

LABOR 190A: LABOR AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
Fall 2010

Lecture: Tuesdays, 2:30-3:45 PM, Tobin Hall 304
Discussion: Thursdays, 2:30-3:45 PM, Herter Hall 116 & 209

Instructor

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Teaching Assistants

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This course is an introduction to basic concepts about globalization and its impact on workers in the U.S. and internationally, focusing on the impacts of recent trends in economic and political globalization on workers in the U.S. and abroad.

Students will gain a working understanding of major international institutions' affects on working people and labor markets, from a labor perspective. We will study the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and their rules for the global economy. Students will learn to navigate terminology such as globalization, neoliberalism, free market, and fair trade. We will approach our investigation of international policy and theory through a series of case studies, or real-world stories. On the journey, we will "meet" many workers: corn farmers in Mexico, garment workers in China, displaced African-Americans in New Orleans, and others. We will locate our discussions about workers who live far away in a way that connects to us personally. Throughout the course we will examine ways in which workers, their unions, social movements, and solidarity activists are resisting the degradation of local economies and working for change in the global economy.

Labor 190A fulfills a Social and Behavioral Sciences General Education requirement; the purpose of the requirement is to stretch students' minds, broaden their experiences, sharpen their critical thinking and evaluation skills, make connections through shared experiences, and prepare them for community engagement, informed citizenship, and a lifetime of learning. The course meets General Education goals by engaging students in studying and applying methods of analysis to real-world problems and contexts; developing analytical and critical thinking and pluralistic perspective-taking; and practicing communicating persuasively and effectively orally and in writing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Two books are required for purchase, available at Food for Thought Bookstore, 106 N. Pleasant St, Amherst:

- Anderson, Sarah, and John Cavanagh, with Thea Lee. (2005). *Field Guide to the Global Economy*. New York: The New Press.
- Stiglitz, Joseph E. (2007). *Making Globalization work*. New York: W.W. Norton & Press.

All other readings are available on SPARK. Print these readings and bring them with you to both Tuesday and Thursday classes during the week in which they are assigned. You will benefit most from the course if you finish the reading assigned for the week in advance of the Tuesday class.

We expect you to attend lectures and discussion sections, keep up with the readings and participate in class discussions. In addition, you are required to turn in five 2-page response papers throughout the semester, complete an in-class midterm exam, and submit a final 6-page paper. There may also be additional homework assignments and surprise quizzes.

We will take attendance in all classes. You will be allowed two unexcused absences, and after that, any unexcused absence will affect your grade. The deadline for the final paper is strict.

Grades will consist of the following components:

- Class participation & attendance 25%
- Response papers, homework, and quizzes 25%
- Midterm 25%
- Final paper 25%

Instructions for response papers

Each student is required to submit 5 response papers by the end of the semester. In the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for the 5 weeks in which they will turn in their papers. Each response paper must be submitted in hard-copy at the beginning of Thursday class of the assigned week, or they will not be accepted. (If students are sick that week, they will have until the following discussion section to turn it in. If you need to switch dates for any other reason, you must notify your TA at least 3 days before your paper is due.)

The response papers should be a minimum of 2 full pages, double-spaced, 12-point font with one-inch margins. Use proper grammar and citations, include a bibliography, and make sure to spell check.

The purpose of these response papers is to demonstrate your understanding of the week's topic and that you are applying your own critical analysis to the material. You may choose one of these three options for each response paper:

Option A: Take one or two of the readings and raise critical questions about them. Is the author persuasive? If so, what makes the article/chapter persuasive? What is the author missing, ignoring, or overlooking? What additional information would be needed to further evaluate the author's argument?

Option B: Identify a newspaper or journal article that addresses the same issue as an assigned reading, but with a somewhat different argument and conclusion. Compare and contrast these two readings, elucidating the major points of difference, and clarifying the assumptions or different data usage that lead the authors to different conclusions. (Some sources that you might consider in looking for a contrasting newspaper/journal article: www.nytimes.com, www.economist.com, www.wallstreetjournal.com, www.nationalreview.com, <http://www.hoover.org>, www.aei.com, as well as primary sources like World Bank, IMF, and USTR websites.)

Option C: Compare and contrast the week's readings with each other. If there is a difference in perspective and argument, then describe and evaluate the difference. (If the perspectives of the authors are similar or if the readings are on two distinct topics, then it will be better to choose Option A or B.)

Keep in mind that the point of the response papers is not to recap or summarize the material. Rather you should succinctly refer to the author's key arguments while focusing the paper on applying your own analysis to the material.

You will be responsible to help kick off class discussion in the Thursday classes when you turn in a paper. Be ready to both summarize the essential content of the reading, raise questions for class discussion, and share your own perspectives.

