

Fall 2010

Professor LaRocco

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
College of Business Administration**

MBA 234 – Industrial Relations

Tuesdays: 6:00 – 8:50 p.m.

COURSE SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR: John B. LaRocco, B.S., M.S., J.D., LL.M.
OFFICE: Bus 2046
OFFICE HOURS: Mondays: 7:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.
Mondays: 10:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Tuesdays: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
And By Appointment
OFFICE TELEPHONE: 916-278-6405
ELECTRONIC MAIL: laroccoj@csus.edu
PREREQUISITE: Graduate Standing

I. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

1. **Holly, Jennings and Wolters, The Labor Relations Process, 9th Edition (South – Western/Cengage Learning; 2008)**
2. **Handouts may be distributed and library reading may be assigned.**

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course introduces students to labor relations and follows with an in-depth analysis of the practical and philosophical aspects of the labor-management relationship. The readings cover the social, economic, legal, historical and political forces which govern the relationship between employers and employees and between employees and labor organizations. Emphasis is placed on the unionized private sector and the unionized public sector of the economy and will include a study of labor history, labor law, union structure, union representation, collective bargaining, contract administration, arbitration, strikes and bargaining impasse procedures. In addition, we will examine the effect of labor organizations on the non-union sector of the economy. Finally, we will briefly cover the relationship between unions and their members.

The course is designed to provide the student with a balanced, neutral study of industrial relations. While unions and employers often engage in adversarial relationships, we will find that they have some common objectives which can facilitate a cooperative atmosphere. The course is designed not only to provide the student with basic knowledge of the substantive concepts of labor relations but also to encourage students to independently analyze complex issues which arise between employers and groups of employees.

Most students are either pro-management or pro-labor. Both predilections are fine and I urge you to candidly state your views in class. I also urge to explore why you settled on supporting one group or the other.

Last, students will engage in research to enhance their understanding of a labor relations topic.

III. GRADING POLICIES

The final grade in this course will be based on the cumulative numerical score which the student receives on two examinations and the research paper/presentation. The grade increments of "+" and "-" will be utilized in this course. The total points are allocated as follows:

First Examination	100 points
Second Examination	100 points
Research Paper with Class Presentation	<u>100 points</u>
Total	300 points

Final grades will be derived from the numerical scale according to the schedule below:

A	276-300 points
A-	270-275 points
B+	264-269 points
B	246-263 points
B-	240-245 points
C+	234-239 points
C	216-233 points
C-	210-215 points
D+	204-209 points
D	186-203 points
D-	180-185 points
F	179 and below

IV. EXAMINATIONS

There will be two examinations which will each be worth 100 points. The second exam is not cumulative. It will only cover the material covered since the first examination. The exams consist of three parts: Identification of Terms, Short Answer to Case Problems or Labor Relations Issues, and a Long Essay. Both exams will be one and one-half hours in length. Exams will be closed book and closed notes. Students must provide their own Blue Book.

Please note that the two exams will be given on the dates specified in the class schedule. We will also cover material and have lecture discussion during the rest of the class period. Usually, the exam is administered during the last 90 minutes of class.

NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN

Students will be excused from taking an examination only if they present a written excuse attesting to a genuine illness or a serious family problem. The student must provide a written notice from a physician disclosing the nature of the illness and treatment administered. If a student is properly excused from an examination, the student will be given a project to complete (which will be graded) in lieu of a make-up examination.

V. CLASS PARTICIPATION

This course is taught by a combination of the lecture, discussion and research methods. There will be no grade for class attendance or class participation except for performance on the class presentation of one's research. Nonetheless, those students who regularly attend class and participate in class discussions are likely to achieve a better score on the examinations. Students must attend class during the student presentations.

VI. RESEARCH PAPER AND CLASS PRESENTATION

Overview of Project

Students are required to write a research paper and make a short presentation on their topic of research. Students may work in teams of two or individually. Team papers shall be approximately twice the length of individual papers. Students select between a paper on labor history or a paper on a contemporary union-employer relationship.

