

# The Labor Force

## (SOCI/MGMT 427)

### Summer Session Two, 2009

101 Davie Hall  
MTWThF, 9:45am to 11:15am

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<b>Office Hours:</b>	3pm – 5pm on Tuesdays at the West End Wine Bar (450 West Franklin St.) or by appointment
<b>Course website:</b>	blackboard.unc.edu

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

##### Official course description

**SOCI 427 The Labor Force (MNGT 427) (3).** Supply and characteristics of labor and of jobs, including industrial and occupation changes, education and mobility of labor, and changing demography of the workforce.

##### My description of the course

Work is one of the central organizing features of modern life: our identities, life opportunities, and well-being depend largely on the jobs we hold. It is therefore imperative that we understand trends currently shaping people's experiences in the world of work. Designed to complement Social Relations in the Workplace (SOCI/MGMT 131), which provides a micro-level view of work (at the individual and organizational level), SOCI 427 takes a macro-level approach (at the societal level), focusing on large-scale shifts and developments that affect a large number of workers.

My goal in this class is to provide you with an overview of the state of the workforce in contemporary America and, in the process, impart practical knowledge that can help you successfully navigate the labor force. As such, this class takes a functional approach to the subject matter: what concepts and theories will help you make sense of your own labor force experience and, conversely, how will your experiences in paid employment likely differ from other people's work trajectories? Because all aspects of the labor force cannot be covered in one class, I have chosen a selection of topics that I feel best capture the current condition of working America.

## EXPECTATIONS

### Mission statement (What I want you to get from this class)

#### *Knowledge goals*

- 1) To recognize the major issues facing workers today, and how these issues are different from those in previous decades
- 2) To understand how people get jobs, the problems inherent in this process, and how workers deal with these problems
- 3) To understand how workers move through the labor force, from the initial school-to-work transition to retirement
- 4) To appreciate how social inequalities, particularly along lines of gender and race, are embedded in labor markets

#### *Practical skills goals*

- 1) To integrate your own knowledge of work, whether gained through observing others or through your own experience, with the knowledge gained in the class
- 2) To collaborate with others in a supportive atmosphere
- 3) To learn how to critically evaluate claims that are made about the labor force, whether scholarly or otherwise
- 4) To apply class concepts to media portrayals of the labor force
- 5) To adjudicate conflicting claims about the state of labor markets, weighing the merits and shortcomings of each side

### Common courtesies

#### *What you can expect from me:*

- Class will begin and end on time.
- You will be treated with respect and understanding.
- Emails will be answered as promptly as possible.
- I will be available outside of class for questions or discussions.
- Blackboard will be updated in a timely manner.
- Assignments will be graded fairly and returned quickly.

#### *What I expect from you:*

- Cell phones will be turned off or to silent mode before the start of class.
- Contributions to class discussions are presented respectfully and with the understanding that it's okay to disagree, as long as you are considerate of others' opinions.
- E-mail and blackboard will be checked regularly. Readings or assignments may change over the course of the semester; visiting blackboard at least every few days will ensure that you have the most current information.
- Regular attendance of class.
- You will not ask me to disregard the rules stated in this syllabus.

## BEING THE BEST STUDENT YOU CAN BE

### Class attendance and participation

**Attendance.** Attendance is not optional. Because a good deal of class time is spent in collaboration with your peers, the success of the class depends on everyone's participation. For this reason, absences will be unexcused for in-class work, no matter what the reason. Any missed in-class work cannot be made up.

**The value of attendance and participation.** Over the years, I have found that two behaviors predict high grades: Attendance and in-class participation. While attending class and speaking up do not, in and of themselves, lead to high grades, they reflect several positive behaviors such as doing the reading before class, thinking critically about the material, turning in assignments on time, and being personally invested in both the material and your own education. To demonstrate the importance of being prepared and being invested, the following is a chart that provides average final grades along the dimensions of attendance and participation for previous classes I have taught. The point I'm trying to make should be clear enough.

	Participation		
Attendance	High	Medium	Low
High	94%	92%	90%
Medium	91%	87%	84%
Low	Empty	73%	71%

### Honor code

The University Honor Code will be in effect through all assignments. Please read carefully the provisions of the Honor Code (<http://instrument.unc.edu>), making certain you understand and adhere to them. The basic message: don't cheat or be dishonest. I consider integrity and fairness to be vital guiding principles, both in academia and life in general. I hold myself to a high standard of integrity and fairness, and I expect the same of you.

