

Youth and Work
Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations
37:575:215:01
Spring 2020

Instructor: Professor Patricia McHugh

Class Time and Place: Janice Levin Building 003; Tuesdays 1:40 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.

Office Hours: By appointment.

Email: pamchugh@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

Course Overview:

This course examines the current situation of young workers, reviews the history and policy responses to child labor in America, and considers the challenges of youth and work today.

Some of the core questions we will explore include: What counts as “work”? Why do young people work and how has that changed over time? How does young people’s preparation for and participation in the labor market differ from that of previous generations? What are some of the challenges that young workers face at work? What kinds of policies, organizational practices, and legal changes can improve young worker’s experiences in the work force? We will examine the work experiences of children and youth in the 19th and early 20th century.

We will look at how “child labor” is defined in social and economic contexts and investigate several industries including---coal mines, manufacturing, textiles, homework, street work and agriculture--- to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in U.S. history, and reform programs and laws that emerged to address the issue. We will also look at whether the U.S.’s response to the child labor problems contributes to understanding global child labor problems.

The course next explores contemporary experiences of young people in the labor market. We will explore how young people prepare for work, view their education and workforce development pathways, and view their work and future careers. We will focus on the experiences of young workers across racial, class, and gender lines and pay particular attention to the growing working poor in the youth labor market, and how public policy can address some of these inequalities. We will also analyze the experiences of young people in the recent economic recession, as well as various policies and programs that can improve youth work experiences and their economic security.

Relationship to School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Learning Goals

1. This class has the following 21st Century Challenge objectives:
 - a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience and perspectives on the world.
 - b. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.
2. It also has the following Social Analysis objectives:
 - a. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
 - b. Understand different theories in social and historical analysis.
 - c. Apply Concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of these concepts via class readings, discussions, assignments, and exams which focus on historical and contemporary issues of youth and work.

Required Book(s):

All the books and materials required for this course will be posted online on the course website on Canvas, which you may access at <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>

Once you are registered for the course, you will be granted access to the site. It is your responsibility to access course materials, including the reading assignments.

The syllabus, schedule and assignments are subject to change as the course evolves, and sometimes due to unforeseen schedule changes due to weather. Please note that additional sets of readings that highlight contemporary issues that develop during the course of the semester may also be added to our activities.

Optional Books:

If you so choose, you may decide to purchase the following book that contain a number of chapters that we will read for class:

Cassino-Besen, Yasemin. 2014. Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America. Temple University Press

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance:

You are expected to attend each class session, and to be on time. An attendance sheet will be passed out during each class; it is your responsibility to sign the sheet. Be punctual and plan to stay for the entire class. Students who repeatedly arrive late and/or leave at break will have their grades lowered. If you need to leave early, see me before class; otherwise you are expected to remain until the class is over. As the class is three hours long, we will have periodic breaks built into the scheduled time.

Participation:

This class will utilize a variety of formats, with weekly discussion sessions one of the more important of these. You are expected to have completed the readings assigned before coming to class each week and be ready to take an active role in these discussions. Class participation includes active, respectful listening and well as talking. You may not use any recording devices in this class.

NO Electronic Devices during the lecture part of class:

Seriously. No laptops, no tablets, no phones, during lectures. Computers and other electronic devices in class tempt us to multitask (it happens to me!), but you're not here for that. What people do on their computers in a group setting can be distracting. On an exception basis, you may need to have a computer or other device in class, however, I will let you know ahead of time. Plus, best of all, taking notes on paper is better for your understanding! See for yourself:

psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/take-notes-by-hand-for-better-long-term-comprehension.html (Links to an external site.)
scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/ (Links to an external site.)
wsj.com/articles/can-handwriting-make-you-smarter-1459784659 (Links to an external site.)
npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away (Links to an external site.)
pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/body/taking-notes-by-hand-could-improve-memory-wt/ (Links to an external site.)
kon.org/urc/v12/duran.html

Choosing to ignore this policy will negatively impact your grade for attendance and participation.

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>.

Cheating/plagiarism

There are serious consequences, including expulsion, for cheating and taking someone else's work without attribution. The university has clear, strict policies on these matters. They include signing in for another student. I will report all violations. If you have not done so already, please familiarize yourself with the university's academic integrity policy by visiting academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/ (Links to an external site.) The relevant parts are brief and straightforward. If you have any questions, please see me.

Statement on Academic Freedom:

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. This class will introduce an array of sometimes conflicting ideas and interpretations of U.S. history, and all who partake in the course should feel encouraged to express their views in an open, civic forum.

