INTRODUCTION TO LABOR STUDIES AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY 37:575:100:01 Tentative - Subject to Change
Fall 2016

Classroom: Room 116, Tillett Hall (TIL), Livingston Campus, 53 Avenue E, Piscataway, NJ 08854
Course schedule: Monday and Thursday, 12:00 pm – 1:20 pm, September 8 – December 12, 2016
Final Exam: TBD

Instructor:
William Brucher, PhD
Email: wbrucher@work.rutgers.edu
Phone: 207-653-2083 (cell) 848-932-5586 (office)
Office hours:
- Mondays: 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm, Room 136, Labor Education Center (LEC), Cook/Douglass Campus, 50 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick NJ 08901
- Tuesdays: 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, lobby, Janice H. Levin Building (JLB), Livingston Campus, 94 Rockafeller Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854
- And by appointment

Fill-in instructor:
Christopher Hayes, PhD
Email: chayes@work.rutgers.edu
Phone: 848-932-1190
Office hours:
- Tuesdays and Fridays: 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm, Room 114, Labor Education Center (LEC), Cook/Douglass Campus, 50 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick NJ 08901
- And by appointment

Course Overview: The course is designed to give you an overview of various aspects of labor and employment relations, including the perspective of working people and their labor organizations. We will also study the changing nature of work, workers and workers’ institutions and organizations; the impact of technological change, the economic cycle, social class, immigration, race, ethnicity and gender; the role of government in labor policy; the history of unions, the role of unions in politics and challenges the labor movement faces today; and collective bargaining and workers’ rights issues.

Class will include lectures, small group discussions, simulations, in-class assignments, and media presentations. Students are encouraged to freely express their views. Respect for the appreciation of different viewpoints will be a guiding principle in this course. Note: this syllabus may be changed or modified as the course proceeds.

Note: The third edition contains updated chapters and information not in the second edition. All readings, except for the textbook, are available on Rutgers Sakai, which you may access at http://sakai.rutgers.edu. To log on, enter your Rutgers ID and password in the upper right-hand corner. Click on the tab: 37:575:100:01 and then click on modules on the menu on the left-hand side of the page.

The syllabus, schedule, and assignments are subject to change as the course evolves.

Course Requirements
1. Read the entire syllabus and make sure you understand it. This is your contract with the instructor.

2. Be prepared for class. Always read the material assigned for a class before the class. For instance, complete the reading for September 12 before our class meets on September 12, complete the reading for September 15 before our class meets on September 15, etc. Bring the reading material to class with you in case you need to refer to it (for instance, for an activity, quiz, or discussion). Check your Rutgers email regularly for class announcements.

3. Be present and be on time. Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssa to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to us. Please note: Our attendance policy is that students begin with an “A” for attendance. However, the grade for attendance will decline each time a student is absent, late, or leaves early. If you are late or leave early, you will be charged with ½ class absence. If you have a legitimate reason for your absence, lateness or need to leave early, it must be provided to us in writing in advance or immediately after the occurrence. Even excused absences must be reported via the University absence reporting website indicated above.

4. Participate in discussions and group activities. Students will be divided into groups for breakout sessions and projects. The teaching assistants and us will supervise the groups. Your participation in these group situations goes to your participation grade. Explain your views. Ask questions. Listen – don’t monopolize the discussion or ignore other views. Do your share of the work in simulations and in-class group activities. Texting, talking on your phone, FB, Twitter, etc. are prohibited in class (unless part of the group activity).

5. Take careful lecture notes. You should obtain lecture notes from another student if you miss a class. These are not provided by the instructors or by the teaching assistants.

6. Academic Integrity: Academic integrity requires that all academic work be the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and permitted by the assignment. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the university community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses. Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of this course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit. For more information on the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, see https://slwordpress.rutgers.edu/academicintegrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/41/2014/11/AI_Policy_2013.pdf

The instructor for this course holds the copyright to the course teaching materials, including lecture slides, discussion questions, exams, and assignments. Students may not copy or distribute this material without the permission of the instructor. Unauthorized distributions of course materials are serious offenses. For
more information on the Rutgers University Copyright Policy, see
http://policies.rutgers.edu/sites/policies/files/50.3.7-current.pdf

Evaluation
For purposes of grading, there are five components of the course:

- Family Interview Exercise (5%)
- Class preparation, homework, attendance, and participation (20%)
- Written assignments (20%)
- Collective bargaining exercise (10%)
- Exams (45%)

Learning Objectives
Students in this course should achieve the following SAS, SMLR, and LSER learning objectives:

**SAS Core Curriculum - Social Analysis (SCL):**
- Understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place (Goal h).
- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political system and other forms of social organization (Goal m).
- Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations (Goal n).

