

PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

37:575:395:90

Spring 2021

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Course Overview

This course is designed to give you a chance to become engaged with the intellectual tradition in labor studies. You will read classic authors and current professional theory. You will have the opportunity to examine some of the big issues in the field and to decide what you think about them. You will also gain proficiency in important skills: reading for analytical insight, debating ideas, and communicating with others. If you do not like to write papers, this is probably not the best section of this course for you. **Students should all be labor studies majors or minors who have previously taken 15 credits or more in labor studies.**

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

How will you learn in this online course?

Most weeks you will:

- Review a power-point and material written by the professors on the page in the online shell. These are like lectures but much shorter, so you have more time for other learning activities.
- Read theorists with a variety of perspectives.
- Answer questions regarding their ideas.
- Participate in an online threaded discussion with other students, posting at least 3 times a week (by Friday; by Sunday and by Tuesday evenings).
- Read a message from the professors (posted in Announcements).

Some weeks you will also have the opportunity to review a video or videos, or listen to a audio file. Some weeks you will take a unit quiz (open book).

Evaluation. Grades will be based on all of the following activities:

	Value	Points
Personal information sheet	00.5%	5
Pretest (you receive all points for taking this)	01.0%	10

Online discussion forums (8 out of 10 @ 25 each)	20.0%	200
Written question on readings (6 out of 8 @ 25 each)	15.0%	150
Midterm exam (1)	16.0%	160
Collaborative power-point (1)	12.5%	125
Unit quizzes (3 @ 50 each)	15.0 %	150
Final exam (1 in two parts)	20.0 %	200
TOTAL	100.0%	1000

You will notice that you are able to “skip” any two weeks of online discussion and any two written questions on the readings (in the same or different weeks). Use these choices wisely and remember, you are still responsible for all concepts covered in any particular topic. **Notice that the collaborative assignment cannot be skipped even though it replaces a weekly writing assignment.** Students who do not use any of their “skips” instead will be allowed to “drop” low scores instead. **Our experience is that the best students “save” their skips and use them wisely later on.**

Points have no “absolute meaning,” – in the end, the professor will use judgment in translating points into grades for the course. *For example, typically a B+ is 88-89.9 points, but the professors may decide to use some other range of points.*

Keep current – avoid being late!

This is an interactive class – you need to keep current in the reading and forums so that you can interact with others in the class.

An online class is somewhat flexible with regard to your schedule but if you must be responsible for managing your time and for getting online each week no matter what else is going on in your life. **In general, you should sign into the class AT LEAST 3 times a week (by Friday, by Sunday and by Tuesday evenings) and check your email each day.**

You should inform the professor of serious personal emergencies that arise – for instance, hospitalization that makes it impossible to get online. A trip associated with your job is not such an emergency, nor is a problem with your personal computer. There are many ways to get online in hotels and in campus computing facilities

Nature of the exams and quizzes

Each week, questions on the material covered that week will be posted. These short-answer questions could be answered in a paragraph or two but you are not expected to write out answers and turn them in. They are solely for your use in studying. The midterm and final exams are take-homes that will contain a subset of these questions – so if you take some notes on the answers to the questions as you go along, you should be able to do well on the two exams. The take home portions of the exams will also have some questions not previously distributed.

The quizzes are a series of T-F questions on the readings, videos, and power-points. The questions are challenging and time is limited, but this is an open book exam. If you are familiar with all the material in the course, you should be able to go back and look up the answer to some items that you don't recall. The T-F questions are randomized and drawn from a larger question bank so no two students will have identical quizzes. The objective portion of the final will also have multiple choice items.

Assessment of weekly written questions that are handed in

You will be asked to answer one question about the reading on most weeks. It is possible to earn up to 25 points by doing so. The answers should not be any longer than they need to be to fully answer the question. Depending on how you write, perhaps 2-3 pages should suffice for many questions.

Scores on these weekly assignments reflect whether or not you have achieved an accurate understanding of the various readings and whether or not you reflect those ideas well in written English.

Avoid plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity! Your written question 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! We are not interested in extensive quotation – have the goal of quoting source material no more than once in these papers.

Assessment of online forums

It is possible to earn up to 25 points by excellence in participation in each weekly forum.

