

PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES, Fall 2016
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
37:575:395:01
Scott Hall, Room 207
Teresa Poor, Instructor – tpoor@aleph-naught.net
Dylan Martis, TA

COURSE SUMMARY

This course is designed to familiarize students with some of the key labor studies perspectives on labor, work, labor and 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 read the assigned scholarship for the arguments, to take a position on those arguments, and to scrutinize the argument and its relationship to the evidence. Students will also be required to participate in discussions and give presentations. Some of the readings are difficult. 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, Sept. 8:

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Introductions
2. Hand out syllabus
3. Create groups and tentative facilitation assignments.

CLASS 2, Sept. 15 – Introduction to Markets, States, and Labor:

READINGS DUE:

1. “What is Neoliberalism?”, by David M. Kotz.

IN CLASS ASSIGNMENT

1. Submit weekly entry answers to questions related to readings. Questions posted on Sakai.
2. Watch and discuss movie Commanding Heights: The Battle of Ideas and “What is Neoliberalism?”
3. Finalize facilitation and group assignments.

CLASS 3, Sept. 22 – Labor, Freedom, Progress and Markets, Pt. 1:

READINGS DUE:

1. Chapters 1, 2, 3. An Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations, by Adam Smith.
2. “Creative Destruction” in Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, by Joseph Schumpeter

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 and present the groups’ answers in class.

CLASS 4, Sept. 29 – Labor, Freedom, Progress, and Markets, Pt. 2:

READINGS DUE:

1. “The Common Sense of Progress” **and** “Employment and Independence” in The Constitution of Liberty, by Friedrich .A. Hayek, 1960.

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 5, Oct. 6 – Labor, Inequality, Instability, and Capitalism, Pt. 1:

READINGS DUE:

1. Chapters 4, 5, and 6. A Critique of Political Economy: Capital, Vol. 1, by Karl Marx
2. 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, Oct. 13 – Labor, Inequality, Instability, and Capitalism, Pt. 2:

READINGS DUE:

1. "Turning the Tables", in The Power of Market Fundamentalism, by Fred L. Bloc.
2. "Neoliberalism on Trial, in A Brief History of Neoliberalism, by David Harvey.

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, Oct. 20 – Review and Movie:

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

CLASS 8, Oct. 27: Meanings of Work, Pt. 1

1. Turn in Take-Home Mid-term
2. Watch "Office Space"
3. Introduction to second theme of the course.

CLASS 9, Nov. 3 – Meanings of Work, Pt. 2:

READINGS DUE:

1. “The Moral Meanings of Work”, by Alan Wolfe, The American Prospect, Sep/Oct.1997.
2. “The Work Ethic State” and “Work and Welfare: A Symposium” – a debate among multiple scholars regarding the lack of work and enduring joblessness.

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, Nov. 10 – The Meaning of Work, Pt. 3:

READINGS DUE:

1. Selected readings from The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling, by Arlie Russel Hochschild .
2. “Estranged Labor”, by Karl Marx.

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 11, Nov. 17 – The Meaning of Work, Pt. 4:

1. “The Human Side of Enterprise,” by Douglas McGregor
2. “Work”, by C. Wright Mills
3. Chapters 3 and 4, Riverthead: 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, Dec. 1 – Organizing and Managing

SUMMARY: Do managers and unions share similar organizational methods? Sometimes. We will explore bureaucratic approaches to organizing labor at work, and into unions. We will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of this approach.

READINGS DUE:

1. “Bureaucracy”, by Max Weber.
2. “Uses of Industrial Power”, by David Brody
3. Selected readings from Scientific Management, by Frederick Winslow Taylor.

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 13, Dec. 8: Unions and Labor

READINGS DUE:

1. “Labor is not a Movement”, by Richard Sullivan. *New Labor Forum*. Vol. 19, No. 10 (Spring 2010).
2. “Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy: Union Revitalization in the American Labor Movement”, by Kim Voss and Rachel Sherman. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 106, No. 2 (September 2000).
3. “Forging the New Labor Transnationalism: Governance Struggles and Worker Power”.

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 final, and review.

FINAL DUE ON DEC. 22:

The final is due by 6 p.m., on Dec. 22, 2016. 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 and Weekly Entries (20%)(80 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).

Class Participation and Facilitation Assignment (30%)(120 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.

Midterm: (25%)(100 points)

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

The Final (25%)(100 points)

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

Grading

Total 400 Points

A = 400-356	C = 276-295
B+ = 336-355	D+ = 256-275
B = 316-335	D = 236-255
C+ = 296-315	F = 235 or below.

"Office Hours"

If you email me anytime between Monday and Tuesday, I will respond to your email by Wednesday evening. I will respond to all other email when I am able. Speak with me after class 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.