

**Department of Sociology
Dartmouth College
Winter 2020**

American Labor Relations (Sociology 70)

Professor: Marc Dixon
Office: 306D Blunt Hall
Phone: 603-646-9041
E-mail: Marc.D.Dixon@Dartmouth.edu

Course Information:
MWF 12:50-1:55, 205 Blunt Hall
X-hour: T 1:20-2:10
Office hours: M 2-3, T 2:30-3:30, or by
appointment

Course Description

This course covers labor organization and activism from the late 19th century to the present. We will examine critical moments in labor history, factors shaping union growth and decline, the changing relationship between organized labor and management and how each has sought to sway government and the public over time, and the implications of union decline for inequality, politics, and worker well-being. Readings and discussion will cover several cross-cutting issues including race, gender, ethnicity, and immigration.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Develop a historical knowledge of labor and labor movements, broadly defined, in the United States.
- Understand key developments in American labor relations and their lasting effects on work and inequality.
- Conduct original research on a labor topic of interest.

Evaluation:

The composition of final grades and grading scale are as follows:

<u>Course Requirements</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Participation – 10%	A 94-100
Reading Prompts – 10%	A- 90-93.99
Seminar Discussion – 20%	B+ 87-89.99
Book Review & Presentation – 20%	B 83-86.99
Final Paper & Presentation – 40%	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. 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.

Reading Prompts: Beginning in week 2, every Monday students will select a two-to four-sentence **quotation** from each reading that captures one of its main arguments; summarize, in your own words, the **concept or idea** the quotation captures; make a **connection** between this reading and another reading from the unit or to a related topic; and, building on this, pose a **question** that can be used in class to

generate discussion. The prompts must be submitted to Canvas by 7AM every Monday. Please note that I count your top seven out of eight writings. Writings will not be accepted if the student does not attend and participate in class that day. Late writings are not accepted. There are no makeups.

Seminar Discussion: 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 15-20-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.

Book Review: Students will select a book from the list on Canvas, 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. Reviews include both a summary of a book's central argument and approach, and a discussion of its usefulness or lack thereof. I will post examples on Canvas. If you want to review something that is not on the list, please clear it with me first.

Research Project and Presentation: Students will conduct original research on some labor issue of interest, write up their findings in a twelve-to-fifteen-page paper, and give a short (no more than 5 minute) presentation on their topic in class on Friday, March 6. Papers are due at the beginning of that class. The purpose of the project is to give you the chance to spend some time researching something of relevance to labor that interests you. You have considerable leeway, but I want you to grapple with some data on labor. I will discuss data sources and potential topics in week 2. Beginning in week 3, students are required to submit a project update each Friday and we will devote part of that class to project work.

Required Readings:

All required readings are posted on Canvas. I will occasionally update readings and place other documents and announcements on Canvas for your edification. *It is your responsibility to check the course site at the beginning of each week.*

I recommend getting or at least browsing the following books, both of which are on reserve at Baker Library:

Lichtenstein, Nelson. 2002. *State of the Union*. Princeton University Press.
Loomis, Erik 2018. *A History of America in Ten Strikes*. The New Press.

Class Organization:

Beginning in week 2, our seminar will be organized around weekly topics (e.g., Gilded Age Activism, The New Deal, etc.). I will introduce the topic, readings, and key questions on Mondays, each Wednesday is a student-led seminar on the assigned materials, and Fridays are devoted to project work, presentations, and film clips.

Course Policies:

Classroom Etiquette: Above all, do your part to help make this a great learning experience. This means: DO ask questions. DO challenge ideas, and foster debate and dialogue in class. DO contribute helpful resources for learning. DO take me and your fellow students seriously. And, Please, Please DO NOT message with friends, shop, sleep, walk in and out, converse with others, and otherwise disrupt lecture

and discussion. It is nearly impossible for me to concentrate on lecturing and guiding discussions, and for others to hear, pay attention, and participate in discussions when students are behaving in disrespectful and/or disruptive ways.

Honor Principle: Assignments and exams will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor, as detailed here:

<http://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/academic-honor-principle>

Students should also take time to read Dartmouth's statement on Sources and Citations:

<http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>

Student Accessibility Needs: Students with disabilities who may need disability-related academic adjustments and services for this course are encouraged to see me privately as early in the term as possible. Students requiring disability-related academic adjustments and services must consult the Student Accessibility Services office (Carson Hall 125, 646-9900, Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu).

Once SAS has authorized services, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to me. As a first step, if you have questions about whether you qualify to receive academic adjustments and services, you should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

Religious Observances: 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 before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Schedule

