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Department of Labor Studies and Industrial Relations

**LIR 100  
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
SPRING 2004**

Section 001  
T Th 1:00 - 2:15

This course serves as an introduction to industrial relations. The field of industrial relations deals with employment and the employment relationship, particularly in unionized settings. Major topics will include the history of work and organized labor in America, the process of labor-management negotiation, and the role of government in regulating the employment relationship. We will also cover workplace issues such as dispute resolution and discrimination, and perspectives on the changing nature of work and employment.

Required text

**All readings are mandatory.**

Harry Katz and Thomas Kochan, *An Introduction to Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations*. Irwin-McGraw Hill, Third Edition.

Additional electronic readings are available through the library website (<http://cat.libraries.psu.edu> → "Course Reserves" → Instructor "Briscoe"). These articles can be printed or read on-line. Additional required readings may be added during the term.

Office hours and teaching assistant

Unless otherwise posted, office hours this term will be Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00-11:30 a.m., and by appointment.

Alisa Allan ([ala189@psu.edu](mailto:ala189@psu.edu)) will serve as Graduate Teaching Assistant for this course. She will be available to answer questions about assignments, grades, attendance, or any other course issues. She can be reached after class and during scheduled office hours in 130 Willard Building. Her office hours will be announced in class.

## Exams

There will be three exams. The exams will primarily consist of objective, multiple-choice questions. Each exams will primarily focus on material covered since the last exam, but may involve material from any part of the course.

The first exam will be in class on **Tuesday, October 12**. The second exam will be in class on **Thursday, November 11**. The third exam will be during finals week at a time **To Be Determined** by the PSU Registrar.

## In-class quizzes

During the semester, five unannounced quizzes will also be given during the last 10 minutes of class. These pop quizzes are designed to encourage attendance and attention during class. Each quiz will contribute one grade point. In addition, 2 points can be earned for attending the evening lecture on November 4, and 4 point for completing the RRP program between September 12 and 26.

## Written assignments

There will be two individual writing assignments, each of short (2-4 page) length.

### *Paper 1: Work comparisons paper*

The first assignment consists of comparing the work experiences of three people in or around your own family. The purpose of this assignment is for you to apply concepts from the course in a concrete research activity while also learning something about the work experiences in your family. **This paper will be due Tuesday, October 26**. Note that because of their potentially personal nature, these papers will not be shared publicly.

The paper 1 assignment can be completed in either of two following ways:

- a) Focus on **three generations in your family**. For example, use yourself, a parent and a grandparent. If you have living grandparents, ask them directly about their work experiences. If not, another relative may know enough about your grandparent to fulfill the assignment.  
– OR –
- b) Focus on **three working adults in different occupations**. For example, use a parent, an adult cousin, and a family friend. No more than one of the three may be a current student or less than 5 years out of school.

For either option (a or b), you should find out about the work experiences of the three people you have chosen, if possible by interviewing them. Your paper should first explain who the three people are and how you obtained the information about them. Include this in an introductory paragraph. Then systematically compare the work experiences of the three individuals. Including these issues:

- *occupational characteristics*, including what they do, and the amount and type of training (formal or informal, at school or on the job) required for their work;
- *organizational setting*, including the size of their work establishment (number of people), whether it is part of a larger organization, and who or what owns it;
- *working conditions*, including typical work hours, schedule, and daily work activities; and
- *union experience*, including whether they belong to a union or professional association (or ever have), how they view unions, and what they believe union representation does or could do for them. It does not matter whether they are for or against unions.

### *Paper 2: Current issues paper*

The second assignment consists of writing a short (2-4 page) commentary paper on a current issue in industrial relations. Valid topics include those which relate to industrial relations directly and have appeared in **major** American newspapers since January 1, 2004. Major papers include, for example, the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Philadelphia Enquirer*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Boston Globe*, and *Baltimore Sun*. The *Daily Collegian* is **not** a major paper, nor is *Yahoo News*.

Examples of relevant topics include current labor strikes, collective bargaining contracts, pension, changes in health benefits, grievances, plant relocation, labor history, mediation or arbitration issues, child labor laws, grassroots activism, minimum wage issues, overtime pay, racial or gender discrimination lawsuits, maternity leave lawsuits, discrimination against older workers, new manufacturing systems, outsourcing, international unions, free trade, and working conditions in developing countries.

Students will be expected to find at least 2 newspaper articles describing the same selected topic (or two closely related topics). First introduce the topic and describe the issue in general terms. Then analyze the industrial relations issues involved, referring to concepts used in class if possible. Where appropriate, offer your own opinion about the issue. Why does the issue matter? Who is affected? Are there two sides to the issue? Sources should be cited at the end of the paper. Do not attach the actual articles. **This paper will be due Tuesday, November 23.**

### Written assignment guidelines

Both papers should each be between 2 and 4 pages in length, and must be typed using standard one-inch margins and double spacing. Quality of research, writing, and analysis are all factors that will contribute to the grades earned on the commentary papers. As a reminder, any sentences directly copied from another source are considered plagiarism and will be prosecuted as per university policy.

