



RUTGERS

UNIVERSITY | NEW BRUNSWICK

School of Management & Labor Relations

Youth at Work, Course 37:575:215:90/91, Spring 2026 Online Asynchronous

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jennifer Zachary

Course Format: **Online, Asynchronous**

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Virtual Office Hours (through Zoom): Tuesdays 11am or upon request at [Prof. Jennifer Zachary Zoom Room](#)

Course Delivery Format

This course runs from January 20th through May 13, 2026. It is delivered *entirely* online through the Learning Management System, Canvas. There will be no Face-to-Face, in-person classroom sessions, except for an optional virtual office hour.

The course is delivered in **asynchronous** mode. This means the learning activities and communication takes place outside of real-time. You do not have to log in at any specific scheduled time; you log in at your convenience. However, there may be times, if you're working in groups on an assignment, you would need to set up a live session via the **Canvas BigBlueButton, WebEx, or ZOOM.**

Note: Even though you don't need to log in at any specific time, **you are required to adhere to all course work due dates.**

Virtual Office Hour

- The Virtual Office Hour will be conducted through Zoom on date/time. Or upon request.

Learning Goals

The Core Curriculum Learning Goals assessed in this course include:

CCD-1: Analyze the degree to which forms of human differences and stratifications among social groups shape individual and group experiences of, and perspectives on, contemporary issues. Such differences and stratifications may include race, language, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, abilities or other social distinctions and their intersections.

SCL-1: Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

SCL-2: Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Learning Objectives – SMLR

1. Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.
2. Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions.

Learning Objectives – LSER Department

3. Demonstrate an understanding of perspectives, theories, and concepts in our field.
4. Apply those concepts, along with substantive institutional knowledge, to contemporary developments.
5. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work

Accommodations

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the [Office of Disability Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#), the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. Below is the full contact information for the Office of Disability Services:

Office of Disability Services contact and address

Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8045.

- E-mail Address: dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu
- Phone: (848) 445-6800 • Fax: (732) 445-3388
- <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

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 (abahruth@rutgers.edu) or through Canvas Inbox at any time and I generally try to answer emails on the same day they are received. I frequently check my emails during the day. Every other week or so I will also schedule a Zoom drop in office hours session. I will post when these will be so that if you would like to meet “in person” we can do so.

Rutgers Support Resources for you

Rutgers Student Health Services:

- Rutgers Student Affairs is dedicated to health for the whole student body, mind and spirit. It accomplishes this through a staff of qualified clinicians and support staff.

[Health, Counseling, and Wellness services](#) are available at several locations throughout Rutgers University.

Crisis Intervention - Student Health

- [Crisis Situations](#)
- [In the Wake of Trauma](#)

Academic Services:

- For academic support including tutoring, visit the [Rutgers - New Brunswick Learning Centers](#).
- For coaching help with writing skills and assignments visit the [Rutgers - New Brunswick Writing Tutors in the Learning Center](#).
- Many library resources are available online. Assistance is available through phone, email, and chat. For information, check the [Rutgers Libraries website](#).
- [Registrar's Office](#)
- [Rutgers Dean of Students - Student Affairs](#)

Veteran Services:

- Rutgers is proud to support veterans. If you are a veteran of the armed forces, please visit the [Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services website](#) for more information.

Course Description

This course explores youth experiences in the labor market. The course starts by examining the work experiences of children and youth in the 19th and early 20th 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 further 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 economy, and various policies and programs that can improve their experiences and economic security, especially in the midst of the current economic crisis.

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?
- Have you ever been hurt at work or know of a young worker who was hurt at work?
- How can young workers and their advocates improve young peoples' experiences in the labor market?

Course Materials

Required Readings

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

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

7. Besen-Cassino, Yasemin. 2013. *Consuming Work: Youth Labor in America*.

- Note: You can access the e-texts through the Rutgers University Libraries by logging in with your NetId and Password.

Additional learning materials

Any other additional articles, videos, and/or other media will be provided to you in the Modules section of this course, under the respective weekly To-Do pages.

Computer & Other Technology Requirements

- Access to the internet
- Reliable computer
- Headphones/Headsets - optional
- Webcam - optional
- Microsoft Word
- [Basic Computer Specifications for Canvas \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

For convenience, you can also download/install the Canvas Student App for Android or iOS devices. Follow the instruction on the respective app centers:

- [Canvas Student App for Android \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Canvas Student App for iOS](#)

Canvas Tutorials & Technical Support

If you are new to Canvas or need a refresher tutorial, visit:

- [Getting Started In Canvas for Students \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas:

- Contact [Canvas Help Desk](#). 833-648-4357, help@oit.rutgers.edu.
- Refer to the [Canvas Student TutorialLinks to an external site.](#)
- View tutorials at Course Tools Tutorials (in the Modules section)

Course Module Structure

The course is structured by weekly Modules. Each Module contains the respective Week's "To-Do" page. The To-Do page lists:

- Brief topic introduction
- Learning Objectives for the week/topic
- Weekly Instructor Note (this is a more detailed description of the weekly topic.) The Weekly Instructor Note will help you better understand, absorb the readings for the week.
- Readings (textbook chapters, web articles, and/or other sources).
- Videos (Watching)
- Assignments (Forum Discussion, and/or other Assignment). Note, there may not be Assignments every week.