Date	Topic & Assigned Readings
1-6	Introduction & Course Overview Richard Freeman and James Medoff, <i>What Unions Do</i> (pp.1-25) Steven Greenhouse, <i>Beaten Down, Worked Up</i> (3-20)
1-8	Slavery and Reconstruction W.E.B Du Bois, <i>Black Reconstruction in America</i> (pp.1-31) Erik Loomis, <i>Ten Strikes</i> (pp.29-48) Chris Muller, "Freedom and Convict Leasing in the Postbellum South"
1-10	Poor Farms and the Yankee Welfare State David Wagner, <i>The Poorhouse</i> (pp.1-38) Optional: Excerpts from Victoria Hattam, <i>Labor Visions and State Power</i>
1-13	Tour of Archival Materials. <i>Meet at Rauner</i>
1-14	<u>X-Hour</u> <u>Gilded Age Activism and Pushback</u> Erik Loomis, <i>Ten Strikes</i> (pp.49-69) Samuel Yellen, <i>American Labor Struggles</i> (pp. 72-100). Knights of Labor Preamble and Declaration of Principles Samuel Gompers "The Political Policy of Organized Labor"
1-15	Robert Goldstein, <i>Political Repression in Modern America</i> (skim the intro, then read pp.23-60) Larry Isaac, "To Counter the 'Very Devil' and More: The Making of Independent

	Capitalist Militia in the Gilded Age”
1-17	Helga Kristin Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers: Cultural Opportunity Structures and the Evolution of the Wage Demands of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor, 1880-1900” <u>Optional:</u> Caleb Southworth and Judith Stepan-Norris. “American Trade Unions and Data Limitations”
1-20	<i>Martin Luther King Day—No Class Meeting</i>
1-21	<u>X-Hour</u> The Progressive Era and Its Discontents Howard Kimeldorf, “Worker Replacement Costs and Unionization.” Industrial Workers of the World, Preamble to the Constitution Melvyn Dubofsky, “The IWW at 100”
1-22	Peter Cole, “Philadelphia’s Lords of the Docks: Interracial Unionism Wobbly-Style” Samuel Yellen, <i>American Labor Struggles</i> (pp.170-200) Larry Griffin et al., “Capitalist resistance to the organization of labor before the New Deal: Why? How? Success?”
1-24	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” Film Clip: Matewan
1-27	The New Deal Upsurge Nelson Lichtenstein, <i>State of the Union</i> (pp.20-53) Vincent Roscigno and William Danaher, “Media and Mobilization” Transcript of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (see notes on Canvas)
1-29	Barry Eidlin, “Why is There No Labor Party in the United States? Political Articulation and the Canadian Comparison, 1932-1948.” Sean Farhang and Ira Katznelson, “The Southern Imposition: Congress and Labor in the New Deal and Fair Deal” <u>Optional:</u> Nelson Lichtenstein, <i>State of the Union</i> (pp.54-97)
1-31	Howell John Harris, <i>The Right to Manage</i> (pp.15-40) Marc Dixon, “Limiting Labor”
2-3	Postwar Labor Relations Jefferson Cowie, <i>The Great Exception</i> (pp.153-178) Marc Dixon, excerpts from <i>Heartland Blues</i>
2-5	Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, “Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement.” Judith Stepan Norris and Maurice Zeitlan, <i>Left Out</i> (pp.1-23; 266-96)
2-7	Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, <i>Selling Free Enterprise</i> (pp.67-107)
2-10	Labor and Civil Rights in the 1960s Nelson Lichtenstein, <i>State of the Union</i> (pp.178-211) Larry Isaac, “How the Civil Rights Movement Revitalized Labor Militancy”
2-12	Leon Fink and Brian Greenberg, <i>Upheaval in the Quiet Zone</i> (skim pp.1-27; read all of pp.139-158) William Danaher and Marc Dixon, “Framing the Field”
2-14	Film Clip: At the River I Stand
2-17	Union Decline and Inequality Jefferson Cowie, <i>Staying Alive</i> (pp.1-19;125-166) Henry Farber and Bruce Western, “Accounting for the Decline of Unions in the Private Sector, 1973–1998” Daniel Tope and David Jacobs, “The Politics of Union Decline”

2-19	Bruce Western and Jake Rosenfeld, “Unions, Norms, and the Rise in American Earnings Inequality” David Brady et al., “When Unionism Disappears”
2-21	Richard Freeman et al., “How Does Declining Unionism Affect the American Middle Class and Intergenerational Mobility?” James Feigenbaum et al., “From the Bargaining Table to the Ballot Box: Political Effects of Right to Work <i>Laws</i> ” Film Clip: Harlan County USA
2-24	<u>New Strategies</u> Kim Voss and Rachel Sherman, “Breaking the Iron Law of Oligarchy” Andrew Martin, “The Institutional Logic of Union Organizing and the Effectiveness of Social Movement Repertoires”
2-26	Veronica Terriquez, “Schools for Democracy: Labor Union Participation and Latino Immigrant Parents’ School-Based Civic Engagement” Bill Flethcer Jr., “Labor Needs To Embrace Social Justice Unionism.” Optional: Marc Dixon and Andrew Martin, ““We Can’t Win This on Our Own.””
2-28	Film Clip: The Hand That Feeds
3-2	<u>Why are unions the news again?</u> Daniel Lewin, “The New Great Debate” Joseph DiGrazia and Marc Dixon, “The Conservative Upsurge and Labor Policy in the States”
3-4	Teachers, Fast Food Workers, Strikes! Harold Meyerson, “The Fight for 15’s Long, Winding, and Brandeisian Road” Joseph McCartin et al., “Why the Labor Movement has Failed—And How to Fix It” Jake Rosenfeld, “US Labor Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Understanding Laborism Without Labor”
3-6	Course Wrap-Up and Presentations