



School of Management and Labor Relations

Collective Bargaining

Spring 2026

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Online

Subject to Change

Course Description: This asynchronous course examines labor relations and collective bargaining through three key processes: union organizing (the formation of unions), bargaining (the negotiation of contracts), and dispute resolution (the resolution of labor disputes and grievances). To facilitate the learning experience, the class will combine small-group discussions, class discussions, lectures, and exercises. Additionally, students will participate in a mandatory synchronous mock contract negotiation (Appendix “A,” on either **April 7 or April 12**). You will be expected to be prepared with a strong internet connection and a camera; otherwise, an alternate assignment of a five-page research paper (Appendix “B”) will be provided.

Course Objective: After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- Identify and explain key terms and various concepts, tools, and techniques relating to the negotiation process, including interest-based and positional negotiations.
- Understand and be able to apply a framework for analyzing collective bargaining and negotiations.
- Explain the role and function of management and union strategies and structures for bargaining.
- Distinguish and discuss the various factors affecting labor law and history.
- Understand and become familiar with contract administration and dispute resolution processes.
- Analyze and relate various vital issues regarding unions in the past, present, and future.

Textbook: Roger Fisher and William Ury, *Getting to Yes: Negotiation Agreement without Giving In*. New York: Penguin, 2011. ISBN 9780143118756

Readings: We will read excerpts from several books, including:

- Harry Katz, Thomas Kochan, and Alexander Colvin, *An Introduction to Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations*, 4th Ed., abbreviated as “KKC.”
- John W. Budd, *Labor Relations: Striking a Balance* (6th edition), abbreviated as “Budd.”
- Michael R. Carrell and Christina Heavrin, *Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining: Public and Private Sectors*, tenth edition, abbreviated as “Carrell.”
- Thomas Berkeley and Arthur Colosi *Collective Bargaining: How it Works and Why*.

The readings must be done before class.

Violations of academic integrity policies, including cheating, will result in penalties up to and including a 0 for the semester. I need to be notified if an issue arises throughout the course that prevents you from attending class or keeping up with the assignments. Every effort will be made to accommodate. However, you must be proactive and not wait until you are performing poorly. **The use of AI, such as ChatGPT, is not permitted at any stage of the writing process on any assignment.**

REQUIRED (if chosen) Bargaining Exercise: April 7, 7 p.m.-10 p.m. or April 12, 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. (You need to be available on one of these dates). A synchronous collective bargaining simulation in which small groups of union and management teams negotiate the terms of a new collective bargaining agreement. Professor Castella will assign teams for this exercise. You will be required to have headphones with a microphone and a camera to participate in this exercise. I will assign teams for this exercise.

Final grades are based on the following:

Note - you must complete all assignments to receive credit for the course.

Student Info Sheet/ Tending to Account:	5/5 points
Forum 1:	50 points
Forum 2:	50 points
Forum 3: Unions	50 points
Woodville	25 points
CB Worksheet	20 points
Labor Law Worksheet	20 points
Midterm Exam:	235 points
Forum 4: CB Debrief (instead of UAW debrief)	20 points
Forum 4: UAW Debrief (instead of CB debrief)	20 points
UAW Paper (instead of bargaining exercise)	285 points
CB Bargaining Exercise	285 points

Final Exam:
Total:

235 points
1000 points

Grading Scale

A 100% to 90%	B+ <90% to 87%
B <87% to 80%	C+ <80% to 77%
C <77% to 70%	D <70% to 64%
F <64% to 0%	

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction and History of Collective Bargaining January 20- January 25 (Short week)

Reading:

- Chapter 1, “A Framework for Analyzing Labor Relations” in Katz, Harry C, Thomas A Kochan, and Alexander JS Colvin. 2015. Labor Relations in a Globalizing World: Cornell University Press.
- Chapter 2, “The Historical Evolution of the U.S. Industrial Relations System” KKC.

Film: Final Offer

Assignments:

- Create Profile in Tending to Account Associated Tasks
- Introduce yourself in the pinned discussion

Week 2: What is a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)? January 26- February 1

Reading:

- Locate and read a Collective Bargaining Agreement described in the worksheet.

Assignment:

- Complete the Collective Bargaining Worksheet, due February 1

Discussion:

- Go to Forum #1 and share your thoughts on the Final Offer film

Week 3: The Bargaining Environment Part 1: The Law February 2- February 8

Reading:

- Budd Chapter 4 (109-148)
- Colosi and Berkeley Section 5, The Battle (33-52)
- National Labor Relations Board Basic Guide to the National Labor Relations Act (1997)
<https://www.nlr.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/basic-page/node-3024/basicguide.pdf>

For reference, see National Labor Relations Act <http://www.nlr.gov/resources/national-labor-relations-act>

Assignment:

- Complete the Labor Law Worksheet
- Complete Student Information Sheet (Due February 8)

Discussion:

- Forum #2

Week 4: The Bargaining Environment: Political Economy February 9- February 15

Reading:

- Lewin, David, Jeffrey J. Keefe, and Thomas A. Kochan. "The new great debate about unionism and collective bargaining in US State and local governments." *Ind. & Lab. Rel. Rev.* 65 (2012): 749-975.
- Keefe, J. (2010). *Debunking the Myth of the Overcompensated Public Employee*. EPI Briefing Paper 276. Economic Policy Institute, Washington, DC.
- Givan, Rebecca Kolins. 2013. "Why Teachers Unions Make Such Useful Scapegoats." *New Labor Forum*.
- Katz, Kochan, Colvin, Chapter 4

View: Are Unions Good for the Economy

Discussion:

- Forum #3: Are Unions Good for the Economy?

