

**Youth and Work**  
**37:575:215**  
**Spring 2017**

**Instructor:**

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<p><b>Course Description</b></p>
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This course will explore youth experiences in the labor market. The course starts by examining the work experiences of children and youth in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. We begin by exploring the idea of child labor, and how it is defined in social and economic contexts. We then investigate several industries including---coal mines, manufacturing, textiles, homework, street work and agriculture---to better understand the causes and effects of child labor in US history, why it matters both socially and economically, reform programs that emerged, and how the US history of child labor can contribute to understanding global child labor problems today.

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. Here 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. Central to this half of the course will be an analysis of the experiences of young people in the current

economic recession, and various policies and programs that can improve their experiences and economic security, especially in the midst of the current economic crisis.

## Course Competencies

This course explores several questions, including:

- Why do young people work?
- What jobs/industries are youth likely to work in, and how has this changed over time?
- Why and how are young workers concentrated in specific industries/occupations?
- How does young peoples' role in the labor market today differ from the role of previous generations of young workers?
- What are some of the challenges that young people face at work? How are the challenges that young workers face differ by cultural context and compared with adult workers?
- How can young workers and their advocates improve young peoples' experiences in the labor market?

The Core Curriculum Learning Goals assessed in this course Include:

[21C]

*a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world.*

*d. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.*

[Social Analysis]

*i. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.*

*m. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.*

*n. Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.*

## **Course Requirements**

### **Required Readings**

There are two required books for this course. All books available online and through the university bookstore.

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

*2) Hindman, Hugh. 2002. Child Labor: An American History. M. E. Sharpe.*

Additional articles, videos clips, etc. will be provided to you in the course.

### **Forums**

Forums are asynchronous discussions, which student groups use to process and synthesize course content. Leading questions will be posted with each forum. It is expected that you give your initial

impressions in your first post and then engage your classmates in subsequent posts.

For all forums, initial posts should be a minimum of 250 words in length, and each response should be at minimum of 100 words each. **A MISSED FORUM CANNOT BE MADE UP.**

There are three areas of review within a student's forum comment: content/synthesis, participation and mechanics.

Content/Synthesis: (30 points)

Students are required to engage in an informed academic discussion on selected course topics within each forum. Students are also required to synthesize the forum discussion with the course reading for the week and/or from prior weeks.

Participation: (15 points)

Students are required to cultivate an online learning community that will enable you to understand and synthesize weekly topics. Engaging with and responding to the ideas of other students through this online learning community will give students a broader appreciation of the ideas put forth in the class.

During weeks that forums are open there is an initial post deadline of 11:59 pm on Saturday. Missing the initial post deadline will result in an automatic 5-point participation deduction. Making all posts in 1 day at anytime during the forum open period will also result in a 5-point deduction.

**There is a 3-post minimum for each forum. Remember the idea is to engage and respond (react) to the commentary. Making 2 posts results in a 10-point deduction; making only 1 post will result in a 20-point deduction.**

Mechanics: (5 points)

Grammar, spelling and sentence structure are important. This is an online forum – but it is an online forum in an upper level college class! Students must also be mindful of sentence structure and how ideas are presented.

### **Writing Assignments**

There are 2 short writing assignments for this course. These should be at least 500 words in length. They are meant to be a brief but thoughtful response to **all** of the readings for that week.

Insightfulness and clarity are important. Be sure to cite which articles you are referring to in your articles by using **in-text citations** and a **reference section**, when applicable (this does not count toward the word minimum). These do not re-tell the "story" in the course material but it does identify the main ideas as well as the relationships of these ideas to assigned topics/issues and to other course materials (synthesis).

There are two areas of review within a student's writing assignment: content and mechanics.

Content: (80 points)

You must demonstrate to me that you have completed all the assigned reading by identifying the main themes in the reading and how they relate to the week's topic (synthesis).

Mechanics: (20 points)

Grammar, spelling and sentence structure are important. Students must also be mindful of sentence structure and how ideas are presented. Formatted citations must be included when appropriate.

### **Course Project**

The course project is a PowerPoint presentation you will design

and turn in (with notes) on a topic related to Youth and Work.  
There are three options for the course project:

Youth and Media (as it relates to work)

Youth and Policy (as it relates to work)

Youth Experiences around the World (as it relates to work)

Another Topic Approved by the Instructor

Once your topic is selected, you should do some research on the subject matter. For example, if you decide to explore Youth and Media and you decide to explore the 1950s- what were some major issues youth faced during this period? If you decide to explore Youth and Policy- Was there any big legislation during this period? You might decide to explore Youth and a topic related to Race, Ethnicity, Gender and/or Social Class- what roles do race/ethnicity/social class play?

Before you begin your project, familiarize yourself with the expectations of this assignment. Your project should consist of approximately 16-25 slides (not including references), and should include notes at the bottom of each slide. Be sure to include at least 6 references, there are many sources on-line that can be found through a simple Google search. You must cite all your sources. Your sources (minimum of 6) should come from academic, popular (reputable) and on-line research.