Week 1, Sept. 7 & 9: Introduction & the State of Labor Today

Reich, Robert. (2010, September 3). "The Great Jobs Depression Worsens, and the Choice Ahead Grows Starker." *Truthout*. <http://www.truth-out.org/robert-reich-the-great-jobs-depression-worsens-and-choice-ahead-grows-starker62957>

Rugaber, Christopher S. and Michael Liedtke. (2010, September 5). "Future Hiring Will Mainly Benefit the Highly Skilled." *The Huffington Post*.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/09/05/future-hiring-will-mainly_n_706258.html

National Labor Committee. (2010, April 13). "China's Youth Meet Microsoft."
http://www.nlcnet.org/admin/reports/files/Chinas_Youth_Meet_Micro.pdf

Field Guide, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter II

Week 2, Sept. 14 & 16: World Bank & IMF's Promised Path to Development

Making Globalization Work, Preface & "Chapter 2: The Promise of Development."

Field Guide, Chapter III

Weisbrot, Mark. (2010, April 1). "The IMF's new wisdom."
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/apr/01/imf-wall-street-banks>

Naiman, Robert. (2010, February 23). "Haitian Garment Workers Should Get \$5 a Day." *Just Foreign Policy*. <http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/node/491>

Week 3, Sept. 21 & 23: The Free Trade Regime: WTO & NAFTA

Field Guide, Chapter IV

Becker, Elizabeth, et al. (2003, December 27). "Free Trade Accord at Age 10: The Growing Pains Are Clear." *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/27/world/free-trade-accord-at-age-10-the-growing-pains-are-clear.html?pagewanted=all>

U.S. Trade Representative. (2008, March). "NAFTA – Myth vs. Facts." Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. <http://www.ustr.gov/sites/default/files/NAFTA-Myth-versus-Fact.pdf>

Faux, Jeffrey. (2004, January 15). "NAFTA at 10." *The Nation*.
<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20040202/faux/single>

Barber, Benjamin R. (2008, January 9). "Malawi's 'Free Trade' Revolt." *L.A. Times*.
<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/jan/09/opinion/oe-barber9>

Week 4. Sept. 28 & 30: How Free is the Free Market?

Chang, Ha-Joon. (2008). "Chapter 1: The Lexus and the Olive Tree Revisited." *Bad Samaritans: The myth of free trade and the secret history of capitalism*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Press.

Chang, Ha-Joon. (2008). "Chapter 3: My Six-Year-Old Son Should Get a Job." *Bad Samaritans: The myth of free trade and the secret history of capitalism*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Press.

Making Globalization Work, "Chapter 3: Making Trade Fair."

Week 5. Oct. 5 & 7: Debt, Vulture Capitalism, and Resistance

Making Globalization Work, "Chapter 8: The Burden of Debt."

Whitney, Jennifer and John Jordan. (2004). "Que Se Vayan Todos: Argentina's Popular Rebellion." Ed. David Solnit. *Globalize Liberation*. San Francisco: City Light Books.

McCabe, Patricio. (2004). "Argentina's New Forms of Resistance." *Globalize Liberation*.

Optional: "Beginners Guide to Debt." Jubilee USA. (Read each of the 5 sections.)
<http://www.jubileeusa.org/de/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt.html>

Optional: Weisbrot, Mark. (2010, April 8). "The great US foreign policy flaw." *The Guardian*.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/apr/08/us-foreign-policy-self-determination>

Week 6. Oct. 14: Midterm Exam

No class on Tuesday, Oct 12th. Monday class schedule is observed.

In-Class Midterm Exam on Thursday

Week 7. Oct. 19 & 21: The Global Corporation

Making Globalization Work, "Chapter 7: The Multinational Corporation."

Goodman, Peter S. and Philip P. Pan. (2004). "Chinese Workers Pay for Walmart's Low Prices; Retailer Squeezes Its Asian Suppliers to Cut Costs." *Washington Post*.

Saporito, Bill. (2003, January 5). "Can Walmart Get Any Bigger?" *Time Magazine*.

Week 8. Oct. 26 & 28: Building Alternatives & Conscientious Consumerism

Readings related to Fair Trade certification to be assigned

Week 9. Nov. 2 & 4: Monitoring Corporations: Corporate Social Responsibility

Maquila Solidarity Network. (2007, November 2). "MSN Statement on Discovery of Child Labour in Gap Subcontract Factory." <http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/en/node/728>

Esbenshade, Jill. (2004). *Monitoring Sweatshops*. Philadelphia: Temple University. pp. 119-144, pp. 169-174, and pp. 150-156.

Karnani, Aneel. (2010, August 23). "The Case Against Corporate Social Responsibility." *The Wall Street Journal*.
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703338004575230112664504890.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLENexttoWhatsNewsThird

Hanqian, Yu. (2006, July-September). "Monitoring the Monitors: Observations of CSR in Action." *Asia Labour Update*. Hong Kong: Asia Monitor Resource Center. Issue 60, pp. 10-15.

