

COMM 485
International and Comparative Employment Relation Systems
Course Outline - SAMPLE ONLY

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. S. Walsworth
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WEBSITE: Supported by Blackboard
OFFICE: Room 283, ESB Building
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Thursdays,
 10:00am – 11:00am



WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels 1848

Course Description:

The course examines the triangular relationship between employers, government and organized labour in the context of developed regions such as North America and Western Europe, as well as in emerging economic regions such as Asia and Africa. Globalization and firm internationalization is explored as it affects organized labour. The aim is to introduce students to a broad range of unionized work environments to facilitate economic, social and legal comparisons. COMM 381 (previously known as COMM 206) is a prerequisite.

Required Reading:

Global Industrial Relations. 2006. Edited by Michael J. Morley, Patrick Gunnigle, and David G. Collins. Routledge. (Referred to as Text)

Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy. 2004. Kevin Bales. University of California Press.

Academic journal articles are also assigned.

Method of Instruction:

The teaching method is a combination of lecture, discussion, and student research and presentations. It is critical that students come to class having completed the assigned readings. Students are responsible for all of the assigned readings unless the Instructor advises otherwise.

Method of Evaluation:

Readiness Assessment Process (RAP).....	15%
Participation.....	15%
Research Project	
Research Paper Outline.....	10%
Class Presentation.....	15%
Research Paper.....	<u>45%</u>
TOTAL.....	100%

Readiness Assessment Process (RAP)

A RAP is a short test of 10 multiple choice questions covering weekly readings. The test will first be answered individually, and then the same questions will be answered in either groups or as an entire class, as each student prefers. The aim is to encourage students to come to class having completed the readings and to promote class debate. At the end of the week the RAP will be reviewed and discussed by the Instructor. Each RAP is worth 20 marks and will account for 15% of the course grade. Only the highest 6 of the 7 RAPs will contribute to the students' course grade. There is no opportunity to write missed RAPs.

Participation

Participation grades will be assigned at the discretion of the Instructor and will reward not just the presence of a student but their active engagement in class discussions. Students who take initiative, offer insightful comments, and make an important contribution to the class will be awarded 13 to 15 of the 15 participation marks. Students who reply to questions with informed comments, demonstrate a grasp of the material, and make a contribution to the class will be awarded 9 to 12 of the 15 participation marks. Students who offer only obvious answers, fail to demonstrate an understanding of the material, and make only a marginal contribution to the class will be awarded 4 to 8 of the 15 participation marks. Students who show even less commitment to the class will be awarded 0 to 3 of the 15 participation marks. Participation marks account for 15% of the course grade.

Research Project

The research project is designed to allow students the opportunity to learn more about organized labour in a country of their choice. Students will investigate the historical conditions of development and key players of a modern day labour movement. In addition to describing its structure and coverage, the research will identify the significance of organized labour in terms of its impact on institutions, legislation, and the national economy and politics. The research project has three deliverables:

1. Research Paper Outline: Students will submit a short outline of the proposed research paper on Oct. 15. This will enable the instructor to provide feedback at an early point in the research. The outline is worth 10% of the course grade.
2. Class Presentation: Students will give a presentation to the class describing the major findings and conclusions of their research. The emphasis is on sharing information so that others in the class may benefit. The presentation is worth 15% of the course grade.
3. Research Paper: Students will submit a research paper on Nov. 26. The research paper will make extensive use of secondary data to clearly describe the historical and contemporary conditions of organized labour. Further details will be provided in class. The research paper is worth 45% of the course grade.

Detailed Course Schedule

Week 1- Introduction: Course Expectations and Main Concepts

Thursday: **Course Introduction**

Sept. 3 Required Reading: "The New Slavery" Chapter 1 of Disposable People.

Week 2 - Globalization and Industrial Relations

- Tuesday: Mock RAP
Sept. 8 **Industrial Relations and Multinational Companies**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 15, *Multinationals, Globalization, and Industrial Relations*.
- Thursday: **International Strike Trends**
Sept. 10 Required Reading: Text Chapter 13, *Contemporary Strike Trends Since 1980: Peering Through the Wrong End of a Telescope*.

Week 3 - Country Study: Canada and the U.S.