Additional Details on the course project will be provided in the classroom.

### **Quizzes and Exams**

Two quizzes/exams (a midterms and a final) are scheduled throughout the semester. These are based on the weekly readings and discussions. The quizzes/exams will require you to construct informed and thoughtful answers to the questions.

**Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity! Your written questions will be submitted to “Turnitin.com” to insure that your answers are yours alone – not answers from another student, from the web, or another source. Be careful not to “copy” phrases or sentences excessively from the readings. The goal is to put the ideas into your own words!**

**General Information For Forum Posts, Papers and Quizzes:**

The papers are to be your own original work. You should use your books and notes as a reference. Be sure to cite any direct quotations that you use. You may discuss ideas with other students in the class, but the final product must be your own work. Any papers that are conspicuously similar are automatically sent to the Dean. The focus is on how what we have read and talked about in class can be used in order to critically examine the issues/arguments presented in the papers. Therefore you will be graded on your understanding of the scholarly information, theories and concepts that we have discussed. Simply regurgitating class notes is not a thoughtfully constructed paper.

<b>Grading</b>
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A final grade is based on a 1000-point system. Each assignment is worth a specific number of points. Total points accumulated determines final course grade.

A	900-1000 points
B+	870-899 points
B	800-869 points
C	700-799 points
D	600-699 points

F	599 points and below
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### **Grade Distribution (out of 1,000 points)**

Initial Forum	50 points
Forums	300 points
Writing Assignments	200 points
Course Project	250 points
Quizzes/Exams	200 points

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Class Sessions**

The success of this course depends on active engagement and dialogue by members of the class. You must be fully prepared to discuss and debate the issues raised in the assigned reading material. The course week begins on **WEDNESDAY** for all weeks, with the exception of week 1 which begins with the semester on a Tuesday.

A weekly message will be sent to you each Wednesday. In addition, I will upload this message into the course weekly messages file in document sharing and Course Announcements by 12pm (noon) each Wednesday.

Each week of the semester is divided into Units. In each Unit, I will introduce the topic for the week in the weekly message. This message will contain key terms and phrases; link you to power point slides and/or videos. Each Unit will also contain your reading for the week.

Keeping current with the material and assignments is vital to your success in the course. You are expected to participate in the online class each week fully prepared to discuss and debate the issues

raised in the assigned reading material. Exam material will draw heavily from material covered in lectures, reading response entries and forum discussions. **Everything covered in class is fair game for the exam!**

### **Due Dates**

**THIS IS NOT A SELF-PACED CLASS!** All assignments must be completed by dates indicated on the course calendar. Deadlines are listed in the syllabus with the course assignments section as well as on the course calendar. Due dates are also listed in each of the weekly units and in the weekly messages I email you. Thus, you have significant notification of deadlines.

Forums lock after 11:59pm on the Tuesday following the week in which it was assigned. No comments or responses can be posted after this time. **MISSED FORUMS CANNOT BE MADE UP, NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### **Communication**

You should inform the professor of any personal emergencies that may arise which will prevent you from getting online. I am available via email at any time and I generally try to answer emails on the same day they are received. You may also reach me on my cell phone at 334-663-4880 (you may also text me – but please be sure to identify yourself by name). **Please reserve this form of contact for only pressing issues.** I prefer not to be called before 9am or after 9pm. I have a Frequently Asked Questions tab in which I will share questions and answers that will be useful for the entire class. Please check this tab frequently as it may contain the answers you are looking for. I am here to help you to succeed in the class – but **COMMUNICATION IS CRUCIAL.**

### **Accommodation Requests**

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>.

*\*\*The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus, assignments, course content, etc. in any way to enhance the learning experience of this course\*\**

## Course Schedule

Week 1: January 18-24

Explore the classroom

Week 2: January 25-31

Topic: Introduction to Studying Youth and Work

Videos: *U.S. Child Labor, 1908-1920* and *The Dark Side of Chocolate*

Forum: ***Icebreaker “Your First Work Experiences”***. For this icebreaker forum we are going to start to get to know each other and also start to think about our own work experiences. First, I want you to post about the first paid work experience that you had. There are questions in the forum to guide your thinking and writing of this post. Second, you must comment

on at least 2 other students' posts. Again, you will find questions in the forum to guide your comments.

Week 3: February 1-7

Topic: The Child Labor Problem (Hindman Chapters 1 and 2) and Child Labor in America—Agriculture (Hindman Chapter 9)

Forum: ***Children on Farms Today***. For this forum we want to explore how far (or not so far) the United States has progressed in regard to child labor on farms. You read about child labor in the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century this week—well what about today? For this forum you will need to first read some news stories/watch some videos about children working on farms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century America (there will be some examples in the forum and you are free to explore online for others). Then I want you to post a memo to President Obama. In this memo you need to explain what the problem is today, and importantly what lessons we learned from child labor on the farms in the 19/20<sup>th</sup> century that can be brought to bear today. (That is, did we improve the situation for child labor on farms; make it worse; not do anything about it). Then you need to comment on 2 other students' posts. Are your memos in agreement? Are there significant differences?