### Plagiarism

Neither I nor UNC have any tolerance for plagiarism; I thus encourage you to learn how to properly quote material. If you didn't write it, cite it! The Writing Center is an excellent resource for learning how to properly cite material. The website <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html> discusses the common pitfalls of plagiarism and how to avoid them. Carefully chosen quotes provide support and validity to your arguments; I wholeheartedly encourage their use in your written assignments as long as they are cited properly. I strongly recommend that you peruse not only the Writing Center's handout on plagiarism but also the rest of their website, which provides a wide variety of resources that are applicable to any class you are taking.

**Any assignments that exhibit blatant instances of plagiarism will not be graded. More to the point, the grade will be zero.**

## CLASS STRUCTURE

Our class has its own blackboard site, accessible at <https://blackboard.unc.edu>. If you are unfamiliar with blackboard, a student tutorial is offered at <http://help.unc.edu/4735#d0e868>.

### Summary of Blackboard

- Any news will be posted under “Announcements.”
- This syllabus and supporting documents are posted under “Course Information.”
- My contact information can be found under “Staff Information.”
- Readings can be found in “Course Documents.”
- Team pages can be found under “Communication” → “Group pages.”
- Policy briefs will be submitted at “Discussion Board.”
- Unit news reports are turned in at “Assignments.”

### Readings

Each class period will have assigned readings, which are posted on Blackboard under “Course Documents”. You will be responsible for downloading each day’s readings. Class time will not be spent covering all aspects of the readings; it is essential that you read class material beforehand so that you can participate in class discussions and group activities.

For some readings, I have only assigned a portion of an article. These instances are noted in the syllabus underneath the reading. Some readings do include statistical analyses. I do not expect you to understand the statistical methods; you can understand the findings without understanding the statistics.

Most importantly, *bring the day’s readings with you to class. You will need them.*

### In-class collaborations

At the start of the semester, I will assign you to a collaborative team, composed of three to four people. It is a pedagogical truth that active discussion fosters deeper understanding of class material than passive listening. The teams are intended to give everyone in the class an opportunity to discuss their own reactions and connections to the material, and thereby provide a richer learning experience than you would receive by just listening to me talk.

### Halftime

I realize that an hour and a half is a long class. Thus, the class will be split into two sessions, with a ten-minute stretch break in between. The timetable is as follows:

- 9:45am – 10:30am: First half of class
- 10:30am – 10:40am: Break time
- 10:40am – 11:15am: Second half of class

**I reserve the right to remove this break if students are abusing it.** Please help keep each other exactly to the ten-minute limit so we can keep the break through the entire semester.

## GRADED MATERIAL

### Unit news reports (50%; 5 x 10% each)

As previously noted, I have chosen our class material to cover topics pertinent to the modern labor force. As such, these issues tend to receive wide coverage in print media and television. After each unit's readings, you will be charged with finding a news story, either in print or video format, related to class material. At the end of the syllabus is a detailed outline of the assignment and should be used as a guide for your news reports.

News reports will be due two class days after we wrap up a unit.

There are seven units, but six news reports assigned. You can skip one of the news reports among the first six units; you can choose which one. You CANNOT, however, use the final exam as your skipped news report. That one is NOT optional. See the following section for a description of the final; it differs slightly from the format for the other news reports.

### Final exam (20%)

The final exam will be your sixth news report. However, for the final *I will select several articles for you to choose from and the news report will be written in class*. The final exam will follow the exact same format as the other news reports, but will be timed (you will have 3 hours). Because you have class material available for reference when writing the other five news reports, you will be allowed to bring the Unit VII readings with you for reference during the final. In addition to your Unit VII readings, you should also bring the news report instructions provided in this syllabus to serve as a guide as you write your final.

*The date and time of the final: July 23 (Thursday) from 8:00am to 11:00am.*

If you have three finals in a 24-hour span, the University provides for the rescheduling of an exam. In this case, I am willing to reschedule the final to accommodate your schedule. Please let me know as far beforehand as possible. Otherwise, there is *no acceptable excuse* for missing the final. This is the University's rule, not mine. If you miss the final, I am *required* to fail you, regardless of how well you would have done otherwise. Don't make me do that.

### Policy briefs (20%; 2 x 10% each)

The labor force is governed by an overarching framework of laws and policies. Policies and court cases determine such diverse outcomes as the legality of various forms of discrimination, the ease with which employers can implement mass layoffs, or whether workers have access to health insurance. As such, labor laws and policies are worth exploring—they shape the labor force and directly impact workers' lives.

