

PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES, Spring 2018
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
37:575:395:03
Teresa Poor, Instructor – tpoor@aleph-naught.net

COURSE SUMMARY

This course is designed to familiarize students with some of the key Labor Studies' perspectives on labor, work, markets, organizing, and management, and to give students an opportunity to apply these perspectives to contemporary issues in Labor Studies. Students will be asked to: 1) read the assigned scholarship for the arguments and to take a position on those arguments, 2) scrutinize the argument and its relationship to the evidence, 3) participate in discussions and give presentations. Students who enroll in the course must be Labor Studies majors or minors, and must have earned 15 or more credits in Labor Studies. A student who does not meet these requirements must seek permission from the Instructor in order to take this class.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate learning in the areas below.

School of Management and Labor Relations

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation. (Goal IV)

Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations

- Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations. (Goal 1)

Additional course objectives from the instructors

- Identify core concepts of the field of labor & employment relations
- Apply those concepts to understanding contemporary developments in work
- Synthesize information from multiple sources to generate new insights

COURSE READINGS

All course readings will be posted on Sakai.

CLASS 1, January 18:

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Introductions
2. Explain the "Personal Statement" assignment

3. Hand out syllabus and debate scenario

PART ONE: LABOR, MARKETS, GROWTH, WEALTH, AND INSTABILITY

CLASS 2, January 25 – introduction

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Submit “Personal Statement”.
2. Watch and discuss movie Commanding Heights: The New Rules of the Game
3. Create facilitation and group assignments.

CLASS 3, February 1

READINGS DUE:

1. “Employment and Independence” in The Constitution of Liberty, by Friedrich .A. Hayek, 1960.
2. “Individualism and Collectivism” in The Road to Serfdom, by Friedrich A. Hayek, 1944.
3. **Watch:**
“Milton Friedman on Minimum Wage” on youtube, uploaded by amagilly on June 14, 2008. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ca8Z__o52sk

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s reading on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions and present the groups’ answers in class.

CLASS 4, February 8

READINGS DUE:

1. Chapters 1, 2, 3. An Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations, by Adam Smith.
2. “Uses and Abuses of Adam Smith”, by Amartya Sen. *History of Political Economy*. 43:2. 2011.

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s reading on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.

CLASS 5, February 15

READINGS DUE:

1. Chapters 4, 5, and 6. A Critique of Political Economy: Capital, Vol. 1, by Karl Marx
2. “The Process of Creative Destruction”, by Joseph Schumpeter
3. Selected reading from The Decline of American Power, by Immanuel Wallerstein

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.

Class 6, February 22

READINGS DUE:

1. “Turning the Tables”, in The Power of Market Fundamentalism, by Fred L. Bloc.
2. Selected pages from “Karl Polyani and the Reality of Society”, *History and Theory*, 55 (October 2016).
3. **Watch:**
“Noam Chomsky on Milton Friedman and the History of Market Economies”, youtube, uploaded by Mechaghostman2 on Nov. 26, 2016 -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoDjEFpwpOY>

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.

CLASS 7, March 1 – Review and Movie:

1. Movie: “Life and Debt”
2. Review
3. Hand Out Take-Home Mid-term.

PART TWO: WORK

CLASS 8, March 8

1. Turn in Mid-term
2. Watch “Human Resources”

3. Introduction to second theme of the course.

SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS ON MARCH 15

CLASS 9, March 22

READINGS DUE:

1. “Kellogg’s Six-Hour Day: A Capitalist Vision of Liberation through Managed Work Reduction”, by Benjamin Hunnicutt
2. “When Work Disappears: New Implications for Race and Urban Poverty in the Global Economy”, by William Julius Wilson.

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.

CLASS 10, March 29

READINGS DUE:

1. “Work”, by C. Wright Mills
2. Selected readings from The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling, by Arlie Russel Hochschild.
3. The Human Side of Enterprise, by Douglas McGregor

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.
3. Hand out Debate written assignment.

PART THREE: AUTHORITY AND ORGANIZING WORK

CLASS 11, April 5

READINGS DUE:

1. “Transient Solidarities: Commitment and Collective Action in Post-Industrial Societies”, by Charles Heckscher and John McCarthy. British Journal of Employment Relations 52:4 December 2014.

2. “Worker Mutualism in an Age of Entrepreneurial Capitalism”, by Dorothy Sue Cobble. *Labour and Industry: A Journal of Social and Economic Relations at Work*. Volume 26, 2016
3. Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act
4. Selected chapters from Rivthead: Tales from the Assembly Line, by Ben Hamper.

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions

CLASS 12, April 12

1. Selections from “Bureaucracy”, by Max Weber.
2. “Uses of Industrial Power”, by David Brody

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Prior to class, all students who are not facilitating must post your entries to the week’s readings on Sakai’s “Assignment” site.
2. Facilitators lead group discussions.
3. Hand out debate written assignment and final Debate scenario.