Week 5: Negotiation Basics
February 16- February 22

Reading:

- Budd, Chapter 7 (excerpt 246-268)
- Introduction and Chapter 1 from Babcock and Laschever, *Women Don't Ask*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003
- Fisher and Ury, *Getting to Yes* (read the whole book)

View: [The Secret to Gaining the Upper Hand in Negotiations](#)

Week 6: Midterm Exam
February 23- March 1

The exam will be open Saturday, February 28, through Sunday, March 1, at 11:59 p.m.

Week 7: Bargaining Structure
March 2- March 8

Reading:

- Budd Chapter 7
- Colosi and Berkeley: Section 6, *The Table Process Examined*; Section 13, *Table Manners*; Section 16, *Table Tactics*

Assignment:

- Hypothetical: Woodville HealthCare Bargaining assignment

Attend:

For those who have chosen the Bargaining Exercise, a mandatory WebEx session will take place on Sunday, March 8, at 7 p.m.

Week 8: Economics and Contract Costing
March 9- March 13 (Short Week, Spring Break)

Reading:

- Carrell Chapters 7 & 8
- Spatz *Contract Costing for Union Negotiators* (Book in entirety)

**Week 9: Grievance, Discipline, and Other Non-Economic Issues.
March 23- March 29**

Reading:

- Carrell Chapters 11 and 12
- Review Bargaining Simulation Materials

**Week 10: Bargaining Simulation Preparation
March 30- April 5**

Negotiation Plan Due by 11:59 p.m., April 1

Reading:

- All materials are in the Collective Bargaining section

Assignment:

- Work with your team to prepare bargaining proposals on all issues and complete and submit the worksheets provided.
- If you chose the paper assignment, I would strongly suggest that you start it if you haven't already.

**Week 11: Bargaining Simulation (If you chose this assignment)
April 6- April 12**

Assignment:

- Participate in one of your assigned Bargaining Exercise times and submit Peer Evaluations.
 1. Tuesday, April 7, 7 p.m. -10 p.m. or
 2. Sunday, April 12, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- Submit the UAW paper by April 12, 11:59 p.m.

**Week 12: Debrief of Collective Bargaining Exercise or UAW Paper
April 13- April 19**

Forum Discussion:

- Forum # 4: Debrief of the Collective Bargaining Exercise or
- Forum #4 Debrief of the UAW Paper

Assignment:

- Submit the MOA from the Collective Bargaining Exercise
- Submit Peer Evaluations

Week 13: Catch-up Week

April 20- April 26

- Submit remaining outstanding assignments for a reduced (50%) grade.

Week 14: Current State of Collective Bargaining

April 27- May 3

Reading:

- Harold Meyerson, Labor at a Crossroads, The Seeds of a New Labor Movement, American Prospect

Week 15: Final Exam

May 4- May 10

- The exam will be available from **May 4 through May 10**

Appendix “A”

A synchronous (live at a particular time) team-based collective bargaining exercise that requires planning with the team and then bargaining with the opposing union or management team online. I highly recommend this option. But if your internet connection is not fast and reliable or if you live in a different time zone, this probably won't work out well. You must have a strong internet connection and a good personal computer with a microphone and camera to bargain online – a cell phone, Chromebook, or working in a student computing center won't be sufficient. There will also be times leading up to bargaining when you will need to schedule group meetings.

Meet ONLINE Tuesday, April 7 -from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

or

Meet ONLINE Sunday, April 12—from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Before the initial bargaining session, each team will construct a negotiation plan. Each negotiation plan should include a bargaining strategy and agenda that contains the team's threat point (i.e., the minimum [maximum] acceptable contract changes the union [company] would accept without a strike) and also what the team reasonably hopes to settle for. Both economic and non-economic items should be included. Blank templates are available on the exercise's website. Costs must be estimated for the monetary items in the packages. Bargaining agendas are not binding during negotiations but are used to facilitate preparation. An Excel spreadsheet is available on the website to help estimate the costs of various proposals. Every team member should lead the team on at least one individual issue. Potential issues include wages, health insurance, retirement benefits, notice procedures, and successorship, among others. Any pair of teams that do not complete an agreement by the end of the negotiation period will be deemed to be on strike and must write a strike paper. A full schedule and discussion regarding the process we will use for this simulation will be provided later.

Appendix “B”

Due, April 12

The 2023 United Auto Workers strike was a labor strike involving automobile workers involving the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the three unionized automakers in the United States—General Motors, Ford, and Stellantis. The three automaker factories, combined, employ approximately 145,000 UAW members. They also produce roughly 50 percent of the vehicles manufactured in the United States each year. The strike began on September 15, 2023, when the union was unable to reach a collective bargaining agreement with the three automakers. It was the first trilateral strike against the three automakers in the union’s history.

The hardline stance taken by the newly elected UAW president, Shawn Fain, contributed to the UAW’s decision to strike. Specifically, he has cited stagnant wages as one of the significant topics in bargaining.

You are to write a five-page paper (not including the bibliography, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12) laying out the issues leading up to the strike. Additionally, please provide a detailed explanation of how the UAW effectively leveraged the strength of its membership and all aspects of the media to launch such a historic campaign. You will also write about the ratification process and why some groups disagreed with the tentative agreement.

This paper is to be the product of mainly research with a closing of your opinion. I am not looking for just your opinion. I am looking for facts supporting your opinion.

You must properly cite all sources obtained from the Internet (APA style). You will lose points for not correctly citing. When submitted, this paper will be checked for plagiarism.