

LABOR & DEMOCRACY
Labor Studies and Employment Relations 575:301
Spring 2019

DRAFT SYLLABUS (to be further updated)

Class Meetings:

Room A4
Hardenbergh Hall
College Avenue Campus
Monday, 1:10 – 4:10pm

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OH: tbd.

Course Overview:

A central issue of our time is the maintenance of democracy, especially in light of a variety of economic and social pressures that have made many countries, even in the West, turn to authoritarian parties and governments. This course probes the role that labor movements play for democracy in comparative perspective. Students will be introduced to workers' collective action as a worldwide phenomenon that has been central to the political economic development of capitalist democracies. Grounded in a historical institutionalist approach from political science, the course emphasizes how countries' unique histories and their institutional contexts have shaped both the political opportunities for workers' evolving collective action and the effects that such social mobilization has had on the relationship between capitalism and democracy. Throughout the course, these insights are contrasted with those provided by alternative perspectives drawn from economic sociology and neoclassical economics.

With reference to three centuries of transatlantic history, the class covers both key political achievements of the working class as well as labor's contemporary challenges. Among the achievements, we focus in particular on the extension of democratic rights and the expansion of welfare states; among the challenges, we probe the needs to accommodate shifting social cleavages, respond to economic globalization, and devise strategies for revitalization.

Learning Objectives: The student is able to...

21C Core Curriculum:

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world (Goal a).
- Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts. (Goal d).

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:

- Analyze a contemporary global issue in labor & employment relations from a multi-disciplinary perspective (Goal 7).
- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (Goal 8).

School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions (Goal V).

Additional Course Objectives from the Instructor:

- Use the comparative approach to develop a solid understanding of labor movements'

causes, nature and effects.

- Improve professional competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving; verbal and written communication; and interpersonal skills.

Course Requirements (details at the end of the syllabus):

In-Class Participation	35% of the course grade
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	35%

Class Materials:

- Students are not required to purchase any books. All readings will be made available.

Course Outline:

Week 1: Building a Foundation (Jan 28)

Labor & Democracy

Julia Preston. 2013. "Veteran Union Activist Fasts to Support Rights for Illegal Immigrants." *New York Times*, November 22.

David Dayen. 2013. "Get Serious: How a Frustrated Blogger Made Expanding Social Security a Respectable Idea." *Pacific Standard*, November/December, 30-33.

Markets for Labor

Paul Frymer and Dorian T. Warren. 2011. "What NBA stars and Occupy Wall Street protesters have in common." *Washington Post*, October 28.

SECTION I: TOOLS FOR ANALYZING LABOR MOVEMENTS

This section of the course probes how we can conceptualize labor movements: Who belongs to them? What does a movement seek to do? Why does a movement end up doing what it does?

Week 2: Work & Collective Action (Feb 4)

Is Collective Action Necessary?

Rick Fantasia & Kim Voss. 2004. *Hard Work. Remaking the American Labor Movement*. Berkeley: UC Press, 1-33 (Chapter 1: "Why Labor Matters").

Different Forms of Collective Action

Joel Rogers and Wolfgang Streeck. 1994. "Workplace Representation Overseas: The Works Councils Story." In Richard Freeman, ed. *Working under Different Rules*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, only read pages 97-117.

Mike Elkby. 2013. "VW Isn't Fighting Unionization—But Leaked Docs Show Right-Wing Groups Are." Bill Moyers & Company, November 14.

Week 3: Labor as a Social Movement (Feb 11) – QUIZ!

Illustration (I): The California Farm Worker Movement

Cletus E. Daniel. 1987. "Cesar Chavez and the Unionization of California Farm Workers." In Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine, eds. *Labor Leaders in America*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, only read pages 350-373; remaining pages of the chapter are recommended but not required.

Theory (I): The Dynamics of Building Social Movements

Sidney G. Tarrow. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (3rd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-15 (Introduction).

Week 4: Institutions & Workers' Collective Action (Feb 18)

Illustration (II): Organized Labor & Immigration

Janice Fine and Daniel J. Tichenor. 2009. "A Movement Wrestling: American Labor's Enduring Struggle with Immigration, 1866-2007." *Studies in American Political Development* 23(April): 84-113 (focus on introduction, conclusion & one time period).

Theory (II): Context Shapes Social Action

Sidney G. Tarrow. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 71-73 (part of Chapter 5).

SECTION II: LABOR MOVEMENTS IN COMPARATIVE HISTORY

In this section of the course, we move beyond the United States to probe how labor movements have played pivotal roles in many countries' histories. We focus on the role of labor in shaping the fate of democracy and capitalism during the 1930s, and in the consolidation of welfare states after World War II.

Week 5: Promoting Social Democracy (Feb 25) – QUIZ!