**School of Management and Labor Relations (SMLR):**
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation (Goal IV).
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance (Goal VI).

**Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department (LSER):**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations (Goal 1).
- Apply those concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work (Goal 2).

**Unit I: The Situations Facing Working People**

Most people have to work. Work shapes our lives and our conceptions of self, and at the same time it provides us with income. When work is insecure, low-paid, or we are not accorded dignity on the job, we suffer. On the other hand, when work is rewarding, it enlarges our capacities, allows us to connect to others, and enables us to contribute to the community at large.
In this unit, you will have a chance to ponder your family's history of work, consider how work has changed in the last 150 years, and explore the relationship of work and social class. A major topic is the prevalence of economic inequality in the United States today.

**September 8: Introduction and Course Requirements**
- Review syllabus and discuss course expectations, assignments, and goals.
- What is a good job?
- What jobs have you held? What are your hopes for the future?
- What is Labor Studies and how does it help us understand issues around work?

**First class assignments:**
- Read the syllabus thoroughly. Learn how to use Sakai and locate readings.
- Family Member Interview: See Family Interview assignment sheet (also posted on Sakai). Assignment due in class on September 15.

**September 12: Work and Our Lives**
- Lecture and class discussion on the contours of work in the U.S.
- Assign discussion groups.

**READING:**

**September 15: Family Histories**
- Group discussions on your family interview assignments and how they relate to course themes.
- Family interview assignment due in class.

**READINGS:**

**September 19: Work in the “New Economy” part 1**
- Film: *The Big One* (directed by Michael Moore, 1997).
- Hand out and discuss written assignment #1 (due in class October 6).

**READING:**

**September 22: Work in the “New Economy” part 2**
- Discussion of *The Big One*.

**READING:**

**September 26: Social Class and Culture**
- Lecture and class discussion on the theories, ideologies, structures, and experiences of class in New Jersey and the U.S.
READINGS:


September 29: Economic Inequality
- Group activity: what would ideal wealth distribution look like and why?
- Review of the causes and consequences of inequality.

READINGS:


October 3: The Industrial Revolution and the Origins of the Labor Movement
- Group discussions: What has changed and what has remained similar about the politics of poverty and work between 1877 and today?

READING:


October 6: The New Deal and the Rise of the Labor Movement
- Lecture on the New Deal and the growth the labor movement in the 1930s and 1940s.
- Video excerpt from *Mean Things Happen*, part of *The Great Depression* PBS documentary series.
- Written assignment #1 due in class.

READINGS:


Unit II: Diversity, Work, and Employee Rights

Employment law is the fundamental law of the workplace. It is essential for you to know something about your rights at work, or lack thereof. And obviously, future managers need to recognize their own rights and how they can, and cannot, treat employees.

Employment law is mutable—it has changed in the past and may change in the future. One of the biggest changes in American employment law occurred in the 1960s in the face of demands for greater equality by race, color, national origin, religion and gender. Employment opportunities for people of different races and national origins have become more equal under the law since then, but racial and ethnic divisions and discrimination still persist throughout the workforce.
Gender also matters for employment outcomes, although again, the workplace is much more equal today than it was in 1964 when the Civil Rights Act was passed. As more women have entered the workplace on a full-time basis, families are increasingly juggling the demands of two (or more) jobs along with the need to care for their families.

October 10: Employment Rights and Job Security in the United States part 1
- “Know Your Rights” – in class quiz and discussion.

READINGS:
- Sweet and Meiksins, Changing Contours of Work, chapter 4.

October 13: Employment Rights and Job Security in the United States part 2
- Lecture and discussion of major workplace labor laws and regulations, including the at-will doctrine and its exceptions, antidiscrimination, and wage and hour laws.

READINGS:

October 17: Worker Safety and Health
- Film: Can’t Take No More (produced by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 1980).
- Discussion of occupational safety and health.
- Midterm exam overview.

