

**[DRAFT: SUBJECT TO REVISION]**  
**Youth and Work**  
**Course # 37: 575: 215: 01**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Labor Studies and Employment Relations**  
**Monday-Thursday 10:20 a.m. to 11:40 a.m.**  
**Lucy Stone Classroom Building, Room B267**  
**Professor: Barry Eidlin, Ph.D., [eidlin@work.rutgers.edu](mailto:eidlin@work.rutgers.edu)**  
**Office: Labor Education Center (50 Labor Center Way), Room 136**  
**Office Hours: TBA**

**Course Overview:**

Why do young people work? What counts as “work”? How have answers to these questions changed over time? Why and how are young workers concentrated in specific industries/occupations? How does young peoples’ preparation for and participation 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? What kinds of policies and organizational practices can improve young peoples’ experiences in the labor market?

These are some of the core questions that we will explore in this course over the course of the semester.

**Initially**, we will discuss the concept of “child labor” in the 19th and early 20th centuries. We will start by examining how children became a separate category of individuals, in need of special protections and even outright exclusion from the labor market. Discussion will center on the cause and effects of child and youth labor, and various policy responses to this phenomenon.

**Next**, we will explore how contemporary youth view and prepare for work, what expectations they have, and what role education plays in relation to workforce paths and careers. Topics discussed in this section of the course will include, among others; working students, educational opportunities, the young working poor, and different experiences among young workers in our current economic environment vis à vis class, gender, and race. We will also examine the issue of student debt and its ramifications.

**Finally**, the course explores internships and unpaid work, contingent workers, knowledge and skill base requirements and job-hopping as they relate to employment in today’s job market. We will discuss various policies in these contexts and brainstorm ideas for new programs and policies that can improve youth work experience and economic self-sufficiency.

**Relationship to School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) Learning Goals:**

A. This class has the following 21st Century Challenges objectives:

- a. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences and perspective on the world.
  - b. Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts.
- B. It also has the following Social Analysis objectives:
- a. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
  - b. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
  - c. Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.

Students will demonstrate their understanding of these concepts via class readings, discussions, and exams which focus on historical and contemporary issues for youth and work.

### **Class Expectations**

I will spend a significant part of the class providing a framework or background for each session's topic, however I view this as an interactive course and welcome your input. The quality and effectiveness of the course will depend heavily on your input as a careful reader of the assigned materials and as a participant and leader of discussions.

Participating in class discussions is one of the best ways to learn. Given the size of the class, we will often break into small groups to allow as many of you to share your thoughts as possible. Participation includes contributing to discussion, either by answering questions that I pose, or raising questions of your own. However, participation does not necessarily mean taking up classroom airtime. Your participation grade will not increase the more you talk. Sometimes, taking time to really listen is participating. Sometimes, helping another student draw out their point with a relevant question is participating. Sometimes, knowing when to hold back and let others speak is participating. The goal is to participate (daily & often!) in an intellectually rigorous manner that will help us advance the discussion.

Needless to say, you cannot do this if you are not prepared for class. ***Being prepared means you have done all the reading and completed all assignments prior to the class where those readings and assignments will be discussed***, and have done so thoughtfully and carefully.

In addition, ***all cell phones, lap tops, iPads, and other devices must be turned off prior to class***. I also expect that you will make every effort to arrive on time to class. I expect that barring any emergencies you will be present (both physically & mentally) during the entire class period. Please note that if you chose not to come to class on a particular day you are still responsible for that day's lecture, readings, etc.

Some of the materials covered in this course may be controversial and I anticipate that we will sometimes disagree in our discussions of them. We all must be committed to work

hard to create a class culture that will be congenial for each student's participation. You will be expected to respect each of your classmates and their comments, and demonstrate that respect at all times. Remarks that are dismissive of other students or that personally attack anyone in the classroom will not be tolerated and will severely reduce your participation grade. Please do not be concerned that taking a perspective different from mine will in any way negatively affect your grade.

### **Exercises, Exams, and Assignments**

Throughout the course there may be class exercises for certain classes. These will include hands-on projects related to the readings which will be conducted (typically in pairs/groups), during the class period. **There are NO make-up class exercises.** They must be completed during the class period, and will be handed in before you leave that class. If a given exercise requires out-of-class preparation, I will assign the exercise prior to the class in which it will be conducted.