Establishing the Primacy of Politics

Sheri Berman. 2006. *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-19 (Chapter 1: "Introduction").

The Swedish Path to Social Democracy

Sheri Berman. 2006. *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 162-176 (Chapter 7: "The Swedish Exception").

Week 6: Limits to Social Democracy in Germany & the United States (March 4)

The German Path to National Socialism

Sheri Berman. 2006. *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 125-151 (Chapter 6: "The Rise of Fascism and National Socialism").

The American Labor Movement and the New Deal

Nelson Lichtenstein. 2003. *State of the Union: A Century of American Labor*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 20-53 (Chapter 1: "Reconstructing the 1930s").

Duncan Kelly. 2013. "Beyond the Politics of Fear (Review of Ira Katznelson's book *Fear Itself*)." *Financial Times*, May 11/12.

Available Student Presentations:

- Elisabeth Sanders. 1999. *Roots of Reform. Farmers, Workers and the American State 1877-1917*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ira Katznelson. 2013. *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*. New York: Liveright.

Week 7: Midterm (March 11)

MIDTERM

Prepare.

Week 8: Consolidating Social Democracy & Welfare States (March 25)

Cross-National Comparisons

Gregory Luebbert. 1991. *Liberalism, Fascism, or Social Democracy: Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-14 (Introduction). – Try to get the basic ideas (no need to understand everything).

Bringing in the Middle Class after World War II

Peter Baldwin. 1990. *The Politics of Social Solidarity. Class Bases of the European Welfare State 1875-1975*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 2 ("The Triumph of the Solidaristic Welfare State: Britain and Scandinavia"), only read pages 107-133.

Week 9: Guest Speaker (April 1)

tbd

SECTION III: KEY CHALLENGES FOR LABOR MOVEMENTS

In this section, we review how contemporary labor movements have responded to some of the key challenges they face around the world today. We also reflect on how they might do better, addressing such questions as: How should labor movements adopt their strategies? Who and how should they seek to organize and mobilize for “contentious collective action”? Which goals should they pursue? How can they be revitalized?

Week 10: Shifting Gender Roles (April 8)

The British Case

No reading. We will watch a movie and complete a worksheet.

Week 11: Responding to Shifting Gender Roles (April 15) – QUIZ!

Socio-economic Changes

Hanne Rosin. 2012. “Who Wears the Pants in this Economy?” *New York Times Magazine*, August 30.

Labor’s Responses

Dorothy Sue Cobble. 2009. “It’s Time for New Deal Feminism.” *The Washington Post*, December 13.

Mundy, Liza. 2014. “The Daddy Track.” *The Atlantic*, January/February, 15-18.

Preparation for Debates: This class believes that...

1. ... “Rising Economic Inequality Threatens Democracy.”
2. ... “The Best Way for Labor Unions to Revitalize Is to Embrace Social Media.”

Week 12: The Rise of Neoliberalism (April 22)

In-Class Debates

No Required Reading.

Social Democracy in Question?

Tony Judt. 2009. “What is Living and What is Dead in Social Democracy?” *New York Review of Books*, December 17.

Week 13: The Future of the Labor Movement (April 29)

Defining the Status Quo

Michael McTernan. 2012. "Distributional Conflicts in the US and Europe." Policy Network Paper, London, November.

Developing a Reform Narrative

Sasha Abramsky. 2011. "A Conversation with Marshall Ganz." *The Nation*, February 2.
Marshall Ganz. 2009. "Why Stories Matter: The Art and Craft of Social Change." *Sojourners*, March, 18-19.

Week 14: Review (May 6)

Watch video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kcx0mabB3dY>

Week 15: Final Exam online

Appendix I – Further Information on Course Assignments & Class Rules:

ACCESS TO READINGS

All readings will be made available on Rutgers Sakai (<http://sakai.rutgers.edu>). These directions lead you to the course site:

- Go to <http://sakai.rutgers.edu>
- To log on, enter your Rutgers NetID and password in the upper right-hand corner.
- Look for the tabs at the top of the next page. Click on the tab: 38:575:301.
- Click on “Resources” on the menu on the left-hand side of the next page. You should see the course syllabus and all of the course readings.

SPECIAL RULES ON ENGAGING WITH THE READINGS

Students are required to print out all assigned readings to allow for effective engagement with the material. Moreover, students are expected to bring hard-copy versions of the assigned texts to class meetings. After instructor’s individual approval, electronic versions may be used as substitutes. These measures will help with in-class discussions of the readings.