A forum is an interactive threaded discussion. In this class it will start each week on Wednesday, and end on Tuesday. Your contribution will be evaluated as follows:

- **How much you participated in a substantive way.** In general, you can think of this as 1 point per substantive post that adds to the discussion (5 points).
- **Was your participation ongoing and interactive?** You should have at least one substantive post by Friday night and another by Sunday night for full credit here. But additionally for full credit, you must interact with others by asking or answering questions, or by agreeing or disagreeing with them. But, remember that you must add to the discussion, not simply agree. (5 points).
- **Were your comments thoughtful and based on the readings?** Did you understand the theorists' ideas correctly or did you make errors? Did you connect the ideas of one theorist to those of others? In other words, what was the quality of your comments? (5 points)
- **Breadth and Evidence.** Did you comment on multiple questions or just one? Were your opinions backed by personal experience or other types of evidence? Persuasive opinions are backed by a variety of types of evidence – from other academic sources, from current events, and from personal experience (5 points).
- **Were your comments expressed clearly and appropriately?** Please don't "flame" in these forums. Informality is OK, but use standard written English of the sort that would be appropriate in a work setting (5 points).

Disability

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> (Links to an external site.). 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> (Links to an external site.).

First Day: Jan. 19

Log into the course shell and review the material in the course home. Learn how to use Canvas. Set up how you want to receive notifications. **Fill out and turn in the student information sheet. Take the pre-test this week to see how quizzes work in the Canvas system.**

Unit 1: Wed. Jan. 20 - Tues. Feb. 9 (3 weeks)

Economic Ideas in Employment Relations: Classical & Neoclassical, Marxist, and Keynesian

Topic 1-1: Jan. 20-26 (Due: Question)

Robert Heilbroner, The Worldly Philosophers, revised 7th ed. (NY: Touchstone, 1999). Portions of chapter on Smith (pp. 50-63).

Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, (Originally 1776; Prometheus Books, 1991), Chapter 1-2 (pp. 109-121).

John Lancaster, excerpt on Neoliberalism from How to Speak Money, NY & London: W.W. Norton, 2014.

Sarwat Jahan, Ahmed Saber Mahmud, and Chris Papageorgiou, "What is Keynesian Economics?" International Monetary Fund, Finance and Development, September, 2014, pp. 53-54. See <http://www.IMF.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2014/09/basics.htm> (Links to an external site.)

Peter Coy, "John Maynard Keynes Is the Economist the World Needs Now," BloombergBusinessweek, Oct. 30, 2014. See <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-10-30/why-john-maynard-keynes-theories-can-fix-the-world-economy> (Links to an external site.)

Topic 1-2: Jan. 27-Feb. 2 (Due: Forum; Question)

Robin, Corey, "The New Socialists," New York Times, 8/26/18. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/24/opinion/sunday/what-socialism-looks-like-in-2018.html> (Links to an external site.)

Sean McElwee, "Marx was Right: Five Surprising Ways Karl Marx Predicted 2014," Rolling Stone, Jan. 30, 2014 at <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/marx-was-right-five-surprising-ways-karl-marx-predicted-2014-20140130>

Leo Panitch, "Thoroughly Modern Marx," Foreign Policy, 2009.

Alan Woods, "The Ideas of Karl Marx," 2013, read from beginning through start of "Historical Materialism,": <http://www.marxist.com/karl-marx-130-years.htm> (Links to an external site.)

Deepa Kumar, Outside the Box: Corporate Media, Globalization, and the UPS Strike. (Urbana & Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2007), Preface (pp. vii-xv) and part of Chapter 6, pp. 155-157 midpage. The rest of the excerpt from Chapter 6 (pp. 157 midpage – 163 is optional reading).

Optional reading: Online discussion with various authors, <https://www.quora.com/Political-Philosophy-What-did-Karl-Marx-get-right-and-what-was-he-wrong-about> (Links to an external site.)

Topic 1-3: Feb. 3-9 (Due: Forum; Question)

Frederick Taylor, Scientific Management (New York: Harper and Row, 1947), pp. 39-73.

Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century (New York: Monthly Review, 1974), Part of Chapter 3, pp. 78-83 and Part of Chapter 5, pp. 124-131.

Richard Edwards, Michael Reich, and Thomas Weisskopf, The Capitalist System, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978), "Alienation," pp. 265-268.

Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Exploring the Managed Heart," in The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, pp. 3-12

UNIT 1 QUIZ – take in any 75 minutes on Wednesday Feb. 10 (you can continue past midnight to finish).

Unit 2: Wed Feb. 10 - Tues. Feb. 23 (2 weeks)

Markets and Institutions

Topic 2-1: Feb. 10-Feb. 16 (Due: Forum; Question)

Bruce E. Kaufman, "Labor Markets and Employment Regulation: The View of the 'Old' Institutionalists," in Bruce E. Kaufman, ed. Government Regulation of the Employment Relationship. (Madison, Industrial Relations Research Association, 1997), pp. 11-39.