Use of Class Materials:

The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, the syllabus, exams, lecture materials, and assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Code of Student Conduct and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current

or future students. You may not make audio or video recordings of any part of this class without my consent.

IN SUM: YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Read the syllabus
2. Be here on time
3. Pay attention
4. Do the readings
5. Turn in your assignments on time
6. Make sure your assignments are submitted
7. Find out what you missed if you are unable to attend

STUDENT EVALUATION

1. EXAMS:

There will be 2 exams for this class. There will be a midterm exam and final exam that will be given during the scheduled exam period. The final exam will NOT be cumulative, but will only cover the material we cover from the midterm exam to the end of our class meetings. The exams will be short answer with 1 longer essay. You will be provided with a study guide to prepare for each exam, however, this is a guide only. You must be able to synthesize the material we have covered to answer the questions on the exams.

Missed Exams:

All students are expected to take the scheduled in-class exams (midterm and final) at the designated times. If you miss an exam, you may make up the exam. However, a make-up exam will only be granted through an excused absence. As explained below, excused absences include documented medical situations or other approved absence due to a personal situation. The latter will be granted at my discretion.

2. ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION:

As with any college course, you are expected to come to class every meeting, on time, for the duration of the meeting. As there are only a limited number of scheduled sessions, if you have more than 2 unexcused absences, your final grade will be reduced by one full grade (e.g. from an A to a B). For every one after that, the same will happen. An excused absence would mean something along the lines of a medical emergency or a funeral and requires documentation. Leaving early and showing up late will count against you as well.

Being physically present is important, but you should strive to be mentally present as well. Being attentive and actively participating in class enhances your learning, as well as that of those around you. Someone (you, your parents, you in the future, Rutgers donors) is paying for you to be here, so try to get the most out of it. Contributing to class discussion is a very easy way to earn a higher overall grade in the course.

Visual Media: I believe in using different media to keep you engaged in class. I particularly think that there are a number of documentaries and other visual media that can allow you to enter the lives and minds of workers, economists and others involved in labor employment issues both in the past and present day. Please engage as actively with these other media as you would with my lectures and our discussions as they are providing critical material that you will learn from and will be a part of your exams and quizzes. You must be actively attentive, taking notes during these times.

3. IN CLASS EXERCISES

This class is highly participatory and requires that you attend and that you work in groups or teams. Coming to class prepared (with readings and assignments up to date) is key to participating effectively in your discussion group. Throughout the course, there will be in class group exercises, including some hands-on projects related to the readings done in groups or pairs. There are NO make-up class exercises and they must be completed during the class period. Of course, if you do not attend class, you will lose points for participation in these exercises as well as for attendance

4. MALL ASSIGNMENT

Students will each conduct a fieldwork project in a local mall to analyze the work experience of young people today. Details for this assignment will be located on the course website.

FINAL GRADE CALCULATION:

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Attendance and Participation (15%)
In Class Exercises (15%)
Mall Assignment (20%)
Midterm Exam (20%)
Final Exam (25%)

NOTE: The Professor reserves the right to change the grading distribution, to offer extra credit assignments, to add or change readings or otherwise change the structure of the course.

Course Schedule

Part One: Overview and Framing

Week 1 (January 21): Introduction to Studying Youth and Work

- Syllabus Review In Class
- Exercise: “First Work Experiences” (Not counted for grade). We are going to start to get to know each other and also start to think about our own work experiences. We will discuss our first paid work experiences, how we got hired, how we felt about it, how much we earned, etc.

Week 2 (January 28): The Current Situation of Young Workers

- EPI Briefing Paper – News Summary, “The Class of 2015: Despite an Improving Economy, Young Grads Still Face an Uphill Climb.”
- EPI Briefing Paper – The Class of 2017
- Boston College Center for Work and Family Briefing Paper, “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: The Expanding Role of Millennials in the Workplace.”
- Short film and discussion: *Eyes on the Fries: Young Workers in the Service Economy*

Week 3 (February 4): Working and Growing Up in America

- Jeylan Mortimer, 2003. *Working and Growing Up in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Introduction
- AFL-CIO Working America Briefing Paper: “Young Workers: A Lost Decade.”
- Andrew J. Cherlin, (2014) “The Fall of the Working Class Family: 1975-2010,” from *Labor’s Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class Family in America*.

Part Two: The “Child Labor Problem”

Week 4 (February 11): What is “child labor”?

