

**LER 542 SPRING 2020**  
**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

**School of Labor and Employment Relations, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**

**Tuesdays, 11:00am-1:50pm**

Asst. Prof. Christine Riordan  
Pronouns: she/her/hers  
Email: [criord5@illinois.edu](mailto:criord5@illinois.edu)  
Tel: 217.244.1679

*Class:* Tuesdays, 11:00am-1:50pm Central  
*Zoom link:* TBD  
*Meeting ID:* TBD  
*Password:* TBD

*Office hours:* Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00pm Central, and by appointment  
*Zoom link:* TBD  
*Meeting ID:* TBD  
*Password:* TBD

\* *Note:* You will be placed in a waiting room in the event that I am speaking with another student; I will admit you as soon as possible.

**Course Topic and Objective**

This course will examine the contemporary system of collective bargaining (sometimes referred to as industrial or labor relations) in the United States. Labor relations is defined as the workplace-based interactions and relationship between employers and employees. The objective of labor relations is to balance the goals and rights of these different actors, which we'll talk about in terms of efficiency, equity, and voice. Collective bargaining is the process in which labor and management negotiate the terms and conditions of employment. Collective bargaining is central to labor relations and will be the focus of much of this class.

We will spend the first four weeks of the course diving into the history, regulation, and structures of collective bargaining—all elements that set the context for understanding processes of labor relations. We will cover these processes, from the formation of bargaining units to the administration of agreed-upon contracts, in both the private and public sectors in subsequent weeks. We'll end the term with two sessions focused on contemporary issues in collective bargaining and labor relations. Throughout, we will examine labor relations and collective bargaining through a number of industry case studies and bargaining exercises, and will document current issues in the field as they unfold over the course of our time together.

The course objective is for you to gain a working knowledge of, and think critically about, labor relations and collective bargaining. As labor relations are constantly undergoing change, you should also leave this course with an understanding of pressures and challenges affecting labor

relations today. You should also be able to critically apply insights regarding the objective of labor relations (balancing different actors' goals and rights) in your current and future workplaces, whether unionized or non-unionized.

## **Course Requirements**

### **1. Readings and reading reflections**

Readings for this seminar will be drawn primarily from two texts.

- Budd, John W. 2018. *Labor Relations: Striking a Balance*. **Fifth Edition**. McGraw-Hill Education.
- *Collective Bargaining under Duress: Case Studies of Major North American Industries*. 2014. By Howard Stanger, Ann Frost, and Paul F. Clark, (Eds.) Ithaca, NY: Cornell ILR Press (ISBN 978-0-913447-06-2).

You can obtain these from a number of sources:

- New and used copies are available at the student union bookstore.
- Used and/or rental copies are available from external sources like Amazon.
- The publisher of the Budd text (McGraw-Hill Education) sells and rents ebook versions of the text; just be sure to secure the Fifth Edition.
- Both books are also on reserve at the library's Main Stacks.

Additional materials will be drawn from journals, newspapers, podcasts, and other sources in an effort to examine significant and timely issues in the field in more detail.

**Reflections:** Each week, you will be expected to submit a short reflection (roughly one paragraph) on the reading. The reflections are intended to help you capture big-picture or key ideas from each topic and help prepare you for our class discussion. Question prompts for each week will be available on Compass, along with instructions for how to submit your reflection, which are due by the Monday prior to class, at 12:00pm. Of the 10 possible reflections due during the term (noted in the syllabus), only 8 are required (you have two skips), but please note that the reflection for Week 16 is required. Reflections will be worth 10% of your final grade.

### **2. Participation**

You will be expected to play an active role throughout the course. Attendance at each class session, from start to finish, is required. The success of our seminar discussions will depend on your participation; as such you should come to each session with the readings completed and ready to contribute. At the end of the term, you will receive a participation grade worth 10% of the final grade.

There are several ways you can participate:

- Contribute to class discussions

- Actively participate in weekly break-out sessions during the seminar
- For remote participation: Zoom chats, polls, and participation in break-out rooms all count towards participation. Contributing to our Discussion Board on Compass through news posts, questions, or responding to Collective Bargaining in the News posts from your classmates (below) also count.