Topic 2-2 Feb. 17-Feb. 23 (Due Forum; Question)

Professor Jerry Z. Muller, Catholic University, 30 minute video lecture, "The Rise of Welfare-State Capitalism," in the series Thinking about Capitalism (The Great Courses, 2008).

John W. Budd and Stefan Zagelmeyer, Excerpt from "Public Policy and Employee Participation," in The Oxford Handbook of Participation in Organizations, edited by Adrian Wilkinson, Paul Gollan, David Marsden, and David Lewin, 2007, pp. 1-6.

UNIT 2 QUIZ – Take in any 75 minutes on Feb. 24 (you can continue past midnight to finish).

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED ON WED. Feb. 24 DUE TUESDAY March 2 at 11:59 p.m.

Unit 3: Wed. March 3 – April 13 (4 weeks plus breaks)

Organizations and Humans Who Work in Them

Topic 3-1 March. 3-9 (Due: Forum)

Steven Ott, ed. "Motivation," in Classic Readings in Organizational Behavior(Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1989), pp. 27-35.

Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," Chapter 2 in Motivation and Personality, 3rd edition. New York, Harper and Row, 1970, pp. 15-31 (note – the first version of this theory was published in the 1940s).

Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise" an excerpt from a book of the same title in J. Steven Ott, ed. Classic Readings in Organizational Behavior (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1989) pp. 66-73.

SPRING BREAK MARCH 13-MARCH 21

Topic 3-2 March 24-March 30 (Due: Forum; Question)

Elton Mayo, The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization (New York: Routledge, 1949), excerpted in D. S. Pugh, ed. Organization Theory: Selected Readings (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 215-229.

Charles Heckscher, White-Collar Blues, Chapter 2, "The Meaning of Loyalty," pp. 13-36.

Topic 3-3: March 31-April 13 (Two weeks) (Due: Forum in first week; Powerpoint in second week) [Note: You can complete the power-point project for this topic either individually or using a group of 2 or 3 people. This is a larger project that cannot be "skipped." You have two weeks for the project but it is important to read this material, complete the forum, and start the project the first week.]

Bruce Kaufman, Human Resources and Industrial Relations: Commonalities and Differences," Human Resource Management Review, 11(4), 2001, pp. 361-374.

Jeffrey Pfeffer, "Human Resources from an Organizational Behavior Perspective: Some Paradoxes Explained," Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol 21, No. 4 (Fall, 2007), pp. 115-134.

UNIT 3 QUIZ – Take in any 75 minutes on Wednesday April 14 (you can continue past midnight to finish)

Unit 4 Wed. April. 14 – Tues. May

Freedom and Democracy in a World of Multi-National Corporations

Topic 4-1 April. 14-20 (Due: Forum; Question)

Gay, Peter, "Liberalism," Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2008.

Alan Fox, "Managerial Ideology and Labour Relations," British Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Nov. 1966), pp. 366-378.

William E. Hudson, American Democracy in Peril, 3rd edition, (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2001), part of Chapter 1, "Models of Democracy," pp. 1-18.

Topic 4-2 April. 21-27 (Due: Forum; Question)

George Lakoff, Whose Freedom: The Battle Over America's Most Important Idea, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), Chapter 5, "Progressive Freedom: The Basics," pp. 73-81 and 85-94.

Jack Metzgar, Striking Steel: Solidarity Remembered (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000). "Getting to 1959," first part pp. 17-39.

Paula B. Voos, "Industrial Relations and Democracy," IRRA Presidential Address, in Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting, Industrial Relations Research Association, San Diego, CA, January 3-5, 2004.

Topic 4-3 April 28. 2-May 4 (Due: Forum; No question is due this week)

Richard Freeman and James L. Medoff, Excerpt from "The Two Faces of Unionism," Public Interest, No. 57 (Fall, 1979), pp. 69-76.

Elaine Bernard, "Creating Democratic Communities in the Workplace," in A New Labor Movement for a New Century, ed. by Gregory Mantsios (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998).

NO SEPARATE UNIT 4 QUIZ – This will be part of the online portion of the comprehensive final exam. In other words, unit 4 will have additional "weight" on the T-F part of that exam. There are also T-F and multiple choice questions over material from the entire course.

Final Exam: Take home portion distributed Wed. May 4 and due Tues. May 11 at 11:59 p.m. Online portion to be taken Sat. May 8 or Sun. May 9. You have 2 hours for the online exam.