Week 10. Nov. 9 & 11: Grassroots Movement: Anti-Sweatshop Activism

Kristof, Nicholas. (2006, June 6). "In Praise of the Maligned Sweatshop." *The New York Times*.
http://select.nytimes.com/2006/06/06/opinion/06kristof.html?_r=1&scp=5&sq=kristof,%20sweatshop&st=cse

Greenhouse, Steven. (2010, July 26). "Pressured, Nike to Help Workers in Honduras." *The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/27/business/global/27nike.html?ref=honduras>

Greenhouse, Steven. (2010, July 17). "Factory Defies Sweatshop Label, but Can It Thrive?" *The New York Times*.
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/18/business/global/18shirt.html?_r=2&pagewanted=1&ref=americas

Worker Rights Consortium. "The Designated Suppliers Program."

Week 11. Nov. 16 & 18: The Changing Workforce in the US: Undocumented & Low-Wage Immigrant Workers

Bowe, John. (2003, April 21). "Nobodies: Does Slavery Exist in America?" *New Yorker*.
http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2003/04/21/030421fa_fact_bowe?printable=true

Chomsky, Aviva. (2007). *"They Take Our Jobs!": and 20 other myths about immigration*.
Boston: Beacon Press. (selected chapters posted on SPARK)

Henwood, Doug. (2006, May). "A nation of (yesterday's) immigrants." *Left Business Observer*, #113. <http://www.leftbusinessobserver.com/Immigration.html>

Schmitt, John. (2010, March). "Unions and Upward Mobility for Immigrant Workers." Center for Economic and Policy Research. Washington, DC.
<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/unions-immigrants-2010-03.pdf>

Week 12. Nov. 23: The Changing Workforce in the US: The Impact of Migrant Worker Programs

Browne-Dianis, Judith, Jennifer Lai, Marielena Hincapie, and Saket Soni. (2006, July). "And Injustice for All: Workers' Lives in the Reconstruction of New Orleans." Advancement Project, New Orleans Worker Justice Coalition, and the National Immigration Law Center.
<http://www.advancementproject.org/reports/workersreport.pdf> (read Intro & Ch. 4; skim the rest)

Hyde, Alan. (2003). *Working in Silicon Valley*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc. pp. 93-111, 112-124, and 125-139.

Vogel, Richard D. (2007, January). "Transient Servitude: The U.S. Guest Worker Program for Exploiting Mexican and Central American Workers." *Monthly Review*, Vol. 58, No. 7.
<http://www.monthlyreview.org/0107vogel.htm>

No class on Thursday

Week 13. Nov. 30 & Dec. 2: Visions for a Better Globalization

Making Globalization Work, "Chapter 10: Democratizing globalization."

Field Guide, Chapter V, Appendix I & II

Week 14. Dec. 7 & 9: Strengthening Local Economies Globally: Solidarity Economy

To be announced

Draft of final paper due in class on Tuesday, Dec. 7

Final version of final paper due in class on Thursday, Dec. 9

Attachment for Labor 204, Labor and the Global Economy, course proposal--evolution

For the past seven, fall semesters Labor 190A has been offered as an experimental course with an average class enrollment of 67. The course was first taught by Professor Stephanie Luce (no longer at the University) and until last fall, it was taught by Visiting Lecturer, Liana Foxvog. Using current Global and Labor events and issues along with providing a foundational understanding to basic concepts of Global Economy this course has evolved into a solid course offering now also fulfilling the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Global Education Requirement as well as an "SB" GenEd. The Labor Studies Center merger with the Sociology Department has initiated this change so that it can count as a 200 or above sociology elective for majors.

Bamber, Greg J., Russell D. Lansbury, and Nick Wailes, eds. (2011), *International and Comparative Employment Relations: Globalization and Change* (Fifth Edition), London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Bieler, A., Lindberg, I. & Pillay, D. (Eds.). (2008). *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization: What Prospects for Transnational Solidarity*. London: Pluto Press.

Bronfenbrenner, K. (Ed.). (2007). *Global Unions: Challenging Transnational Capital Through Cross-Border Campaigns*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Croucher, R. & Cotton, E. (2009). *Global Unions Global Business: Global Union Federations and International Business*. London: Middlesex University Press.

Gall, G. (Ed.). (2009). *The Future of Union Organising: Building for Tomorrow*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Meyerson, H. (2009). *Workers of the World: A Report on the Rise of Global Unions and the Case for International Labor Standards*. New America Foundation.

Papadakis, K. (Ed.). (2008). *Cross-Border Social Dialogue and Agreements: An Emerging Global Industrial Relations Framework?* Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies.

Rebick, J. (2009). *Transforming Power: From the Personal to the Political*. Toronto: Penguin Canada.

Rodriguez, R. (2010). *Migrants for Export: How the Philippine State Brokers Labor to the World*. University of Minnesota Press.