Week 4: February 8-14

Topic: Child Labor in America--Coal Mines, Manufacturing (Hindman Chapters 4 and 5)

Forum: ***Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire***. For this forum we want to build on what we read and focus in on factory work. Specifically, you want to watch the PBS film on NYC Triangle Shirtwaist Factory (found in the forum). Now imagine that you have been asked by the Mayor of New York to design a memorial to the victims of the Triangle Fire. What would you propose, and why? What information would you want your memorial to impart, and what feelings and emotions would you

want it to elicit? Describe the concept for your memorial in writing. After you post the story you are then to assume the “mayor” role for the other students, and respond to their news stories concepts. What do you like about them? How does it share the experience of the victims of the fire? How does it convey the issues associated with child labor?

Week 5: February 15-21

Topic: Child Labor in America—Homework and Street Trades (Hindman Chapters 7 and 8)

Forum: ***Gender and Child Labor*** This week you read about 2 very ‘gendered’ forms of child labor—young boys working as news boys and messengers; and young girls working as homeworkers/sewers. Such segregation is very common. For this assignment I want you to search for a news stories on child labor today that focuses on work that is predominately performed by young boys or young girls. I suggest some sites in the forum for you to search (including BBC, BBC America, Guardian, CNN, CNN international etc). You are to post the link to the story along with your summary by the initial post deadline. Then comment on 2 other students’ stories where you try to identify similar patterns of how gender segregation in child labor existed in the US in the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century and how it exists today.

Week 6: February 22- 28

Quiz #1

Week 7: March 1-7

Topic: Teenage Workers Today (Besen-Cassino, Chapter 1-3 and Tannock, Why Do Working Youth Work Where They Do?:A Report from the Young Worker Project)

Forum: ***Retails Jobs and Young Workers***. For this forum I want you to search online for help wanted ads for the types of

workplaces/retail establishments that Besen-Cassino talks about in Chapter 2 and 3. You can use craigslist, company websites, and other sources. Then I want you to post what you find—what are the employers emphasizing (skill, education, something else; are they looking for a particular kind of worker?). I want you to post a summary of what you found (you can include links to the ads) by midnight on Monday March 1. Then I want you to respond to at least 2 other students' posts. Did you find similar things, different things, why?

Weeks 8 and 9: March 8-21

Course Project Work Week and Spring Break  
Course Projects Due March 21st

Week 10: March 22-28

Topic: Teenage Workers Today (Besen-Cassino, Chapter 5-7)

Forum: ***Gender Wage Gap*** For this forum I want to focus in on Besen-Cassino's chapter on gender pay gap for young people. First I want you to supplement the reading by reading this piece from Think Progress on gender gaps in children's allowances (<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/04/23/3430025/gender-gap-allowance/>) Then I want you to either: think back to what you earned for an allowance or for work you did in your neighborhood (babysitting, lawn work) and if you have siblings, ask them what they earned. If you don't have siblings (or if your siblings are the same gender as you) ask friends (both male and female) of similar ages to you what they earned. In both cases be sure to get the wages and the work they did. Or if you are a parent who pays your children an allowance (or hires children for certain jobs) report out the work they do, their gender and what you pay. So for your first post I want you to share the data you gathered (including the years when the work was done) and write a post about how gender does/does not influence the payment. Then I want you to comment

on at least 2 other students' posts. Are there similarities, differences? Does some of that have to do with the work that is being performed? Time period?

Week 11: March 29-April 4

Topic: Teenage Workers Today – Besen-Cassino Chapter 8  
Begin Writing Assignment 1

Week 12: April 5-11

Topic: Teenage Workers today: Race, Class and Unemployment Part 1 (AFL-CIO “Young workers: A Lost Decade” and Economic Policy Institute “The Kids Aren’t Alright: A Labor Market Analysis of Young Workers; and Jacobs, “Twelve Ways to Fix the Youth Unemployment Crisis”  
Writing Assignment 1 Due

Week 13: April 12-18

Topic: Teenage Workers today: Race, Class and Unemployment Part 2  
Writing Assignment 2 Due

Week 14: April 19-25

Topic: How Young Workers will Change Work: (Williams, How the Millennial Generation Will Change the Workplace and Stiller, Creating Tomorrow’s Leaders: the Expanding Roles of Millennials in the Workplace)

Forum: ***Changing Workplaces?*** For this forum you want to reflect on the readings and also your own experiences in the workplace (either as a millennial or as someone who is not an Millennials but perhaps has worked with Millennials). Post how you believe the workplaces will/will not change as young workers

take on more leadership positions. You should use your own experiences as well as the readings as a guide.

Week 15: April 26- May 1

Wrap Up and Prepare for Final Exam

Week 16: May 4-10

Final Exam Period (**Final Exam Opens Thursday May 4<sup>th</sup> and Closes Monday May 8<sup>th</sup>**)