Industrial and Labor Relations: IndRel 701

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Course Description:
This course serves as an introduction into the field of industrial relations. Students will learn about the history of the field and of labor unions. In addition, we will review how the industrial relations system in the US works in general, as well as specific areas such as the future of unions in the US, comparisons with the industrial relation systems of other countries, relationships with human resource management models, various models of dispute resolution, issues in labor-management cooperation, and differences and similarities between public and private sector industrial relations.

Course Objectives:
- To introduce students to the terminology, history, and models of the US industrial relations system.
- To provide tools and other resources for students who will be pursuing further instruction and research in industrial relations.

Course Requirements:
- Students are expected to come to class having read the suggested materials for that class and to be ready to participate in class discussions. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize email and the World Wide Web as resources for information about the class, networking, communication, and research. The course will have a web site on the university’s D2L site where the weekly readings, assignments, and other important information, will be posted.

Other important information:
- Information on MHRLR policies regarding participation by students with disabilities, accommodation for religious observances, academic conduct, complaint procedures, grade appeal procedures and other standing policies (e.g., sexual harassment, incompletes) is available in the MHRLR office in Bolton 842. Any students with special needs of any sort should contact me after class, by phone or in the office during the first week of classes. For more information see: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf.
- Academic Misconduct. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic
dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Student academic misconduct information can be found at: http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm.

Assessment:
Student performance will be judged using the following methods:

Class participation:
- With the understanding that students, many of whom have full time jobs, may have to miss class from time to time, class participation in discussions is vitally important for learning in the course. While I will not take attendance, missing substantial numbers of classes will adversely affect this part of your grade. It helps to let me know if you are going to miss a class.
- One of the best ways to promote discussion is to find out what interests you when you do the readings. That way, you can help set the agenda for what will be covered in the class. So as part of your participation grade, you will be asked to come up with questions and/or interesting issues as you do the readings. In recognition of time, however, you will not have to do this for each lecture (although you are encouraged to email questions or ask them during class time any week). So, you will be assigned a group (A, B, C - to find which group you are a part of, look at the circled letter at the top of the syllabus that you were handed on the first day of class). Nearly every lecture will be assigned a group letter. When your letter matches the lecture letter, you will need to send at least two questions to me by the Monday of class by noon. I will then use those questions as a guide for the lecture portion of class and/or for the discussion portion of class. Please make sure that the questions/issues are substantive and do not have a yes or no answer.

Periodic assignments:
- See the class D2L site for the topics of the assignments. The weekly course schedule (below) will indicate when these assignments are due. It is your responsibility to obtain these assignments off of the web site. The assignments should be typed in 12 point font, double spaced, be no more than 4 pages long, and have 1 inch margins. Grammar, spelling, and length do count!

Take home exam:
- There will be a take home exam, for which you will have one week to complete the exam. You can use notes or readings from the class, but not each other.

Group project:
- As a research project experience and an exercise in teamwork, the class will be split into 3-4 person groups. Each group will be responsible for a 20-25 page research paper on a topic in employment/labor relations. The topic is up to the group, but these topics must be approved by me by Nov 1 at the very latest. However, I strongly encourage you to start thinking and working early on the project, as the end of the semester can become very hectic. Source materials can come from the course readings or research outlets (e.g. books or articles), but a substantial portion must come from peer-reviewed journal
articles. See the attached page (or the one on D2L) for more details about the paper and a list of potential topics.

- The grading of the project will be based on two things. First, 90% of your score will be based on the quality of the research and knowledge of the topic, demonstrated ability of identify the crucial issues and their implications, the professionalism (including grammar, spelling, and overall appearance) of the report. This will be the same across all group members. Second, the final 10% will come from a peer evaluation from your group members. They will judge you along the following criteria: attendance at group meetings, participation in meetings, completion of work on time, completed work was useful and relevant to topic, and sufficient contribution enough to make the workload relatively equal. See the class D2L site for an example of the peer evaluation sheet. This is a not-so-subtle carrot (stick??!) to help the groups work together on their project.

- See the D2L site (the ‘Contents’ page) for the list of topics already taken for this class.

**Grading weights:**
Class participation: 100 points
Periodic assignments: 200 points (4 assignments at 50 points each)
Take home exam: 200 points
Group project: 200 points (90% group + 10% individual)

**Grading scale:** A: 700-648 points; A-: 647-627; B+: 626-613; B: 612-578; B-: 577-557; C+: 556-543; C: 542-508; C-: 507-487; D: 486-417; F: below 417

**Texts and Reading Materials:**

**Texts:** (available in the bookstore or in other book outlets such as Amazon, etc)

**Other readings:**
- As befitting a graduate level course, the majority of readings will come from published articles and book chapters. These will be available via the library’s e-reserve. Because these can change from one semester to another, these readings do not appear below. Please contact me directly if you want a listing of readings used in a particular semester.
Class Schedule: This is the typical list of lecture topics covered in the class

- **Course Introduction**: The goals for this class are to cover the syllabus and outline the course as well as introduce the subject of Industrial and Labor Relations.

- **History of Industrial Relations**: This class will investigate what the term ‘industrial relations’ means and will follow the history of the field.

- **Modeling the Employment Relationship**: This class examines how IR/HR/ER scholars think about the employment relationship and the basic models used to analyze the employment relationship.

- **Setting Up the Employment Relationship - Internal and External Considerations**: In contrast to the previous lecture, which was more theoretical, this class examines the practical implications of setting up (or continuing) an employment relationship and the external constraints that affect how employers set up the employment relationship.

- **Unions and the Employment Relationship: Part 1 - History and Legal Framework**: This class examines trade unions - their history and the laws surrounding labor unions in the US.

- **Unions and the Employment Relationship: Part 2 - Economic Effects of Unions**: This class will examine some of the economic effects of unions on wages, employment, and other aspects of the employment relationship.

- **Participatory Work Systems**: Participation in the decision making of firms by workers is an increasingly important aspect of the employment relationship. This class examines the rationale for this and some of the obstacles in setting up such systems.

- **Compensation Systems**: This class focuses on how different methods of compensation affect the employment relationship.

- **Dispute Resolution**: Conflicts between management and labor have been at the forefront of research for industrial relations scholars over the past several decades. This class attempts to take a more applied focus by covering some of the mediums available to resolve disputes between labor and management.

- **Labor-Management Cooperation**: One of the earliest issues in industrial relations was emphasizing of the 'mutuality of interests' between management and labor. This class will review some of this history and discuss current attempts to promote cooperation.

- **Employment, HR, and the Aging of the Workforce**: This class will look at a key future issue in industrial and employment relations – namely the challenges presented by an aging workforce. Here we will look at both the public policy, as well as workforce, aspects of aging and how these might impact the employment relationship.

- **International/Comparative Industrial Relations**: Industrial relations has a long history outside the US, with many different models being developed across the world. This class will continue the discussion of the industrial relations systems of different countries and compare them to the US system.