Class: Wednesday, 3:55-6:55 pm
Labor Education Center Room 115

Professor: Lisa Schur
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Office: Labor Education Center, Room 150B
Phone: 848-932-1743
Office hours: Wed. 2:30-3:30 or by appointment

Course Expectations and Requirements

This course explores important topics in the field of labor studies. We will read and compare classic writings on economic, social, and political theory, as well as current theories and research. Through these writings we will analyze historical developments and view current events and problems from new angles. You will have the opportunity to examine some of the major issues in the field and to decide what you think about them. This class is designed to strengthen your ability to summarize and analyze texts, pick out key ideas, read critically, formulate arguments, debate different points of view, and work in groups.

This course meets the following SMLR learning objectives:
  I) Written & Oral Communication – Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry level professional.
  IV) Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.
  V) Understanding Context - Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions

Classwork and Preparation for Class

Class attendance is mandatory and reading assignments are expected to be completed before class. Please bring hardcopies of the readings to class. Assigned readings are on the Sakai website. Supplemental material will also be handed out in class or added to the Sakai website.

Please turn off cell phones during class time. Also, you may use computers for notes, but do not check email, text, or browse the Internet during class (it is rude and distracting, and you won’t learn as much). If you have a health problem or another emergency that requires you to miss a class, please inform the professor of the situation before the class if possible, or as soon after the class as you can.

It is important to participate in discussions and group activities. Explain your views. Don’t be afraid to ask questions! Also listen – don’t monopolize the discussion or ignore other views.
Requirements

Paper
Students will pick a class reading on which they would like to write a paper of at least 5 pages. This paper should: a) summarize the main points of the reading, b) relate it to other relevant readings, including at least one academic book or article from outside the syllabus, c) evaluate the strengths and/or weaknesses of the authors’ arguments, and d) draw your own conclusions based on the evidence, e) relate the readings to your own experiences or current events if relevant, and f) provide appropriate citations. You should submit both a hardcopy in class, and an electronic copy to the Sakai website (see instructions below). The paper will determine 20% of the grade for the semester. Papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com to ensure that they are original and there is no plagiarism. Late papers will be downgraded by a third of a grade (e.g., A to A-) for 1-2 days late, two-thirds of a grade (e.g., A to B+) for 3-4 days late, and a full grade for 5 or more days late.

Participation

This course emphasizes student participation. All students are expected to attend class and discuss the readings. To prepare for participation students are asked to write one-paragraph summaries of the main points of each weekly reading and 1-2 reactions and/or questions they raise. You are encouraged to bring in information on current events that relate to the class readings. You can also email interesting articles to the professor, who will post them on Sakai for the whole class. Information on current events may be gleaned from newspapers, magazine articles, websites, or television programs.

You should hand in a hardcopy of your summaries in class, and also submit an electronic copy to the Sakai website (see instructions below). You may skip handing in summaries for two weeks of readings during the semester (you choose which weeks you want to skip). Students are responsible for handing in at least 9 summaries by the end of the semester. Extra credit will be given to those who hand in 10 or 11 summaries. Attendance, the weekly summaries of the readings, and participation in discussions will determine 30% of the grade for the semester.

Exams
Final grades will also be based 25% on the first exam and 25% on the second exam.

Readings

Readings are available on Sakai. To obtain the readings do the following:
1. Go to http://sakai.rutgers.edu
2. Enter your Rutgers ID and password in the upper right corner
3. Click on the tab that says “37:575:395:02 PERS F16”
4. Click on “Resources” at the left
5. Click on the folder titled “37:575:395:02 PERS F16 Resources”
6. Click on the folder for the week you want, then the file you want to download. Many of the readings are in Adobe Acrobat format. If your computer doesn’t have it, you can download the reader for free at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html
If you have technical problems with Sakai, please contact Laura Walkoviak at 848-932-9503 or Walkoviak@smlr.rutgers.edu.

**Submitting paper and weekly summaries to Sakai**

You should submit hardcopies of the paper and weekly summaries in class, and also upload these to Sakai so there is a permanent record. Follow the directions above to get onto the Sakai site, and click on “Assignments” on the left so that you can see a list of the weekly assignments. You can submit your summary and paper under “Assignments” either by copying text into the “Submission” box or by attaching a file. Do not submit your paper using “Dropbox.”

Also, please check “Announcements” on the left of the Sakai site each week for any updates on the class and assignments.

**Opening Class: September 7th**

Overview of the course and course requirements, plus initial discussion.

**Second week: September 14th**

*An Initial Contrast in Perspective:*


**Third Week: September 21st**

*Exploitation and Alienation*

Selected readings from Karl Marx, *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*


**Fourth Week: September 28**

*Scientific Management and Human Relations*


**Fifth Week: October 5**

*Motivating and Managing Employees*


Sixth Week: October 12th

Race and the Labor Market


“Black unemployment is significantly higher than white unemployment regardless of educational attainment,” Economic Policy Institute, December 17, 2015.


Seventh Week: October 19th

First Exam

Eighth Week: October 26th

First exams to be returned and discussed.

Democracy and Social Capital


Ninth Week: November 2nd

*Gender and Disability in the Labor Market*


Tenth Week: November 9th

**Paper topics due**

*The Role of the Corporation*

Excerpt from film to be shown in class, "The Corporation"


Eleventh Week: November 16th

Inequality


No class November 23rd (Thanksgiving week)

Twelfth Week: November 30th

Decreasing Inequality Through Employee Ownership
Film: “We the Owners”


Thirteenth Week: December 7th

Unions and Worker Organizations in a Changing Society


Fourteenth Week: December 14th

Final papers due
Second Exam – covering material since the midterm