**One point will be deducted for each day that a paper is submitted late.**

Save and print out copies of your papers as you are working on them. Your problems with deleted files or other computer issues are not an acceptable excuse for failing to turn in a paper when due.

**Emailed papers will not be accepted.** Do not expect your instructor to print out copies of papers. Please be aware that failure to submit papers will result in a grade of zero on them and will seriously jeopardize your overall grade in the course.

### **RACE RELATIONS PROJECT**

The Race Relations Project (RRP) is a peer-facilitated diversity program that employs trained undergraduate students from Penn State to lead small group discussions on the topic of race relations. Two facilitators from the RRP encourage participants in each group to express their personal views and experiences on a variety of subjects associated with race relations and the issues being covered in class.

Because our mission is simply to expand the multicultural dialogue, we do not teach or tell anyone what they should think. Instead, we encourage each person to uncover for themselves what they actually think. And our experience shows that this candid type of conversation helps participants to better understand their own views on race relations and, in turn, brings about a greater degree of multicultural competence with respect to these controversial issues.

**PARTICIPATION IN THE RRP PROGRAM IS WORTH 4 POINTS TOWARD YOUR FINAL COURSE GRADE.**

You will receive an email explaining how to register for the RRP program. However, the programs for this class will only be offered during the 3rd and 4th weeks of the semester starting September 12th and ending September 26th.

All questions regarding the RRP should be directed to Jon at [racereactionsproject.psu.edu](mailto:racereactionsproject.psu.edu).

## Grades

Grades will be determined in the following manner:

Exam I	Exam II	Exam III	Paper 1	Paper 2	Quizzes and bonuses	Total
25	25	25	10	10	11	106

Letter grading will follow this point system:

F	D	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
0-59.9	60-69.9	70-75.9	76-79.9	80-82.9	83-86.9	87-89.9	90-93.9	94-100

## Exam policy, academic dishonesty, and class attendance

All students will be expected to take the exams at the dates and times assigned. Only illness or personal emergency will be accepted as excuses for not taking exams. These should be reported to the instructor (865-0746 voice mail) or the teaching assistant **prior** to the exam and documentation is required.

**Unreported absences from an exam will be recorded as a grade of zero for that exam.**

**Any instance of academic dishonesty (as defined in the student handbook, including cheating on exams, any form of plagiarism, or collaboration on written assignments) will result in failure of the course.** Violations will also be reported to the appropriate University authorities for further action.

The Department of Labor Studies and Industrial Relations expects students to attend all scheduled class sessions. The only valid reasons for missing class are illness, family emergencies, and University sanctioned activities (off-campus athletic, academic, or student government-related events).

**Topics and readings (subject to modification during the term):**

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
0	Thurs Sep 2		Course overview	
1	Tues Sep 7		Introduction to IR and employment	CH 1
	Thurs Sep 9	1. IR history and context	Labor strife	CH 2
2	Tues Sep 14		<i>Film: The Inheritance</i>	
	Thurs Sep 16		National unions	
3	Tues Sep 21		Mass production	<i>Rise &amp; Fall</i>
	Thurs Sep 23	Labor law	Wagner Act	CH 3
4	Tues Sep 28		Post-Wagner	
	Thurs Sep 30	Employment law	at-will laws, benefits laws	
5	Tues Oct 5		Discrimination laws	
	Thurs Oct 7		Sources of power, workforce context	CH 4
6	Tues Oct 12	<b>EXAM 1</b>		
	Thurs Oct 14	2. The strategic level	Management strategies & systems	CH 5
7	Tues Oct 19		Union strategies, union decline	CH 6
	Thurs Oct 21	3. The functional level	Union organizing	CH 7
8	Tues Oct 26	<b>PAPER 1 DUE</b>	Negotiations	
	Thurs Oct 28		Bargaining & strikes	CH 8 & 9
9	Tues Nov 2		<i>Film: Collective bargaining</i>	
	Thurs Nov 4	<i>No class: eve. lecture</i>	8:00 PM lecture in Kern auditorium	
10	Tues Nov 9		Economic impacts of bargaining	CH 10
	Thurs Nov 11	<b>EXAM 2</b>		
11	Tues Nov 16	4. The workplace level	Grievance & arbitration	CH 11
	Thurs Nov 18		Workplace safety	<i>Cogs</i>
12	Tues Nov 23	<b>PAPER 2 DUE</b>	<i>Film: The Big One</i>	
	Thurs Nov 25	<i>No class: thanksgiving</i>		
13	Tues Nov 30		Participatory processes	CH 12
	Thurs Dec 2		<i>Film: Saturn and the UAW</i>	
14	Tues Dec 7	5. Alternative IR systems	International IR	CH 14
	Thurs Dec 9		The "new employment relationship"	<i>New Face</i>
15		<b>EXAM 3</b>	Scheduled during exam week	CH 15

**Electronic reserve readings:**

Rise & Fall = Rise and Fall of Mass Production by Womack, et al.

Cogs = "Cogs in the Great Machine" & "The Most Dangerous Job" by Schlosser

New Face = "New Face of the Silicon Age: How India became the capital of the computing revolution" by Pink

**Course schedule and content subject to change**