SPECIAL RULES ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES

There will be no use of laptops, tablets or smart phones during class sessions without special permission. While such instruments are important tools for research, they have also become distractions in the classroom. For in-depth learning in the course, students are asked to pay focused attention and contribute critical thought in class discussions. I will prepare PowerPoint presentations that will include the main points of each class session. The slides from these presentations will be shared with students through Sakai after each class session.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE

Be prepared for class and always read the assigned materials before our meetings. You are expected to bring questions and comments about the course material so that you can participate in class discussions. With much of our time spent learning through discussion, it is necessary for everybody to participate. I might ask students to use their questions to stimulate discussions and will ensure broad participation. It is critical that we respect one another’s thoughts and address our comments at others’ ideas, not at people themselves. This course is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language. Rather than measuring the frequency with which you speak in class, your participation grade reflects how you balance speaking, reading, and listening. Also, don’t forget to take careful notes to complement the PowerPoint slides.

Students should plan to attend every course session, and I ask you to sign in personally at the beginning of class. If for some unavoidable reason you must miss a class, please let me know in advance through the university’s absence reporting website (<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>) so that your absence will not remain unexplained. If you are late or leave early repeatedly, and if you miss class unexcused, your participation grade will suffer.

GROUP DEBATES

The session in week 12 will be used for in-class group debates. A couple of weeks before, groups will be formed and time will be provided in class for groups to coordinate their preparation for the debates. Your performance in the debate will become part of your in-class participation grade.

QUIZZES

There will be three very short in-class quizzes during the semester. If you do the assigned readings, you should have no problem doing well on the quizzes. There will be no trick questions, nor will a complete understanding of the reading be required. Rather, the quizzes are geared to helping you engage with the reading by asking you to answer some very basic questions. Your performance in the quizzes will become part of your in-class participation grade. However, I will not count your worst quiz grade.

MIDTERM EXAM

The midterm exam will be held in class. It covers material from the first half of the course and will require you to define key terms and provide short-answers to questions.

FINAL EXAM

The final exam will be given via SAKAI. It will be two hours in length, and you will be able to independently pick the most suitable time for you to take it. The final exam covers material from the entire course, and you will be expected to use what you have learned in class to advance clear arguments on two issues. I'll give you information about the content and structure of the final exam a few weeks before the end of the semester.

EXTRA-CREDIT PAPER ASSIGNMENT

The assignment asks you to critique the press coverage of a news story ("press critique"). Write a paper of 5-7 pages (double spaced) analyzing one particular instance of how the press/media has covered economic globalization's impact on labor broadly conceived. Please see Appendix II for more information.

COMMUNICATION

Students are expected to check their Rutgers email accounts regularly for class announcements. Students are responsible for all information communicated to them via email by the instructor. Feel free to contact the instructor via email with questions or concerns about the course. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. When emailing the instructor, always include "Labor & Democracy" in the subject line of your email. When available, grades will be posted on the course's Sakai site under the "PostEm" tab.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

While I encourage students to work together to understand theories and concepts, all written work must be your own. If you cite an author or use his/her ideas, please cite properly.

Plagiarized assignments or evidence of cheating will result in a failing grade in the assignment and possibly in the course, and may result in disciplinary action by the university.

KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS

Throughout the course, students should keep up with current events by reading at least one quality newspaper (e.g. *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*) and one news magazine (e.g. *The Economist*, *The Atlantic*) on a regular basis. You may also choose foreign-language publications, or fulfill this assignment by checking online news sources regularly. In addition, you will be expected to read any newspaper clippings handed out in class or emailed by the instructor.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

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>.

Appendix II – Extra-Credit Paper Assignment:

The paper assignment asks you to critique the press coverage of a news story. Write a paper of 5-7 pages (double spaced, 12 sized Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins) analyzing one (or two) newspaper article(s) that discuss(es)/analyze(s) the global economy's impact on labor.

The main goal of this assignment is to get you to think through the material covered in class, and to demonstrate that you can apply it outside of the immediate class context. The other goal of this assignment is to help develop your ability to write clearly and analytically. Your essay will be graded on the level of engagement with class materials, on how well it critiques the article(s), on its consideration and evaluation of different perspectives that relate to the argument(s) it is making, on the organization of the paper, and on the quality and clarity of the writing.

You are free to choose for your critique any of a variety of article formats, including a report, a commentary/editorial, or a longer analysis. You may review one newspaper's or news magazine's coverage of a story, or compare two or more sources' coverage. Articles with strong opinion content (such as op-eds) often provide the easiest targets for thorough and convincing critiques. The article you choose to critique should be contemporary, i.e. it needs to have been published after January 2010. If in doubt about whether the article falls within the scope of the assignment, please check with me.

The paper should present a coherent critique of the chosen material, grounded in the ideas discussed in the course. Central questions to address in your analysis include: Is the coverage accurate? Is it biased? If so, what is the nature of the bias? What is the frame that the article adopts? Could the same data have been framed in a different way? Do you think any important data points or contextual perspectives are missing? Do the reporters have a good understanding of politics and economics? How could the reporters improve the coverage? What would be a better way to view/interpret the material? For example, if the reporting builds on inaccurate assumptions, identify those assumptions and state why they are wrong. Feel free to suggest an alternative argument or set of assumptions. Make sure to keep in mind that there are real limits to what a single news article can cover. For example, a short reporting-style piece cannot go into the many complexities of real-world causal relations.