- Tuesday: RAP #1
Sept. 15 **Industrial Relations in Canada and the U.S.**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 1, *Industrial Relations in the United States and Canada*.
- Thursday: **Union Decline in Canada and the U.S.**
Sept. 17 Required Reading:
Joseph B. Rose, and Gary N. Chaison. 2001. Unionism in Canada and the United States in the 21st century: The prospects for revival. *Relations Industrielles* 56, no. 1 (January 1): 34-65.

Week 4 - Regional Study: Africa

- Tuesday: RAP #2
Sept. 22 **Institutional Realities in Africa**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 8, *Industrial Relations in Africa*.
“Mauritania: Old Times There are not Forgotten” Chapter 3 of *Disposable People*.
- Thursday: **Apartheid, Social Change and Organized Labour in South Africa**
Sept. 24 Required Reading:
Buhlungu, Sakhela, and Andries Bezuidenhout. 2008. Union Solidarity Under Stress: The Case of the National Union of Mineworkers in South Africa. *Labor Studies Journal* 33, no. 3 (September 1): 262.

Week 5- Regional Study: Western Europe

- Tuesday: RAP #3
Sept. 29 **Industrial Relations in Western Europe as a Region**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 3, *Industrial Relations in Western Europe*.
- Thursday: **Industrial Relations in Britain**
Oct. 1 Required Reading:
Godard, John. Institutional Environments, Work and Human Resource Practices, and Unions: Canada vs. England. Forthcoming in the *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*. (Available on Blackboard)

Week 6 - Country Study: India

- Tuesday: RAP #4
Oct. 6 **Institutional Regimes in India**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 9, *Industrial Relations in India*
“India: The Ploughman’s Lunch” Chapter 6 of *Disposable People*.

Thursday: **The Untouchables and the Informal Sector and Solutions**
Oct. 8 Required Reading:
Anjula, Gurtoo 2008. A framework for labour policy reforms in India :Balancing economic growth and social development. *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 28, no. 11/12 (November 1): 472-484.

Week 7: Country Study China

Tuesday: RAP #5
Oct. 13 **Industrial Relations in China**
Required Reading:
Kan Wang (2008). A Changing Arena of Industrial Relations in China :What is Happening After 1978. *Employee Relations*, 30(2), 190-216.

Thursday: Research Project Outline Submitted
Oct. 15 **Labour Standards in China**
Required Reading:
Xiaomin Yu 2008. Impacts of Corporate Code of Conduct on Labor Standards: A Case Study of Reebok's Athletic Footwear Supplier Factory in China. *Journal of Business Ethics* 81, no. 3 (September 1): 513-529.

Week 8 - Regional Study: Central and Eastern Europe and International Trends

Tuesday: RAP #6
Oct. 20 **Industrial Relations in Central and Eastern Europe**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 4, *Industrial Relations in Central and Eastern Europe*.

Thursday: **Trends in International Unionization**
Oct. 22 Required Reading: Text Chapter 10, International Trends in Unionization.

Weeks 9 to 13: Student Presentations

Research Paper Submitted on Nov. 26

Week 14 - National Labour Law and International Labour Standards

Tuesday: RAP #7
Dec. 1 **National Labour Law**
Required Reading: Text Chapter 14, *The Juridification of Industrial Relations: The Role of Labour Law in a Globalised Economy*.
“Pakistan: When is a Slave not a Slave?” Chapter 5 of Disposable People.

Thursday: **International Labour Standards**
Dec. 3 Required Reading: Text Chapter 11, *International Labour Standards*.

Supplemental Reading: Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels. 1848. “Manifesto of the Communist Party”. Available legally and for free at:
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/manifest.pdf>

Course Website

This course has a website on the University’s Blackboard system found at http://www.usask.ca/its/services/instructional_tech/blackboard/. When appropriate class slides

will be posted prior to each class. It is recommended that students print out copies to bring to class (to limit the note taking that will be otherwise required). It is essential that students check this website regularly as important information will be posted on this site. Any changes to class content, information about tests, announcements about readings, etc., will all appear on this website.

Academic Dishonesty

Every student who is registered in this class is expected to have read and understood the rules regarding student academic dishonesty which are posted on the Programs and Academic Information page of the Edwards School of Business website at the following location:

http://www.edwards.usask.ca/ginfo/academic_dishonesty.html