The course is divided into 15 weekly modules as follows:

- [Week 1 \(January 20-25\): Orientation](#)
- [Week 2 \(January 26-Feb 1\): Introduction](#)
- [Week 3 \(February 2-8\): Defining the Child Labor Problem](#)
- [Week 4 \(February 9-15\): Child Labor Home and the Streets](#)
- [Week 5 \(February 16-22\): Child Labor in the Mines and Factories](#)
- [Week 6 \(February 23-March 1\): Should Adolescents Work?](#)
- [Week 7 \(March 2-8\): Paid and Unpaid Internships](#)
- [Week 8 \(March 9-15\): Teen Workers Today, Part 1](#)
- Spring Recess (March 14-22nd)
- [Week 9 \(March 23-29\): Teen Workers Today, Part 2](#)
- [Week 10 \(March 30-April 5\): Course Project Submission and Reviews](#)
- [Week 11 \(April 6-12\): Youth at Work: Talking Safety](#)
- [Week 12 \(April 13-19\): Responding to Projects](#)
- [Week 13 \(April 20-26\): Youth Unemployment](#)
- [Week 14: \(April 27-May 3\) Youth and the Future of Work](#)
- [Week 15 \(May 4-10\): Youth and Unions](#)

Discussion Forums

In the absence of a face-to-face interaction, the discussion forums become essential in sharing your thoughts, experiences, expertise with each other. Discussion is a significant portion of this course. Participation is required as this is a graded activity.

Before posting your thoughts, replies to the discussion forum, make sure to have read the assigned readings, viewed/listened to the relevant media (videos, podcasts, etc). Take time to reflect on what you have read and viewed, organize your references, and citations. Write a draft, refine your response, save your document in Word (just in case), then copy and paste to the Discussion forum(s). Provide a substantial response supported by references and citations. Stay on topic. Follow the Discussion Post Guidelines and Rubric noted in each Discussion Forum Portal.

With the exception of Week 1 Discussion, your Discussion Forums are set up as a Group Discussion; 10 students per group. Over the course of the semester, your groups will be randomly reset so you get to know your classmates.

Note: *Timeliness is important* - a good discussion entails keeping the dialogue going (throughout the given week) with your classmates. In order to facilitate the dialogue, it is critical you **adhere to the Discussion post due dates** so you have sufficient time to respond to each other's posts. Please **do not wait until the last day** of the week to post your replies.

- Each forum opens on a Monday of the week. First post is due on **Wednesdays**, and replies to your classmates' are due on **Saturdays**. Each forum closes on a Sunday of the week.
- You are encouraged to post your replies **by audio, video, and/or text**. Refer to each forum portal for instructions. If you reply in audio/video, you still need to post your citations and references in the forum portal, in text.
- The Discussion Forums are set up for groups of 10 students, 6 groups in total. There are 3 rounds of Forum groups in which you are randomly assigned to different Forum groups so you get to know and interact with your classmates. Here are the list and breakdown of the Forum groupings:
 - Forums 2, 3, and 4 - 1st round grouping
 - Forums 5, 6, and 9 - 2nd round grouping
 - Forums 10, and 12 - 3rd round grouping
 - Forums 7 and 11 are optional, non-graded but you are encouraged to participate.

Course Project

Detailed project information will be available in Week 3. You may work individually or with a partner. Please reach out to me by week 5 if you wish to work with a partner for this project.

Grade Distribution

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.

Grading Components	Percent towards Final Grade
Discussion Forum Participation (50 points each)	40%
Writing Assignments	20%
Course Project	40%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points Range
A	90-100
B+	87-89
B	80-86

C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Policies and Procedures

Online Participation and Engagement

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 **Monday** for all weeks and ends on **Sunday**.

Using AI Tools:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including text generators like ChatGPT, can be valuable resources for learning and research. However, their use must be transparent and ethical:

- **Disclosure:** If you use AI tools to aid your work, you must disclose this use. Clearly indicate which parts of your assignment or project were assisted by AI.
- **Attribution:** Treat AI tools as you would any other source. Provide proper attribution and citations for any content generated by AI that you include in your submissions.
- **Originality:** Ensure that most of your work reflects your own understanding and effort. AI should not replace your critical thinking and creativity but rather support and enhance it.
- **Accuracy:** AI tools can sometimes produce inaccurate or biased information. Always verify the content generated by AI and use your judgment to determine its validity and relevance.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may be considered a violation of academic integrity and could result in disciplinary action. For further guidance, please refer to the [Guidelines on the Use of AI at Rutgers](#).

Regarding using AI tools, please follow the [Guidelines on the use of AI at Rutgers](#).

Let's work together to ensure our learning is genuine and respectful.

Your Responsibilities

Online learning requires a high level of discipline, dedication, and time management skills. While online learning offers you flexibility and convenience to learn from anywhere, anytime, *you are still expected to **adhere to all due dates***.

You are expected to:

- Have access to a reliable computer, and access to the Internet
- Log in to Canvas for your course ***on a regular basis***
- Check for any announcements, update to the syllabus, assignments, and/or discussions and respond accordingly
- Actively participate in the Discussion Forum
- Complete the assigned readings and/or media
- Complete the assigned exercises and projects
- Adhere to all due dates

In case of computer failure

Make sure you have an alternative plan of access to your Canvas course in case your computer crashes (it happens). Additionally, be sure to backup your important documents and assignments on a flash drive or other external device.

Where to Next?

After reviewing the syllabus components, proceed to Modules, and review the Learning Support Resources before starting Week 1 activities.

Any Broken Links

At SMLR we strive to continuously improve all course designs. If you come across any broken links/URLs, or suggestions for improving the course design, please feel free to email Marta Pulley, SMLR's Instructional Designer/Technology Specialist, Online DEI Officer, marta.pulley@rutgers.edu. Your suggestion and recommendation for improvement is greatly appreciated.