

**Department of Sociology
Dartmouth College
Fall 2013**

American Labor Relations (Sociology 70)

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Course Information:
TR 2-3:50, 013 Silsby Hall
X-hour: W 4:15-5:05
Office hours: TR 1-2 or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines worker struggles from the late 19th century United States to the present. Readings and discussion will focus on the formation of unions and other collective responses to the employment relationship, the changing relationships between organized labor and management, how each has sought to sway government and broader publics over time, and the implications of union decline for inequality and politics. Additional topics include: labor militancy, politics, and coalitions with other social movements, business activism and politics, and a range of cross-cutting issues around gender, immigration and race.

Evaluation:

Seminar grades are based on daily participation, a group presentation and statement, book review, and final paper. The composition of final grades and grading scale are as follows:

<u>Course Requirements</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Participation – 15%	A 93-100
Group Presentation – 20%	A- 90-92.99
Book Review & Presentation – 25%	B+ 87-89.99
Final Paper & Presentation – 40%	B 83-86.99
	B- 80-82.99
	C+ 77-79.99
	C 73-76.99
	Etc.

Class Participation: Enthusiastic and intellectually rigorous discussion is the core of any seminar. While I will typically provide introductory comments and put the day's materials in context, I will not lecture the entire course period. I expect you to attend each class, having done the reading ahead of time and ready to contribute. I recommend that you come to class each day armed with at least two written questions for class discussion on the assigned readings and topic. If discussion does not emerge spontaneously, I'll ask you to answer questions directly and push for your point of view.

Group Presentation:

Once during the quarter you will be responsible for leading a seminar discussion with at least one other student on a particular reading(s) and course topic. The teams will have the responsibility of explaining and elaborating course material (theory, debate, reading, group of ideas, etc.), and

then delving into a specific topic in greater detail. For example, if your group is presenting on the postwar decline in unionization, you may wish to provide data on union membership by industry or place over time in order to assess various explanations of union decline. The format for the presentation is a 10 – 15 minute talk on the topic, followed by a class discussion that you facilitate on selected key points. There is flexibility in how to present. The key is to be effective, rigorous, and interesting. The final requirement for this assignment is that the group must submit a one-page single-spaced summary and analysis/critique of the day's assigned reading(s) and course topic (this should overlap with your presentation). I encourage teams to run ideas by me for their presentation. Scheduling and details for the presentation will be covered during the first week of class.

Book Review:

Students will select a book from the list on blackboard, write a 4-5 page review, and provide a brief (approximately 5 minute) overview in class. The review should take a form similar to that found in academic journals. For a good example, browse an issue of *Contemporary Sociology* or the *American Journal of Sociology* (reviews are at the end). Reviews include both a summary of a book's central argument and approach, and a discussion of its usefulness or lack thereof. If you want to review something that is not on the list, clear it with me first. Scheduling and details for the reviews will be covered during the first week of class.

Final Project and Presentation:

Students will write a twelve-page term paper and give short (no more than 10 minute) presentation on their topic in class on Thursday, November 14. Papers are due at the beginning of class. The purpose of the paper is to give you the chance to spend some time thinking about something of relevance to labor that interests you. You have considerable leeway in choosing a topic but you must clear it with me first. To this end, students will meet with me early in the quarter to discuss their interests and will submit a written description of the project by the fourth week of the quarter. Details on paper requirements will be provided on blackboard.

Required Readings:

The following books required books are available at the Dartmouth Bookstore and Wheelock Books.

Kimeldorf, Howard. 1999 (Paperback). *Battling for American Labor*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lichtenstein, Nelson. 2003 (Paperback edition). *State of the Union*. Princeton University Press.

Jayaraman, Saru. 2013. *Behind the Kitchen Table*. Cornell University Press.

Blackboard: Several additional required readings are posted on the course blackboard site. In general, students should do the readings in the order they are listed. I will occasionally update readings or place other documents and announcements on blackboard for your edification. Check the blackboard course site often.