### ***Course discussion board and CBNs***

- Part of your class participation will involve bringing current events in labor relations to our discussions. To this end, one (1) CBN post and brief presentation is required from all students during an assigned week.
  - For your assigned week, you should find at least 1-2 news articles or segments regarding a current example of collective bargaining.
  - By 12:00pm on the Monday prior to your assigned week, please a brief write-up of your item on our CBN forum (on our Compass Discussion Board). These should include a short (3-4 sentences) summary of the recent collective bargaining example you're highlighting; b) a short (3-4 sentences) reflection on how the example relates to a reading, discussion, or theme in the course, and c) citations or links to at least 1-2 news sources you gathered.
  - You should come to the seminar ready to give a 2-3 minute oral summary of your post.

#### *Adding your reactions and additional posts:*

- Leave comments, questions, or points for discussion on your classmates' posts. At any point in the term, you may share also additional collective bargaining news items on our discussion forum. These comments, questions, and items count toward your participation grade, but you are not required to present them orally.

### **3. Facilitating class discussion**

Each week we will hear from 2-3 students, who will lead us in a 15-minute discussion of the industry case study assigned from the Stanger et al. book for that week. The discussion should include a) a brief summary of main points from the reading; b) your thoughts and critical reactions to the reading, c) a current event or specific collective bargaining case from the industry you're covering, and c) one of the two: at least two discussion questions to pose to the seminar, or 2-3 Zoom poll questions. You are free to use Powerpoint (although it is not required) or any other materials or activities you'd like. A grade will be assigned on the basis of the quality of the presentation and the accompanying discussion. The discussion facilitation will be worth 10% of the final grade.

### **4. Simulations**

Over the course of the semester, we will hold two mock collective bargaining sessions; each will be worth 10% of the final grade. Students will be divided into union and management teams for each simulation, and grades will be assigned based on the quality of bargaining preparation (details given in class), participation in the simulation itself, and team peer review.

## **5. Take-home exams**

Both the midterm and final are take-home exams; each is worth 25% of your course grade. Our midterm will be due on March 16, and our final on May 11. We will discuss the details of each in class. There will be no make-up exams for either the midterm or final except for extraordinary circumstances. In these cases, arrangements must be made at least one week prior to the exam.

## **Grading**

Students' final grades will be based on reading reflections, class participation, facilitation of a class discussion, simulations, and two exams. For the purposes of assigning a final grade this work is weighted as follows:

<b>Course grade</b>		<b>Grading Scale</b>	
Reading reflections	10%	A	93-100%
Class participation	10%	A-	90-92%
Facilitating class discussion	10%	B+	87-89%
Mock simulations	20%	B	83-86%
Midterm	25%	B-	80-82%
Final exam	25%	C+	77-79%
		C	73-76%

## **University Policies and Resources**

Please see the end of this syllabus for relevant university policies and resources.

### Overview of Schedule and Topics

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Jan. 26	Introduction and overview of labor relations
2	Feb. 2	Evolution of the labor relations system
3	Feb. 9	Introduction to labor law
4	Feb. 16	Labor and management strategies and structures
5	Feb. 23	The organizing process: Establishing the collective bargaining relationship
6	Mar. 2	Collective bargaining: The negotiations process, part 1
7	Mar. 9	Collective bargaining: The negotiations process, part 2: The Zinnia simulation Take-home midterm released
8	Mar. 16	Take-home midterm due; <i>American Factory</i> viewing and discussion
9	Mar. 23	Impasses, strikes, and dispute resolution
10	Mar. 30	Administration of collective bargaining agreements
11	Apr. 6	Public sector collective bargaining, part 1
12	Apr. 13	Break
13	Apr. 20	Public sector collective bargaining, part 2: The Queen City simulation
14	Apr. 27	Contemporary issues, part 1: Flexibility, employee empowerment, and global forces
15	May 4	Contemporary issues, part 2: Course wrap up and discussion of current social and political events Take-home final released
16	May 11	Take-home final due

