this assignment are located in the course website.

General Information For Forum Posts, Papers and Quizzes:

The papers are to be your own original work. You should use your books and notes as a reference. Be sure to cite any direct quotations that you use. You may discuss ideas with other students in the class, but the final product must be your own work. Any papers that are conspicuously similar are automatically sent to the Dean. The focus is on how what we have read and talked about in class can be used in order to critically examine the issues/arguments presented in the papers. Therefore you will be graded on your understanding of the scholarly information, theories and concepts that we have discussed. Simply regurgitating class notes is not a thoughtfully constructed paper.

.Course Schedule

Week 1: January 23 to January 29

Topic: Introduction to Studying Youth and Work

Videos: *U.S. Child Labor, 1908-1920* and *The Dark Side of Chocolate*

Forum: ***Icebreaker “Your First Work Experiences”***. For this icebreaker forum we are going to start to get to know each other and also start to think about our own work experiences. First, I want you to post about the first paid work experience that you had. There are questions

in the forum to guide your thinking and writing of this post. You must post this by midnight on Sunday January 25th. Second, you must comment on at least 3 other students' posts. Again, you will find questions in the forum to guide your comments. You must complete these 3 additional posts by midnight on Thursday January 29th.

Week 2: January 30 to February 5

Topic: The Child Labor Problem (Hindman Chapters 1 and 2) and Child Labor in America—Agriculture (Hindman Chapter 9)

Forum: ***Children on Farms Today***. For this forum we want to explore how far (or not so far) the United States has progressed in regard to child labor on farms. You read about child labor in the 19th/20th century this week—well what about today? For this forum you will need to first read some news stories/watch some videos about children working on farms in the 21st century America (there will be some examples in the forum and you are free to explore online for others). Then I want you to post a memo to President Obama. In this memo you need to explain what the problem is today, and importantly what lessons we learned from child labor on the farms in the 19/20th century that can be brought to bear today. (That is, did we improve the situation for child labor on farms; make it worse; not do anything about it). You need to post this by Monday February 2nd at midnight. Then you need to comment on 2 other students' posts. Are your memos in agreement? Are there significant differences? You need to comment by midnight on Thursday February 5th.

Week 3: February 6 to February 12

Topic: Child Labor in America--Coal Mines, Manufacturing (Hindman Chapters 4 and 5)

Forum: ***Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire***. For this forum we want to build on what we read and focus in on factory work. Specifically, you want to watch the PBS film on NYC Triangle Shirtwaist Factory (found in the forum). Now imagine that you have been asked by the Mayor of New York to design a memorial to the victims of the Triangle Fire. What would you propose, and why? What information would you want your memorial to impart, and what feelings and emotions would you want it to elicit? Describe the concept for your memorial in writing. You want to write up your concept and post it in the forum by Monday February 9th at midnight. After you post the story you are then to assume the "mayor" role for the other students, and respond to their news stories concepts. What do you like about them? How does it share the experience of the victims of the fire? How does it convey the issues associated with child labor? You must respond to 2 students post by midnight on Thursday February 12.

Week 4: February 13 to February 19

Topic: Child Labor in America—Homework and Street Trades (Hindman Chapters 7 and 8)

Forum: ***Gender and Child Labor*** This week you read about 2 very 'gendered' forms of child labor—young boys working as news boys and messengers; and young girls working as homeworkers/sewers. Such segregation is very common. For this assignment I want you to search for a news stories on child labor today that focuses on work that is predominately

performed by young boys or young girls. I suggest some sites in the forum for you to search (including BBC, BBC America, Guardian, CNN, CNN international etc). You are to post the link to the story along with your summary of it by Sunday February 15th at midnight. Then I want you to comment on 2 other students' stories where you try to identify similar patterns of how gender segregation in child labor existed in the US in the 19th/20th century and how it exists today. These posts are due by midnight on Thursday February 18th.

Week 5: February 20 to February 26
Quiz #1

Week 6: February 27 to March 5

Topic: Teenage Workers Today (Besen-Cassino, Chapter 1-3 and Tannock, Why Do Working Youth Work Where They Do?:A Report from the Young Worker Project)

Forum: **Retails Jobs and Young Workers**. For this forum I want you to search online for help wanted ads for the types of workplaces/retail establishments that Besen-Cassino talks about in Chapter 2 and 3. You can use craigslist, company websites, and other sources. Then I want you to post what you find—what are the employers emphasizing (skill, education, something else; are they looking for a particular kind of worker?). I want you to post a summary of what you found (you can include links to the ads) by midnight on Monday March 1. Then I want you to respond to at least 2 other students' posts. Did you find similar things, different things, why? You need to complete these responses by midnight on Thursday March 5th.

Week 7: March 6 to March 12

Topic: Teenage Workers Today (Besen-Cassino, Chapter 5-7)

Forum: **Gender Wage Gap** For this forum I want to focus in on Besen-Cassino's chapter on gender pay gap for young people. First I want you to supplement the reading by reading this piece from Think Progress on gender gaps in children's allowances (<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/04/23/3430025/gender-gap-allowance/>) Then I want you to either: think back to what you earned for an allowance or for work you did in your neighborhood (babysitting, lawn work) and if you have siblings, ask them what they earned. If you don't have siblings (or if your siblings are the same gender as you) ask friends (both male and female) of similar ages to you what they earned. In both cases be sure to get the wages and the work they did. Or if you are a parent who pays your children an allowance (or hires children for certain jobs) report out the work they do, their gender and what you pay. So for your first post I want you to share the data you gathered (including the years when the work was done) and write a post about how gender does/does not influence the payment. Post this by Monday March 9th at midnight. Then I want you to comment on at least 2 other students' posts. Are there similarities, differences? Does some of that have to do with the work that is being performed? Time period? You need to make this post by midnight on Thursday March 12th.

Week 8: March 13 to March 19 (Spring Break)

Week 9: March 20 to March 26

Topic: Teenage Workers Today – Besen-Cassino Chapter 8

No Forum-- ***Begin Mall Observations*** Visit the page on our course website that details the Mall Observation assignment and you are to download the observation sheets and start your observations.

Week 10: March 27 to April 2

Mall Observation and Paper Due by midnight on April 2nd. Details on the assignment are found in the course website.

Week 11: April 3 to April 9

Topic: Teenage Workers today: Race, Class and Unemployment Part 1 (AFL-CIO “Young workers: A Lost Decade” and Economic Policy Institute “The Kids Aren’t Alright: A Labor Market Analysis of Young Workers; and Jacobs, “Twelve Ways to Fix the Youth Unemployment Crisis

No Forum but you should start your **Briefing Paper to US Labor Secretary Perez**. Details for the briefing paper are on the course website.

Week 12: April 10 to April 16

Topic: Teenage Workers today: Race, Class and Unemployment Part 2

For this week you are to post your **Briefing Paper to Secretary Perez** in the dropbox by midnight on April 16th. Details on the paper are found in the course website.

Week 13: April 17 to April 23

Topic: How Young Workers will Change Work: (Williams, How the Millennial Generation Will Change the Workplace and Stiller, Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace)

Forum: ***Changing Workplaces?*** For this forum you want to reflect on the readings and also your own experiences in the workplace (either as a millennial or as someone who is not an Millennials but perhaps has worked with Millennials). You want to post how you believe the workplaces will/will not change as young workers take on more leadership positions. You should use your own experiences as well as the readings as a guide. Post this by midnight on Sunday April 19th. Then I want you to react to at least 3 other students’ posts by Thursday April 23 at midnight.

Week 14: April 24 to April 30

Quiz #2