CLASS 13, April 19

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Watch “Harlan County, USA”
2. Turn in Debate written assignment.
3. Divide class into Debate teams.

CLASS 14, April 26

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Debate
2. Score the Debate via extra credit
3. Review for Final.
4. Hand out Final

FINAL DUE ON THURSDAY, May 3, 2018 at 6 p.m.:

The final is due by 6 p.m., on May 3, 2018. Upload your final to Sakai's "Assignment" site and use the "Final" folder. It may not be longer than eight pages, and it must be typed and double spaced.

GRADING AND CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance, Weekly Entries, and Personal Statements (95 points)

a. Rutgers University has an attendance policy (26 points):

Students are expected to attend all scheduled course meetings, although no special provisions are normally made for reporting occasional absences from class. It is the policy of the university to excuse without penalty students who are absent because of religious observance and to allow the makeup of work missed because of such absences. A student absent from an examination because of required religious observance will be given an opportunity to make up the examination without penalty.

We will abide by this attendance policy except that each student may have one absence that will not be counted against him or her.

b. Weekly Entries(54 points)

All students who are not assigned to facilitate must submit a weekly entry, which should be posted on Sakai at the "Assignments" tab. Each entry will be a short response to the weekly entry questions posted on Sakai in the Assignments tab. The weekly entry must be posted prior to each class. The entry is a response to each reading assigned for the week. For example, if there are three readings assigned then there will be three responses. A response should be no more than a short paragraph (approximately five sentences).

c. Personal Statements(15 points)

All students must submit a Personal Statement. A Personal Statement is a three to five-page statement of your views and opinions of each of the class's themes: 1) Labor and Market Society, 2) Work, and 3) Organizing Work. A set of questions will be posted to help you with your Personal Statement. The Personal Statement will help each student prepare for the theme and to reflect on how the readings and discussions have changed initial opinions and beliefs. It will be due at the beginning of the semester.

Class Participation, Facilitation Assignment, and Debate (150 points):

The Group

Students will be broken down into separate Groups on the second day of class. Students will remain in these Groups for the entire semester.

The Group Facilitator Assignment (95 points)

During the semester, one student in each group will act as the facilitator. This facilitator role will rotate throughout the semester. The student who acts as the facilitator must do the following:

- a. The facilitator is responsible for leading the other students in the group through that week's reading assignment.
- b. By 11:55 p.m. on the Tuesday before each class, the facilitator will submit his or her typed answers to his or her assigned questions (posted on Sakai) and will upload the answer to the "Assignment" site. I will review and comment on that answer by Thursday morning. My review and comments will be given to the facilitator and will be geared toward helping the facilitator lead the group discussion scheduled for later that night.
- c. The facilitator will then lead the group discussion and stand before the larger class to present the group's answers.

The Group's Responsibility for Weekly Questions, Answers, and Discussion (25 points)

- a. Each member of the group must be prepared to discuss answers to the Group's facilitation questions. These facilitation questions will be posted on Sakai.
- b. I will assess each student's participation in the small group and in the larger class discussion, and that assessment will be incorporated into each student's grade. To do well in this part of the class, each student must show that they have read and thought about the material, and are prepared to discuss the material.

The Debate (30 points plus extra credit opportunities)

The Class will try to weave some of the themes covered during the semester into a Debate scenario and format. At the beginning of the semester, a draft debate scenario will be handed out to students. Throughout the semester, the class will turn to the scenario to explore it from the perspectives of the assigned scholarship. At the end of the semester, prior to the day of the debate, each student will submit a 4 to 5-page paper that analyzes the debate scenario from the perspective of a few of the scholars covered during the semester. Then, the entire class will participate in a "debate". There will be extra credit opportunities during the debate.

Midterm: (100 points)

The midterm will be no more than 8 pages, typed and double spaced.

The Final (100 points)

The final will be no more than 8 pages, typed, and double spaced.

Grading

Total 445 points

A	445-400.5
B+	400-378
B	377-354
C+	353-331.5
C	331-309
D+	308-289
D	288-267
F	266 and below

“Office Hours”

If you email me anytime between Friday and Saturday, I will respond to your email by Sunday evening. I will respond to all other email when I am able. Speak with me after class or email me if you need to arrange a time to meet.

Timeliness

All assignments must be submitted by the scheduled due date and time. Assignments may be turned in one week from that due date and time; however, those late assignments will be docked points. I will not accept assignments that are turned in any later than one week past due the date.

Please also review Rutgers University’s Academic Integrity policy. Visit academicintegrity.rutgers.edu for information on this policy. The policy must be applied in this class. Thanks.