- Hugh Hindman, 2002. *Child Labor: An American History*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.
 - Chapters 1, 2 and 9
- Videos:
 - Fingers to the Bone: Child Farmworkers in the U.S.;
 - Made in the USA: Child Labor and Tobacco;
 - Children of the Fields; U.S. Child Labor, 1908-1920
 - The Dark Side of Chocolate
- ***In Class Exercise #1: Children on Farms Today***

Week 5 (February 18): U.S. Policy Responses to Child Labor in the 21st Century

- Hindman, *Child Labor*, Chapter 3.
- John M. Herrick and James Midgley, “The United State.” Pp. 187-216 in *The State of Social Welfare: The Twentieth Century in Cross-national Review*, edited by John Dixon and Robert P. Scheurell (Westport, Conn.:Greenwood).
- Mill Girls of Lowell - Excerpt
- ***In class exercise #2: Triangle Shirtwaist Fire (film and group activity)***

Week 6 (February 25): In class Midterm Exam

Part 3. The Challenges of Youth and Work Today

Week 7 (March 3): Young Workers: Service Sector Employment

- Yasemin Besen-Cassino, 2014. *Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
 - Chapters 1: Introduction
 - Chapter 2: “Would you like an Application with Your Coffee?”
 - Chapter 3: Fun or Exploitation? The Lived Experience of Suburban Youth Work
- Stuart Tannock, “Why Do Working Youth Work Where They Do?” A Report from the Young Worker Project.
- Stuart Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 2: On the Front Lines of the Service Sector
- ***In Class Exercise #3: Retails Jobs and Young Workers (needs work prior to class)***

Week 8 (March 10): Young Workers: Race, Class and Gender

- Besen-Cassino, *Consuming Work*
 - Chapter 5: “They Need Me Here”: Work as a Perceived Alternative to School;
 - Chapter 6: “White Young, and Middle Class”: Aesthetic Labor, Race, and Class in the Youth Labor Force
 - Chapter 7: Origins of the Gender Wage Gap: Gender Inequality in the Youth Labor Force.
- Think Progress.org, “There’s Even a Gender Gap in Children’s Allowances”
<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/04/23/3430025/gender-gap-allowance/>
- ***In Class Exercise #4: Gender Wage Gap***

Week 9 (March 17): Spring Break – Have fun!

Week 10 (March 24): Education, Stagnant Pay and Increasing Debt Load

- Tamara Draut, *Strapped*
 - Chapters 1: Higher and Higher Education
 - Chapter 2: Paycheck Paralysis
 - Chapter 3: Generation Debt

Week 11 (March 31) Young Workers Today—Case Study

- Mall Assignment--No Class Meeting due to Mall Assignment
 - **Mall Observations**: Visit the course website on Canvas and find the section that details the Mall Observation assignment. Download the observation sheets and start your observations. You must bring this material to class next week. I have given you this 3-hour period to complete the assignment. You may do it during this time or at another time but there are no late assignments!

Week 12 (April 7): The Intern Economy

- Mall Observation and Paper Due on Canvas by class meeting.
- Ross Perlin. *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Teach Little in the Brave New Economy*. New York:
 - Verso. Chapter 2, “The Explosion”
- The Economist. 2014. “The Internship: Generation I.” *The Economist*, Sept. 6, International 1-9
- Josh Eidelson, “Legal Protections for Interns: A Guide”
- “Defining Employee in the Gig Economy”, *NY Times*, July 18, 2015

- “How Crowdworkers Became the Ghosts in the Digital Machine”, The Nation, November 4, 2014

Week 13 (April 14): How Young Workers Will Change Work

- Tannock, Youth at Work
 - Chapter 7: “The Youth Union”
- Ray B. Williams, “How the Millennial Generation Will Change the Workplace”
- Boston College Center for Work and Family Briefing Paper, “Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: The Expanding Role of Millennials in the Workplace.”
Note: (Previously read in Week 2 - Please reread with perspective you have gained from our classes thus far.)
- John Schmitt, 2008. Center for Economic and Policy Research, “Unions and Upward Mobility for Young Workers” In Class Exercise: Changing Workplaces.
- ***In Class Exercise #5: Changing Workplaces***

Week 14 (April 21): An Agenda for Change

- Tamara Draut, Strapped, Chapter 7: Changing Course: An Agenda for Reform
- Besen-Cassino, Consuming Work, Chapter 8: The Economic Recession and the Future of Youth Labor

Week 15 (April 28): Catch Up and Wrap up and Optional Final Exam Review

Final Exam TBD as per University Exam Schedule