In addition to occasional class exercises, you will have four main assignments over the course of the semester. These will test your knowledge of the course materials, and your ability to assimilate them and apply them to real-world situations. They will include:

1. Three brief interpretations of statistical data
2. A midterm exam, taken in class
3. A mock congressional testimony project, done in small groups
4. A final exam, administered during the final exam period

For the mock congressional testimony project, I will break the class into groups of 5, and each group will be assigned the role of a different interest group. Each group will then be tasked with developing a policy brief and short (5-10 minute) presentation (including PowerPoint, if desired), modeled after Congressional testimony, based on the policy positions that group would be expected to take. I will provide more instructions in class.

### **Grading**

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Class Exercises/ Participation	20%
Graph Interpretations	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Congressional testimony project	20%
Final Exam	30%

\*\*\* I will not accept any papers or quizzes by email or fax during the semester. You must submit your assignments via the class website on Sakai for credit. Absent an extreme emergency, there will be no opportunity to make-up quizzes and no extensions of time to hand in papers. If you experience a significant situation that affects your ability to complete the work in this class in a timely fashion **DO NOT DELAY IN DISCUSSING THE**

**PROBLEM WITH ME.** I will make myself available to meet with students before and after class sessions as needed.

### **Accommodations**

If you require special accommodations for this class, please let me know as soon as possible. You are never required to tell me personal information; however, if you are having problems that affect your ability to attend, participate, or keep up with the workload in this class, please don't wait until right before the exams to ask for help, and don't just disappear. I may be able to help you or direct you to someone else who can help you.

The Rutgers Office of Disability Services (848-445-6800, <https://ods.rutgers.edu>) provides resources for students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation of disability to them in order to receive official university services and accommodations.

### **Absences**

If you are absent, you are still responsible for the course materials you missed. You should get the notes from someone in the class, review those notes, and come see me in office hours if you have any questions. I do not deviate from the syllabus, and if I do, I will email the class, so you can assume that what is on the syllabus is what we covered in class. Please do not email me to ask if you "missed anything important," as that implies that every class is not important.

### **Respect**

Please be respectful of yourself, your peers, and me. This means raising your hand before speaking, keeping an open mind, and never chatting while someone else is speaking. Making excessive noise during class (such as by chatting or packing up before class is over) is rude to everyone in the room, as it denies the people around you (and yourself) a chance to learn. If you have a question, please ask me (and not your neighbor). Finally, if you make an office hours appointment with me, please show up. If you cannot come, send me an email letting me know ASAP.

### **Email**

I will be communicating with you via email a lot. Please check your Rutgers email regularly.

I am not always available via email. I will usually be able answer your email within 24 hours (except on weekends). Please do not expect an immediate response to your emails.

Please write your emails to me like you would write an email to your boss or other work colleague. Emails should have a proper greeting (Hi, Hello, Dear, Greetings, etc.) followed by my name (you may call me Dr. Eidlin, Professor Eidlin, or Barry). The body of your email should be written in complete sentences, using standard English grammar and spelling (i.e.

not in “text speak”), and should use a respectful, professional tone. Please be sure to sign your emails with at least your first name. Because of the way email addresses are assigned at this university, it can be hard to tell who the email is from if you do not sign it.

## **Questions**

You can approach me with questions at any time. My preference is to answer questions in class or in office hours – this format is best for avoiding misunderstandings (which are common via email or when conversations are rushed). I am also available to answer quick questions via email (allow up to 24 hours to respond, longer if on the weekend) and right after or before class. If at any time you feel that what I am doing is not advancing your learning, please let me know (in a respectful manner) – I want each and everyone of you to feel safe and to learn, so please let me know if that is not happening.

## **Required Books**

All books are available at the Rutgers Bookstore. Supplemental course readings will be available on the course website (<http://sakai.rutgers.edu>), online, or from me.

Draut, Tamara. 2005. *Strapped: Why America's 20 and 30 Somethings Can't Get Ahead*. New York: Doubleday.

Newman, Katherine. 1999. *No Shame in my Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City*. New York: Vintage.