There is no particular organizational structure required for your critique. Be sure to properly describe the character of the material you pick for your review, but avoid an extended summary of the piece. Rather, launch into your critique and write a paper that makes a strong argument about the quality – and particularly potential weaknesses – of a piece of press coverage.

A solid press critique cites multiple examples from the analyzed coverage and demonstrates careful reading of the course material. The paper should exhibit university-level competence in grammar and style, and should properly and accurately cite all sources that are consulted in a consistent citation style.

Appendix III – Tips from Political Scientist Henry Farrell on what constitutes good student writing (useful for both the paper assignment and exam essays):¹

1. **Read the Requirements for the Assignment:** This suggestion may be taken as insulting because it is so obvious; still, it is commonly ignored in practice. Professors usually drop some very strong hints about what they are looking for. It is best to pay attention to those hints. If assignments are ambiguous, you may want to be quite clear in saying how you are interpreting the posed question.
2. **Avoid Data Dumps:** Poor essays very often ignore the question asked in a quite specific way. The student spots some topic in the assignment that seems familiar, and immediately sets about writing an essay that tells the professor everything the student knows about that topic, in no particular order. For obvious reasons, such essays rarely receive high grades. Higher education in the social sciences and liberal humanities encourages students to criticize, to analyze, and to think. Mere demonstration that one possesses a disorganized body of knowledge on a topic suggests that this encouragement has fallen on untilled ground.
3. **Cut to the Chase:** Undergraduate essays frequently begin with an extended session of throat-clearing irrelevances and vague generalities. They talk about everything except the question that has been asked. Moreover, students sometimes state and re-state the question in a manner intended to suggest that they understand it, without ever providing an actual answer.

It is important that you get the introduction right. This is your best opportunity to grab the reader's attention and to persuade her that you have something interesting to say. Don't waste it. By the time the reader has finished reading the first two sentences, she should know which question the essay addresses. By the time the reader has finished reading the first five or six, she should have a pretty good idea of how the author is going to tackle the question.

When writing, remember that an essay does not necessarily have to convince its readers (particularly if it takes a controversial stand). A paper's introduction needs to signal to the reader that the author pursues a clear question, provides a clear answer to that question, and shows a willingness to address the best arguments against the case she is making.

4. **Organize:** Many student papers wander from point to point. They tack an introduction and conclusion onto a main body that does not have any internal system of order; or they do not have a distinguishable introduction, body, and conclusion at all. **You should structure your paper/essay at three levels:**
 - **Macro-structure:** This is the broad structure of the essay itself. Unless you feel very comfortable that you are an excellent writer, it is usually best to stick to the traditional frame of an introductory section, a main body, and a conclusion. The introduction tells the reader what you are going to say. The main body tells the reader what you are saying. The conclusions tell the reader what she has just read (perhaps adding some thoughts as to its broader implications if you are feeling adventurous).

¹ This is a condensed version. For the full elaboration, check Henry Farrell's webpage at www.henryfarrell.net.

- **Meso-structure:** This is perhaps the most commonly neglected element of structured writing. It concerns the paragraphs into which your prose is organized. Each paragraph should focus on one main point. The point of each paragraph should build on that in the previous paragraph, and create the foundations of the next. Each paragraph should be a necessary part of the overall structure of your essay.
 - **Micro-structure:** What is true of the paragraph is also true of the sentence. Each individual sentence should flow in a logical and obvious way from the sentence before, and into the sentence after. This will provide your text with the coherence that it will need to successfully advance an argument.
5. **Use Simple, Direct Writing:** Good social science writing does not require striking metaphors or clever verbal constructions. Instead, it needs to communicate its arguments and evidence as clearly and unambiguously as possible. The implications for prose style are straightforward:
- Use direct language when at all possible. This not only reads better; it communicates clearly who is responsible for what.
 - Prefer simple words to complex words, and plain language to jargon. Sometimes it will be impossible to avoid jargon or obscure terms. However, it will usually be possible to use simple terms to convey your meaning. Plain language makes life easier for the reader, and it also makes it harder for the writer to get away with nonsense. If you use plain language you will be forced to confront your areas of weak understanding and to rectify them.
 - Use straightforward sentence structures rather than complex ones. Again, simple sentences usually read better. You should typically prefer simple sentences with the bare minimum of sub-clauses needed to convey your argument. Formless and incoherent sentences usually suggest formless and incoherent thought, and indeed they may plausibly cause intellectual incoherence.