## Detailed Schedule of Topics

*As of 12.14.20. Subject to change.*

### **Week 1 | Jan. 26      Introduction and overview of labor relations**

*Key questions:* What do we mean by labor relations and collective bargaining? What is the objective of labor relations, and what frameworks can we use to evaluate these objectives?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Define labor relations and collective bargaining.
2. Define the objective of labor relations and identify relevant actors and their goals.
3. Describe two major frameworks and four schools of thought used to analyze labor relations.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 1: Contemporary labor relations and Chapter 2: Labor unions: Good or bad?
- Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.K., and Colvin, A.J.S. 2017. A framework for analyzing collective bargaining and labor relations. Chapter 1 in *An Introduction to U.S. Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations*. Ithaca: ILR Press. [on Compass]

### **Week 2 | Feb. 2      Evolution of the labor relations system** *Reflection 1 due Monday 12:00pm*

*Key questions:* What are the important features of major historical eras of labor relations? How does this historical perspective inform our understanding of labor relations today?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Identify the overarching eras of labor relations in the U.S.
2. Identify major events and figures of each era.
3. Describe key features of these eras using IR frameworks.
4. Understand how the historical record shapes labor relations today.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 3: Historical Development
- Stanger et al., Introduction: Collective bargaining under duress: Case studies of major U.S. industries
- Podcast: [A Brief History of the Labor Movement](#). NPR Weekend Edition Sunday, September 3, 2006.
- Podcast: [The Middle Class Took Off 100 Years Ago ... Thanks To Henry Ford?](#) NPR All Things Considered, January 27, 2014

**Week 3 | Feb. 9      Introduction to labor law**  
***Reflection 2 due Monday 12:00pm***

*Key questions:* How does the legal system shape labor relations? What are the major provisions of U.S. labor law and their underlying logic or rationale?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Understand how a legal system can either promote or repress unionization.
2. Identify major provisions of U.S. labor law and their underlying rationale/logic.
3. Understand the role of the NLRB and similar agencies.
4. Assess whether or not labor law reform is necessary.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 4: Labor law
- Stanger et al., Chapter 1: Context, process, and outcomes of collective bargaining in the U.S. airline industry
- [“The Haves and Have-Nots: How American Labor Law Denies a Quarter of the Workforce Collective Bargaining Rights”](#) Report by American Rights at Work, November 2008 [on Compass]
- Podcast: [Sara Nelson: The world’s most powerful flight attendant](#). *Talking Points* July 10, 2019. [www.thepointsguy.com](http://www.thepointsguy.com).

**Week 4 | Feb. 16      Labor and management strategies and structures**  
***Reflection 3 due Monday 12:00pm***

*Key questions:* What are the strategies and structures used by employers and labor unions to balance efficiency, equity, and voice?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Compare traditional strategies with alternatives.
2. Understand the organizational structure of unions and the U.S. labor movement.
3. Discuss labor relations strategies pursued by employers and their connection to human resource management and business strategies.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 5: Labor and management: Strategies, structures and constraints
- Stanger et al., Chapter 2: Crisis and recovery in the U.S. auto industry: Tumultuous times for a collective bargaining pacesetter
- Hertel-Fernandez, A., Kimball, W., and Kochan, T. 2019. How U.S. workers think about workplace democracy: The structure of individual worker preferences for labor representation. Working Paper, Columbia and MIT Sloan.
- Podcast: [The Roots of The Modern Anti-Union Movement](#) Working History, 2016.

Collective Bargaining Simulation I Team Assignments

**Week 5 | Feb. 23      The organizing process: Establishing the collective bargaining relationship**  
*Reflection 4 due Monday 12:00pm*

*Key questions:* What are the procedural steps and legal standards of organizing a union? How do labor and management engage in the organizing process?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Understand the sequence of events and legal issues involved in the organizing process.
2. Identify tactics and processes of both unions and management in an organizing campaign.
3. Assess whether reform of the union certification process is necessary.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 6: Union organizing
- Stanger et al., Chapter 3: Hotels and casinos: Collective bargaining during a decade of instability
- Ferguson, JP. 2008. The eyes of the needles: A sequential model of union organizing drives, 1999-2004. *ILR Review*, 62(1):3-21.