READINGS:
- Workers’ Memorial Day Interview with the Hoyt Family, New Jersey Work Environment Council, April 24, 2016: http://www.njwec.org/PDF/Press/2016/InterviewHoytfamilytranscriptWEC.pdf

October 20: MIDTERM EXAM (IN-CLASS)

October 24: Work, Race, Ethnicity, and Equality part 1
- Film: At the River I Stand (directed by David Appleby, Allison Graham, and Steven Ross, 1993).

READINGS:
- Sweet and Meiksins, Changing Contours of Work, chapter 7.
October 27: Work, Race, Ethnicity, and Equality part 2
• Discussion of historical and contemporary issues surrounding race and employment.

READINGS AND AUDIO STORY:

October 31: Gender and Work
• Presentation on the relationships between gender, working conditions, and employment opportunities.
• In-class discussion on “occupational ghettos,” “the glass ceiling,” and possible remedies.

READINGS:
➢ Sweet and Meiksins, Changing Contours of Work, chapter 5.

November 3: Work and Family
• Guest presentation on the movement for paid family leave by Yarrow Willman-Cole, Program Coordinator of the Working Families Program at the Center for Women and Work, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations.

READINGS:
➢ Sweet and Meiksins, Changing Contours of Work, chapter 6.

November 7: Immigration and Labor part 1
• Discussion of immigration and labor issues in the U.S.
• Film excerpts from Bread and Roses (directed by Ken Loach, 2000).

READINGS:
➢ Immanuel Ness, Immigrants, Unions, and the New U.S. Labor Market, chapter 2 (Sakai)

November 10: Rutgers 250th Anniversary Event – Bhairavi Desai (OPTIONAL-Attend if you can!)
• Public presentation by guest speaker Bhairavi Desai, Executive Director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, http://www.nytwva.org/
• This event will be held from 1:40 to 3:00 pm, location TBA. Regular class from 12:00 to 1:20 pm will be cancelled.

READINGS:

Union membership grew rapidly in the 1930s-1950s. Collective bargaining between unions and employers in major industries helped raise the standard of living not only for union members, but also for the entire workforce. For the past 35 years, however, the labor movement has been in steep decline in the U.S.

In this final unit for the course we will try our hand at collective bargaining during an in-class simulation. We will also explore the reasons why the labor movement has been in decline, as well as some of the newest and most innovative efforts on the part of unions, worker centers, and community organizations to organize workers in the ever-changing economy. The course will end with a discussion of public policies that could reshape the future of work.

November 14: Unions 101
- “Union knowledge” in class quiz and discussion.
- Presentation on the structure of the labor movement in the U.S. and New Jersey.

READINGS:
- Excerpts from the National Labor Relations Act (Sakai).

November 17: Unions and Collective Bargaining
- The basics of collective bargaining under private and public sector labor laws.
- Mediation, arbitration, lock-outs, and strikes.
- Hand out Collective Bargaining simulation assignment guideline and assign bargaining teams.
- Write first drafts of contract language proposals individually outside of class.

READINGS:

November 21: Collective Bargaining Simulation
- Bring first drafts of contract proposals to class.
- In-class preparation with your team: assign roles, revise, and finish contract proposals.
- Hand out and discuss written assignment #2 (due in class December 5).

TUESDAY November 22: Collective Bargaining Simulation continued (Note: Thursday classes meet today)
- Begin bargaining!
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24: THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 28: Collective Bargaining Simulation continued
- Continue bargaining and reach a final settlement with the other side… if possible!
- Hand-in contract language bargained in class and notes from bargaining.
- Complete online peer and self-assessment for collective bargaining exercise (due by December 1).

December 1: Organized Labor Today
- Guest presentation on union organizing and strikes by Joel Brooks, organizer for Health Professionals and Allied Employees (HPAE-AFT, AFL-CIO).
- Begin studying for final exam!

READINGS:

December 5: Organized Labor Tomorrow
- Written assignment #2 due in class.
- Discussion of “Union avoidance” strategies by employers and counter-measures by unions.
- Online peer and self review for collective bargaining exercise due.

READING:

December 8: Public Policy and the Future of Work
- Discuss how new public policies could address work and employment-related problems.
- Discussion of ways young students and workers (like yourselves!) can get involved.
- Continue studying for final exam!

READINGS:
- Sweet and Meiksins, chapter 8

December 12: Final Exam Review
- Overview of major course themes and review of final exam topics.
- Continue studying for final exam!

FINAL EXAM – DATE AND TIME TBD