Tannock, Stuart. 2001. *Youth at Work: The Unionized Fast-Food and Grocery Workplace*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Part 1. Framing and Overview**

January

#### **Week 1**

January 22: Course introduction

#### **Week 2**

January 26: The current situation-I

EPI Briefing Paper, “The Class of 2014: The Weak Economy Is Idling Too Many Young Graduates.” Available at <http://www.epi.org/publication/class-of-2014/>

January 29: The current situation-II

Short film and discussion, *Eyes on the Fries: Young Workers in the Service Economy*

February

**Week 3**

February 2: Working and growing up in America over time

Jeylan Mortimer. 2003. *Working and Growing Up in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, introduction

**Part 2. The “Child Labor” Problem and Policy Responses**

February 5: What is “child labor”?

Hugh Hindman. 2002. *Child Labor: An American History*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe. Introduction and Chapter 2.

**Week 4**

February 9: Defining and regulating child labor

Hindman, *Child Labor*. Chapter 3.

February 12: Case study: The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire

Film: *Triangle: Remembering the Fire*

[GRAPH INTERPRETATION ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE]

**Week 5**

February 16: U.S. employment policy in the twentieth century—an overview

John M. Herrick and James Midgley, “The United States.” Pp. 187-216 in *The State of Social Welfare: The Twentieth Century in Cross-national Review*, edited by John Dixon and Robert P. Scheurell (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood).

**Part 3. The Challenges of Youth and Work Today**

February 19: Youth in the postwar labor market

Arne Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States, 1970s-2000s*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Chapter 2: Economic Transformation and the Decline of Institutional Protections.

**Week 6**

February 23: Declining opportunities for youth at work

Stuart Tannock, *Youth at Work*. Introduction

February 26: Youth and Service Sector Employment

Stuart Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 2: On the Front Lines of the Service Sector

## March

### **Week 7**

March 2: Education and Work

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 1: Higher and Higher Education  
[GRAPH INTERPRETATION ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE]

March 5: Stagnant pay for young workers

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 2: Paycheck Paralysis

### **Week 8**

March 9: Increasing Debt Load

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 3: Generation Debt

March 12: MIDTERM EXAM–IN CLASS

**[March 14-22: SPRING BREAK]**

### **Week 9**

March 23: Left behind: the young working poor in urban America

Katherine Newman, *No Shame in my Game*. Chapter 2: The Invisible Poor

March 26: Juggling school and work for the young working poor

Katherine Newman, *No Shame in my Game*. Chapter 5: School and Skill in the Low-Wage World

### **Week 10**

March 30: The Case for Reparations, Part I

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations”

## April

April 2: The Case for Reparations, Part II

Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations”

### **Week 11**

April 6: The Temp Economy

Erin Hatton. *The Temp Economy: From Kelly Girls to Permatemps in Postwar America*,  
Chapter 4: Boxing In the Temp Industry.  
[GRAPH INTERPRETATION ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE]

April 9: The Intern Economy

Ross Perlin. *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*. New York: Verso. Chapter 2, "The Explosion."

The Economist. 2014. "The Internship: Generation I." *The Economist*, September 6, International, 1–9.

(<http://www.economist.com/news/international/21615612-temporary-unregulated-and-often-unpaid-internship-has-become-route>).

Josh Eidelson, "Legal Protections for Interns: A Guide"

<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-08-12/how-to-know-whether-youre-legally-protected-as-an-intern>

## **Week 12**

April 13: The Union Solution?

Tannock, *Youth at Work*, Chapter 7: "The Youth Union"

April 16: The minimum wage controversy-I

Bradley, David H., 2013. *The Federal Minimum Wage: In Brief*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service

Dube, Arindrajit, 2013. Statement by Arindrajit Dube, Ph.D., before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions, March 14.

Sickler, Melvin, 2013. Statement by Melvin Sickler on Behalf of the National Restaurant Association before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions, March 14.

## **Week 13**

April 20: The minimum wage controversy-II/Group work

April 23: Proposals for reform

Tamara Draut, *Strapped*, Chapter 7: Changing Course: An Agenda for Reform

## **Week 14**

April 27: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY-I

April 30: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY-II

## **Week 15**

May 4: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY-III

**FINAL EXAM TBA**