

LABR 001
INTRODUCTION TO LABOR STUDIES
Mon./Wed./Fri., 1:00-1:50, Spieth Hall, Room 2200

Prof. Brookes

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office hours: Wednesdays 10:30-12:30 & Fridays 11:30-12:30, Watkins 2223

Course Description

This course examines the economic, political, and social factors shaping labor conditions and workers' struggles for justice in the United States and beyond. We will analyze and discuss the changing nature of work under capitalism, race and gender discrimination in workplaces and in the labor market, the impact of economic globalization, and unions' successes and limitations.

About Labor Studies, including our minor and internship program:

<https://laborstudies.ucr.edu/>

Required Book:

McCallum, Jamie K. 2020. *Worked Over: How Round-the-Clock Work Is Killing the American Dream*. New York: Basic Books.

All other readings will be made available online via Canvas.

Course Structure and Requirements

Regular lecture attendance is required. Be sure to take notes during lecture. While the PowerPoint slides will be made available via Canvas, note that the slides are not a substitute for students' own notes. Moreover, timely completion of the readings is crucial for success in this course. In effort to help you budget your time, I have noted approximate page totals next to each reading assignment. Note that the readings complement but do not always directly follow the lecture material. Likewise, the lectures complement but will not always speak directly to the readings. You are responsible for both the lecture material and the readings.

Students will take three in-class **exams**, each worth **20%** of the course grade, and one **final exam (30%)**, all of which will be based on both the lectures and the readings. **Class participation**, either in person during lecture or by posting comments on the Canvas discussion board, will constitute **10%** of your final grade. Remember that speaking up and interacting with your peers will not only help you retain more information but also develop your communication and argumentation skills. Listening is important too. Whether you agree, partially agree, or disagree with your classmates' comments, please be respectful at all times. Personal attacks and other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

Missed Classes and Makeup Exams

Students are expected to attend every lecture and arrive on time. The assigned readings must be completed before the start of each class. It is the student's personal responsibility to complete all required readings and obtain notes from a classmate for any class missed. You are welcome to come to me with questions, but I will not reiterate missed lectures in full during office hours.

Every effort must be made to be present for the exams. Students who miss an exam will be given an alternate test at a mutually convenient time *only if* the absence was **excused**. Most excused absences require official documentation (e.g. jury duty notice, medical note). If you are missing class for a religious holiday, please just e-mail me a brief note. Severe illnesses, family crises, and other circumstances resulting in a long-term absence will be handled on a case-by-case basis. An unexcused absence on the day of an exam will result in a score of **0** for that exam.

Students with Disabilities

Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities with the resources provided by the Student Disability Resource Center (<https://sdrc.ucr.edu/>).

Phones, Laptops, Tablets, and Other Electronic Devices

Silence or shut off your phone and stow it away before class begins. Absolutely no phone use during class will be tolerated. Laptops, tablets, and other devices are to be used for note-taking only; internet browsing and other distracting activities during class are unacceptable. Failure to abide by these rules will result, at minimum, in a significant reduction of the participation grade. Students who engage in disruptive behavior after a warning will be asked to leave the class.

Academic Integrity

Cheating in any form is a deeply serious offense. Students who attempt to cheat will be subject to disciplinary procedures. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with UCR's Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures and are **REQUIRED to read UCR's Academic Integrity Guidelines: <http://conduct.ucr.edu/policies/academicintegrity.html>**. Additional information on expectations for student conduct is available at: <https://conduct.ucr.edu/for-students>

Course Schedule

WEEK 0: Course Introduction

Sept. 23 (Friday)

- course syllabus

WEEK 1: Welcome to the Working Week: Overview

Sept. 26 (Monday)

- **McClelland, Mac.** 2012. “**I was a Warehouse Wage Slave.**” *Mother Jones*. [17 pgs]

Sept. 28 (Wednesday)

- **Furman, Jonah.** 2022. “**How Zoomers Organized the First Chipotle Union.**” *Labor Notes*. [5 pgs]

Sept. 30 (Friday)

- **Schultze-Cleven, Tobias.** 2021. “**The Unique Advantages of Labor Studies,**” pp. 34-42 in Tobias Schulze-Cleven and Todd E. Vachon, eds. 2021. *Revaluing Workers: Toward a Democratic and Sustainable Future*. Labor & Employment Relations Association. [8 pgs]

WEEK 2: Career Opportunities: “Old” vs. “New” in the Structure of Work and the Economy

Oct. 3 (Monday)

- **McCallum** 2020. Introduction: “**One Nation Under Work**” [21 pgs.]

Oct. 5 (Wednesday)

- **Rosenberg, Jacob.** 2022. “**Workers Got Fed Up. Bosses Got Scared. This is How the Big Quit Happened.**” *Mother Jones*. January/February. [6 pgs.]
- **Thompson, Derek.** 2021. “**Three Myths of the Great Resignation.**” *The Atlantic*. December 8. [4 pgs.]

