

RUTGERS

Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department
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TOPICS IN LER: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS IN ENTERTAINMENT

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SYLLABUS

FALL 2016

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Course Location: College Avenue Campus, Scott Hall Room 221

Course Time: Wednesday, 7:40-10:30 p.m.

Office Hours: Before or after class or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The entertainment industry in the United States is a multi-billion dollar enterprise. The business is comprised of a diverse labor force and constantly evolving ways to deliver content to consumers. Technological change has historically made employee relations in this field volatile. This course will explore employee-employer dynamics of specific industries such as stage, radio, television and movies.

This class will provide the basic outline for the multifaceted employment relationships in the entertainment industry. The class will focus on employment relations in the entertainment industry, including the labor / management relationship as well as the relationship between management and talent. Whether you are the talent, or representing the talent as a union, agent, or manager role or an employer seeking to retain the services of anyone in the entertainment field, this class is a must.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: 1) final exam, 25% of grade, 2) midterm exam, 25% of grade 3) negotiations project / class participation, 25% of grade and 4) assigned topic paper, 25% of grade.

The assigned topic paper will require each student to write a 5 to 10 page paper. The subject of the paper will be a labor union representing individuals in the entertainment industry. Students will be expected to provide a brief history of the union and to discuss recent rounds of bargaining for a collective bargaining agreement.

The class project will consist of students being put into groups and each group being assigned the role of either representing an actor or representing a studio and negotiating a contract of services. The group will be required to present the final contract and then explain their position to the class as if the class were either the actor they represented or the studio heads.

BOOKS/READINGS:

All readings will be available on Sakai. Be sure to check Sakai frequently as additional readings not set forth below will be added on a regular basis.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introductions & Course Overview
Sept. 7, 2016

Week 2 Introduction to the law of contracts and their importance to the
Sept. 14, 2016 entertainment industry.

Basic labor law and employment law overview within the
entertainment industry.

Reading: *Examples and Explanations – Contracts*. Ch. 1, The Meaning of
Contract and the Basic Attributes of the Contractual Relationship

Contracts for the Film and Television Industry, Ch. 1, Basic
Principles of Contract Law.

Week 3 History and analysis of live theatre and the 100 years of the Actor's
Sept. 21, 2016 Equity Association.

Introduction to the art of negotiations with emphasis on collective
bargaining and negotiating for individual talent.

Begin working on class projects.

Reading: *Under the Stars*, Ch. 1, The Industry and the Unions: an Overview.

Week 4 A history of the Screen Actors Guild and analysis of its recent
Sept. 28, 2016 merger with the American Federation of Television and Radio
Artists.

Reading: *The Politics of Glamour, Ideology and Democracy in the Screen Actors Guild*, Ch. 1, A Union of Screen Actors.
SAG-AFTRA Merger Agreement

Week 5
Oct. 5, 2016 Radio industry history and analysis of current Collective Bargaining Agreements in the entertainment Industry

Review for mid-term exam

Reading: *Under the Stars*, Ch. 4, Transformation of Industrial Relations in the Motion Picture and Television Industries: Craft and Production

Week 6
Oct. 12, 2016 Mid-Term Exam

Week 7
Oct. 19, 2016 Interplay of Collective Bargaining Agreement and individual contracts for television and motion pictures

Reading: *Deal Making in the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 1, Introduction, Ch. 2, Deal Making, Ch. 3, Permission to Portray People and Places

Week 8
Oct. 26, 2016 Individual contracts in the entertainment industry.

Reading: *Deal Making in the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 6, Employment Contracts.

Week 9
Nov. 2, 2016 Labor unrest in the entertainment industry, including an in-depth look at the Writers Guild Strike of 2007 – 2008.

Reading: *Introduction to 2007 Writers Guild West Strike*
Rules Writers Strike of 2007 – 2008, The Economic Impact of Digital Distribution

Week 10
Nov. 9, 2016 Discussion regarding industry financing, production and distribution

Reading: *Contracts for the Film and Television Industry*, Ch. 7, Financing, Ch. 8 Production, Ch. 9, Distribution, Ch. 10, Merchandizing

Week 11 A look towards the future-how new technology will shape the face
Nov. 16, 2016 of labor relations in the decades to come.

Reading: *Under the Stars*, Ch. 2, Technology Transforms

Week 12
Nov. 30, 2016 Projects due, presentations to be made in class

Week 13 Breach of contract, remedies and alternatives.
Dec. 7, 2016

Week 14 Review for Final Exam
Dec. 14, 2016

FINAL TBD
EXAM