Course Policies:

Honor Principle: Examinations and assignments will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in the Dartmouth Organization, Regulations and Courses. I also encourage students to read Dartmouth's statement on Sources and Citations:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/>

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

Religious Holidays: Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Course Schedule & Assigned Readings:

The following is an outline. I will occasionally update readings and place other documents and announcements on Blackboard for your edification. *It is your responsibility to check the blackboard course site at the beginning of each week.*

Date	Topic & Assigned Readings
<i>Labor Activism Before the New Deal</i>	
9-17	Introduction & Course Overview Skim Amy Dean on "Alt-Labor" Richard Freeman and James Medoff, "A New Portrait of U.S. Unionism" Jack Fiorito, "The State of the Unions"
9-19	Howard Kimeldorf, <i>Battling for American Labor</i> , Chapters 1-4 Melvyn Dubofsky, "The IWW at 100"
9-24	Finish Kimeldorf's <i>Battling for American Labor</i> <u>Recommended:</u> Robert Goldstein, <i>Political Repression in Modern America</i> , Chapters 1-3
9-26	Film & Class Discussion: <i>Matewan</i> <u>Readings:</u> Cliff Brown, "Racial Conflict and Split Labor Markets" Salvatore Restifo, et al. "Segmented Assimilation, Split Labor Markets, and Racial/Ethnic Stratification: The Case of Early Twentieth Century New York"
<i>New Deal and Early Postwar Labor Relations</i>	
10-1	Nelson Lichtenstein, <i>State of the Union</i> (Introduction & Chapters 1-2) Vincent Roscigno and William Danaher, "Media and Mobilization"
10-3	**Guest Speaker: Data and Research Methods for Studying Labor Unions and Social Movements

	<p><u>Readings:</u> Jennifer Earl et al., “The Use of Newspaper Data in the Study of Collective Action.” Caleb Southworth and Judith Stepan-Norris. “American Trade Unions and Data Limitations”</p>
10-8	<p><i>Back to New Deal Labor Relations</i> Howell John Harris, excerpts from <i>The Right to Manage</i> Continue Lichtenstein, Chapter 3</p> <p><u>Recommended:</u> Marc Dixon, “Limiting Labor”</p>
10-10	<p><i>The Not So Quiet 1950s</i> Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, excerpts from <i>Selling Free Enterprise</i></p>
10-15	<p><i>The Public Sector Upsurge</i> Joseph Slater, excerpts from <i>Public Workers</i> Lichtenstein, Chapter 5</p>
10-17	<p><i>Public Sector-Civil Rights Alliances</i> Film & Class Discussion: At The River I Stand</p> <p><u>Readings:</u> Larry Isaac and Lars Christiansen, “How the Civil Rights Movement Revitalized Labor Militancy”</p>
<p><i>Union Decline and Reorganization, 1970s to the Present</i></p>	
10-22	<p>Jefferson Cowie, excerpts from <i>Capital Moves</i> Dan and Mary Ann Clawson, “What Happened to the US Labor Movement?” Lichtenstein, Chapters 4 and 6</p> <p><u>Recommended:</u> Marc Dixon and Jack Fiorito, “Can Unions Rebound?” Daniel Tope and David Jacobs, “The Politics of Union Decline”</p>
10-23	<p><u>X-Hour:</u> Film Clip & Discussion: American Dream</p>
10-24	<p>No Class Meeting</p>
10-29	<p><i>Inequality Outcomes</i> Bruce Western and Jake Rosenfeld, “Unions, Norms, and the Rise in American Earnings Inequality” Tali Kristal, “The Capitalist Machine: Computerization, Workers’ Power, and the Decline in Labor’s Share within U.S. Industries” Ken Hou Lin and Don Tomaskovic-Devey, “Financialization and US Income Inequality, 1970-2008”</p> <p><u>Recommended:</u> Jake Rosenfeld and Meredith Kleykamp, “Organized Labor and Racial Wage Inequality in the United States.” David Brady et al., “When Unionization Disappears”</p>
10-31	<p><i>Wisconsin and the Contemporary Fights Over Unionism</i> David Lewin et al., “The New Great Debate”</p>
11-5	<p><i>New Organizing Strategies</i></p>

	<p>Kim Voss and Rachel Sherman, “Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy”</p> <p>Andrew Martin, “The Institutional Logic of Union Organizing and the Effectiveness of Social Movement Repertoires”</p> <p>Richard Sullivan, “Density Matters”</p> <p>Jack Fiorito, et. al, “Union Organizing and Membership Growth: Why Don't They Organize?”</p> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <p>Marc Dixon and Andrew Martin, “We Can’t Win This On Our Own”</p>
11-6	X-Hour: Film Clip & Discussion: Bread and Roses
11-7	<p><i>Alternative Labor Organizations</i></p> <p>Saru Jayaraman, <i>Behind the Kitchen Table</i>, Chapters 1-3</p> <p>Steven Greenhouse, “The Workers’ Defense Project, A Union in Spirit”</p>
11-12	<p><i>Alternative Labor Organizations</i></p> <p>Finish Jayaraman</p>
11-13	<p>X-Hour: <i>Future Directions</i></p> <p>Rich Yelson, “Fortress Unionism”</p>
11-14	Course Wrap-Up and Presentations
11-19	No Class Meeting