Oct. 7 (Friday)

- **Rosalsky, Greg and Alina Selyukh.** 2022. “The Economics Behind ‘Quiet Quitting’ – and What We Should Call It Instead.” *National Public Radio Planet Money*. [6 pgs]
- **Thompson, Derek.** 2022. “Quiet Quitting Is a Fake Trend.” *The Atlantic*. [6 pgs]

WEEK 3: To Have & To Have Not: Economic Inequality & Mobility

Oct. 10 (Monday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 1: “**The Hours of Inequality**” [32 pgs.]

Oct. 12 (Wednesday)

EXAM ONE

Oct. 14 (Friday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 2: “**Nickel and Timed**” [27 pgs.]

WEEK 4: Clampdown: Flexibility, Intensity, and Insecurity

Oct. 17 (Monday)

- Kantor, Jodi. 2014. “**Working Anything but 9 to 5.**” *New York Times*. [11 pgs]

Oct. 19 (Wednesday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 3: “**The Electronic Whip**” [25 pgs.]
- *Recommended: NYT*: “The Rise of the Worker Productivity Score” (interactive):
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/14/business/worker-productivity-tracking.html?referringSource=articleShare>

Oct. 21 (Friday)

- May, Tiffany and Aman Chang Chien. 2022. “Slouch or Slack Off, This ‘Smart’ Office Chair Cushion Will Record It.” *New York Times*. [2 pgs]
- *The Guardian*. 2016. “**French workers win legal right to avoid checking work email out-of-hours.**” [3 pgs]

WEEK 5: Do or Die: Labor & Gender

Oct. 24 (Monday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 4: “**Time Machines**” [24 pgs.]

Oct. 26 (Wednesday)

NO CLASS

Oct. 28 (Friday)

NO CLASS

WEEK 6: Labor & Gender (continued)

Oct. 31 (Monday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 5: “**More Than Money**” [28 pgs.]
- *Recommended: Terkel, Studs. 1971. “Introduction” in Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do. The New Press.[18pgs]*

Nov. 2 (Wednesday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 6: “**Back to Work**” [22 pgs.]

Nov. 4 (Friday)

- Reese, Ellen. 2020. “**Gender, Race, and Amazon Warehouse Labor in the United States.**” Ch. 6, pp. 102-116 in Jake Alimahomed-Wilson and Ellen Reese, eds. 2021. *The Cost of Free Shipping: Amazon in the Global Economy.* Pluto Press. [15 pgs.]

WEEK 7: Fading American Dream: Labor, Race, & Ethnicity

Nov. 7 (Monday)

EXAM TWO

Nov. 9 (Wednesday)

- **Zinn, Howard.** 1980. “**Robber Barons and Rebels**” Ch. 11 in *A People’s History of the United States*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics. [25 pgs]

Nov. 11 (Friday)

NO CLASS (Veterans Day)

WEEK 8: Labor, Race, & Ethnicity (continued) / There is Power in a Union: The Politics of Organized Labor

Nov. 14 (Monday)

- **Wilson, Jake.** 2008. “**The Racialized Picket Line: White Workers and Racism in the Southern California Supermarket Strike.**” *Critical Sociology*, 34(3), 349–367. [19 pgs]

Nov. 16 (Wednesday)

- **National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).** “**Employer/Union Rights and Obligations.**” <https://www.nlr.gov/about-nlr/rights-we-protect/your-rights/employer-union-rights-and-obligations> [3 pgs.]

Nov. 18 (Friday)

- **Jaffe, Sarah.** 2019. “**This is Much Bigger Than Us, Than Our Union, Even Than Our City.**” *The Nation*, January 23. [3 pgs.]

WEEK 9: The Politics of Organized Labor (continued)

Nov. 21 (Monday)

- **Greenhouse, Steven.** 2019. “**The Return of the Strike.**” *The American Prospect*, January 3, 2019. <https://prospect.org/article/return-strike-0>. [15 pgs.]

Nov. 23 (Wednesday)

- **Olney, Peter and Rand Wilson.** 2020. “**Think Big: Organizing a Successful Amazon Workers’ Movement in the United States by Combining the Strength of the Left and Organized Labor.**” Ch. 6, pp. 102-116 in Alimahomed-Wilson and Reese, eds. 2021. *The Cost of Free Shipping: Amazon in the Global Economy*. Pluto Press. [15 pgs.]

Nov. 25 (Friday)

NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

WEEK 10: Conclusions & Review

Nov. 28 (Monday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 7: “We Control the Clocks” [28 pgs.]

Nov. 30 (Wednesday)

EXAM THREE

Dec. 2 (Friday)

- McCallum 2020. Ch. 8: “Labor’s Forgotten Fight” [28 pgs.]

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

11:30AM-2:30PM

FINAL EXAM