**Week 6 | Mar. 2      Collective bargaining: The negotiations process, part 1**  
*Reflection 5 due Monday 12:00pm*

*Key questions:* What is the process for collective bargaining? What are its legal, strategic, and behavioral elements?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Articulate the general timeline of collective bargaining and its different structures.
2. Explain the legal parameters of collective bargaining.
3. Discuss determinants of bargaining power.
4. Discuss the four subprocesses of collective bargaining, including their purposes, strategies and tactics, and outcomes.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 7: Bargaining
- Stanger et al., Chapter 4: Health care: Collective bargaining's growing role in a time of transition
- Scheiber, Noam. 2 Feb 2020. The great Google revolt. *New York Times Magazine*,

**Week 7 | Mar. 9      Collective bargaining: The negotiations process, part 2**

Mock Collective Bargaining Exercise #1: The Zinnia  
Take-home midterm released after class; due Tuesday Oct. 13 at 10:00am

**Week 8 | Mar. 16**    *American Factory* viewing and discussion

Midterm due by 10:00am

**Week 9 | Mar. 23**    **Impasses, strikes, and dispute resolution**  
*Reflection 6 due Monday 12:00pm*

*Key questions:* What happens when labor negotiations do not result in an agreement? What are options for addressing an impasse?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Explore options for resolving bargaining disputes and impasses.
2. Understand different types of strikes and lockouts, and their controversies.
3. Identify other pressure tactics, beyond strikes and lockouts, for addressing disputes.
4. Compare major third-party dispute resolution mechanisms.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 8: Impasses, strikes and dispute resolution
- Stanger et al., Chapter 5: When chickens devoured cows: Union rebuilding in the meat and poultry industry
- Podcast: [How Labor Strikes Work](#) Stuff You Should Know, April 7, 2016.

Collective Bargaining Simulation II Team Assignments

**Week 10 | Mar. 30**    **Administration of collective bargaining agreements**  
*Reflection 7 due Monday 12:00pm*

*Key questions:* Once agreed upon, how are union contracts administered? What are the parties' rights and obligations, and how are disputes resolved?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Understand the key elements and nature of U.S. union contracts.
2. Explain the importance of different contractual provisions that define rights and obligations.
3. Describe the general process for grievance resolution and the importance of grievance arbitration.

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 9: Contract clauses and their administration
- Stanger et al., Chapter 6: Hard times and hard bargaining in the newspaper industry
- Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.K. & Colvin, A.J.S. 2017. Contract terms and employment outcomes. Chapter 10 in *An Introduction to U.S. Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations*. Ithaca: ILR Press. [on Compass]

**Week 11 | Apr. 6      Public sector collective bargaining, part 1**  
***Reflection 8 due Monday 12:00pm***

*Key questions:* What is the nature of public sector collective bargaining? How does it differ from collective bargaining in the private sector?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Articulate the ways in which public sector bargaining differs from that in the private sector.
2. Understand the legal framework, bargaining environment, and bargaining approaches of public sector unions.
3. Explain how the nature of stakeholders in public sector bargaining is distinct from collective bargaining in the private sector.
4. Discuss how collective bargaining in the public sector seeks to balance efficiency, equity and voice.

*Readings/materials:*

- Review Budd excerpts on public sector bargaining: pages 97 (development of firefighters' unions); 99-100 (public sector union density); 103 (PATCO strike); 136-140 (public sector labor law); 225 (union organizing in the public sector); 258-260 (bargaining in the public sector); 274-278 (strikes); 288 (slowdowns); 290-294 (dispute resolution, esp. 294)
- Skim: Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.K. & Colvin, A.J.S. 2017. Collective bargaining in the public sector. Chapter 13 in *An Introduction to U.S. Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations*. Ithaca: ILR Press. [on Compass]
- Stanger et al., Chapter 7: Public sector collective bargaining
- Issa, N. 4 Nov 2019. Why the Chicago teachers' strike lasted so long. *Chicago Sun Times*
- News segment: "[Labor clout takes a hit in Supreme Court ruling on dues.](#)" NPR News, June 20, 2018.