Project Topics

Labor History Research:

Students may opt to research a person, event, campaign, or organization in American Labor History that occurred prior to 2000. You should obtain my approval of your topic if there is any doubt about the cutoff at year 2000. The paper must show thorough research of the topic, why the subject had an influence on the development of U.S. labor relations and your insights about what we can learn from your topic. Your personal insights are a critical part of your paper. The suggested length of this paper is 10 to 15 pages for individual papers and 20 to 30 pages for team papers. Papers exceeding the recommended length will not be penalized if the additional length was necessary to cover the topic. Papers of less than 10 pages are not likely to contain all of the required content.

Analysis of a Contemporary Union-Employer Relationship:

Students select a unionized employer and study the ongoing relationship between the union and the employer. This paper may require review of contemporary articles as well as library research. Students may, if they wish, engage in field research, such as personal interviews, especially if they have access to management officials and/or union officials. Students must thoroughly research the substantive bargaining relationship and critically reach a conclusion on whether the relationship is successful or not. Your insights might include recommendations to the parties and predictions about the future. The suggested

length of the paper is 10 to 15 pages for an individual and 20 to 30 pages for a team. Students will not be penalized for exceeding the recommended length if the additional length is necessary to cover the topic.

Online Research

Research online is allowed but students need to be highly skeptical of its reliability and it can only supplement other research sources. I will comment more about online research in class. However, a paper with exclusively online sources will receive a grade no higher than a “B”.

Class Presentations

Each student will make an oral presentation to the class on the student’s research topic. The presentation will be about 20 minutes depending on class enrollment and time constraints. Teams will have double the time. About ¼ of the research paper grade will be allotted to the class presentations. Students should allot about 90% of the time for their presentation and 10% for questions from the audience. The presentations will be made during the last two or three class sessions.

Grading The Paper

While past students have scored very well on research papers/presentations, please note that your own insights and critics are an essential component of the paper. Also, you must demonstrate your ability to thoroughly research your topic.

Bibliography

Students must attach a bibliography to their papers. This does not exclude using text citations or footnotes.

VII. GUEST LECTURERS

We have a substantial amount of material to cover in a very short time. Nevertheless, I believe the guest lecturers can sometimes be of great benefit. In the past, I have utilized 0-2 classes for guest lecturers. If we have any, we will have to adjust the class schedule and/or reduce the time for class presentations. I will keep you apprised.

VIII. OFFICE HOURS AND CONFERENCES

Exigencies sometime prevent me from consistently maintaining my office hours. Instead of relying on my presence in my office during office hours, it is better to see me in class to confirm that I will be in the office at the designated time or to make a special appointment for a conference.

IX. CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Following is a tentative schedule of class discussions and assignments which is subject to amendments which will be announced in class:

Date	Assigned Reading	Class Topic
August 31	----	Introduction & American Labor History
September 7	Chapters 1 & 2	Labor History & Labor Law
September 14	Chapters 2 & 3	Labor Law
September 21	Chapter 4 & 5	Unions & Union Organizing
September 28	Chapter 6	Collective Bargaining
October 5	Chapter 9	Bargaining Impasse
October 12	FIRST EXAMINATION No Make-Up Exams	
October 19	Chapter 7	Bargaining Subjects
October 26	Chapters 8 & 10	Bargaining Subjects and Contract Administration
November 2	Chapters 11 & 12	Employee Discipline & Labor Arbitration
November 9	Chapter 13	Public Sector Labor Relations
November 16	Chapter 13	Public Sector Labor Relations
November 23	SECOND EXAMINATION No Make-Up Exams	
November 30	Class Presentations	
December 7	Class Presentations	
	RESEARCH PAPERS DUE No Late Papers	
December 14	Class Presentations If Necessary	

NOTE: There will be **NO** class meeting on December 14 if the class presentations are completed.