**Week 12 | Apr. 13      No class (all-campus holiday)**

**Week 13 | Apr.20      Public sector collective bargaining, part 2**

Mock Collective Bargaining Exercise #2: Queen City

**Week 14 | Apr. 27      Contemporary issues in labor relations, part 1: Flexibility, employee empowerment, and labor-management partnerships**  
***Reflection 9 due Monday 12:00pm***

*Key questions:* How are union strategies for representation linked to work organization? What pressures are changing this relationship today?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Understand how the organization and structure of work is important to labor relations and union strategies for representation
2. Explain contemporary pressures on organizations and how they affect the employment relationship
3. Compare how these pressures subsequently affect union representation strategies to that of the past
4. Understand the debates around representation and flexibility, empowerment, and labor-management partnerships

*Readings/materials:*

- Budd, Chapter 10: Flexibility, empowerment, and partnership
- Stanger et al, Chapter 8: Professional sports: A tale of conflict and accord

**Week 15 | May 4**      **Contemporary issues in labor relations, part 2: Globalization, financialization, and current political and social events**  
*Reflection 10 due (special instructions to be posted on Compass)*

*Key questions:* In what ways are globalization and financialization transforming labor relations? What are associated challenges and opportunities? And, how do current political and social movements, like Black Lives Matter, as well as COVID-19 affect labor relations?

*Learning objectives:*

1. Define globalization and financialization as well as key dimensions of each and their implications for labor relations, unions, and collective bargaining.
2. Discuss the implications of current social and political events for collective bargaining and, more generally, efficiency, equity, and voice
3. Discuss how these insights are linked to HR management in practice

Final exam released after class

**Week 16 | May 11**      Take home final exam due by 5pm

## University Policies and Resources

### **Request for Special Accommodations**

To obtain disability-related adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities should contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign; call 217.333.4603; email [disability@illinois.edu](mailto:disability@illinois.edu); or go to the DRES website, <http://disability.illinois.edu>. Please also schedule a private meeting with the course instructor to discuss your needs and requirements. All accommodations will try to be met once you self-identify. Please note accommodations are not retroactive to the beginning of the semester but begin the day you contact your professor with a current letter of accommodation from DRES.

### **Code of Academic Integrity**

The University of Illinois “Academic Integrity-All Students” policy in the *Code of Policies and Regulations Applying to all Students* applies to this course and will be strictly enforced. Adhering to the highest academic integrity standards is expected from all students in this course. Violations of academic integrity will result in appropriate penalties.

### **Writing Resources**

The UIUC’s Center for Writing Studies provides free workshops and writing assistance. The Writers Workshop’s mission is to support the University of Illinois community by providing free writing assistance for students, faculty, and staff from all disciplines and at all stages of the writing process. The Workshop has multiple locations and offers both face-to-face and online tutoring. Find more information at [writersworkshop.illinois.edu](http://writersworkshop.illinois.edu).

### **Support Resources and Supporting Fellow Students in Distress**

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (333-0050) or online at [odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/](http://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/). Based upon your report, staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe.

Further, as a Community of Care, we want to support you in your overall wellness. We know that students sometimes face challenges that can impact academic performance (examples include mental health concerns, food insecurity, homelessness, personal emergencies). Should you find that you are managing such a challenge and that it is interfering with your coursework, you are encouraged to contact the [Student Assistance Center \(SAC\)](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support and referrals to campus and/or community resources. The SAC has a Dean on Duty available to see students who walk in, call, or email the office during business hours. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or walk-in to the Counseling Center, no appointment needed.