Each group will present TWO policy briefs. Policy briefs will be a group effort and will culminate in a presentation that outlines the assigned policy/court case and links it to the day's reading. The specific policies and court cases we will explore are listed in the class calendar. Class time will be allotted for groups to work on policy briefs. All group members

will receive the same grade for the policy brief. Early in the semester, groups will convene and prepare a list of their three preferred days. I will try to accommodate as many groups as possible. A detailed outline of this assignment is provided at the end of the syllabus.

**Peer evaluations (10%)**

Peer evaluations will compose part of your grade. Each team member will provide an assessment of the other members’ contributions to group collaborations such as the policy briefs and in-class group discussions. The peer evaluation component will be 10% of the total grade. Peer evaluations assess things like preparedness for class and quality of contributions. I have no control over this grade; it is purely a result of how your team members feel you have performed over the course of the semester. Peer evaluations will be distributed before the end of classes and must be returned before the final. I will not accept your final exam if you have not returned your completed peer evaluations.

**GRADING**

**Grading scale**

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
+		87-89	77-79	67-69	
	93-100	83-86	73-76	60-66	Below 60
-	90-92	80-82	70-72		

**Components of your grade**

Unit news reports (5)	<b>50%</b>
Final exam (News report for Unit VII)	<b>20%</b>
Policy briefs (2)	<b>20%</b>
<u>Peer evaluations</u>	<b>10%</b>
Total	<b>100%</b>

## SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

### News reports

News reports should be submitted on blackboard at “Assignments” under the appropriate unit heading. Your news report should be attached as a Word document. The news article can be submitted one of two ways:

- 1) Attach the article as a separate document. Make sure the source is included.
- 2) Include the link in the Comments section. Make sure the link works!

**News reports will be considered “on time” up to ten minutes before class begins on the due date.** Beyond that, a 10% late penalty (of the total points possible) will accrue per 24-hour period. Why ten minutes before? Because otherwise, how will you get to class on time?

### Policy briefs

Each policy or court case covered in class has its own discussion thread in the “Discussion Board” section of blackboard. Your finished product, along with any supporting documents, videos, or powerpoint slides should be posted here before the start of class on your presentation day.

### Honor code

To demonstrate our joint commitment to the Honor Code, I would like you to include the following Honor Pledge in all assignments you turn in: “No unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of the work.” For unit news reports, please include this statement in the Comments section. For policy briefs, please include the Honor Pledge on the title page.

## CLASS CALENDAR

June 18: Introduction to the class; taking stock of your knowledge about the labor force

### Unit I: Overview of trends in the labor force

June 19: Demographic changes in the labor force

Morris, Martina and Bruce Western (1999). "Inequality in earnings at the close of the twentieth century." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25: 623-657.

\*\*\*Read only pages 623-636 (stop at "Changes in Demand: Economic Restructuring")

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2001). "How the government measures unemployment". Available at [http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps\\_htgm.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm).

June 22: Research tutorial

**Today's class will be held in Davis Library, Room 247**

Library staff will provide a tutorial on searching for news articles, conducting online research, and citing sources

June 23: The rise of uncertainty

Kalleberg, Arne (2009). "Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition." *American Sociological Review* 74: 1-22.

June 24: Trends in working time

Jacobs, Jerry A. and Kathleen Gerson (2001). "Overworked individuals or overworked families? Explaining trends in work, leisure, and family time." *Work and Occupations* 28(1): 40-63.

### Unit II: Labor markets—Matching people to jobs

June 25: What is a labor market?

Kalleberg, Arne and Aage B. Sorensen (1979). "The Sociology of Labor Markets". *Annual Review of Sociology* 5: 351-379.

**Policy brief:** Fair Labor Standards Act

#### June 26: Navigating the external labor market

O'Mahony, Siobhan and Beth A. Bechky (2006). "Stretchwork: Managing the career progression paradox in external labor markets". *Academy of Management Journal* 49(5): 918-941.

\*\*\*Read ONLY pages 918-931 (stop at "Boundary conditions affecting the acquisition of stretchwork")

**DUE:** News report for Unit I

#### June 29: (Mis)matching people and jobs

Kalleberg, Arne L. (2008). "The mismatched worker: When people don't fit their jobs". *Academy of Management Perspectives* 22(1): 24-40.

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### **Unit III: Power and bargaining**

#### June 30: Occupational labor markets—creating closure

Weeden, Kim (2002). "Why do some occupations pay more than others? Social closure and earnings inequality in the United States". *American Journal of Sociology* 108(1): 55-101.

\*\*\*Read ONLY pages 55-72 (stop at "Methods and Models")

**Policy brief:** Medical licensing

#### July 1: Unions

Vallas, Steven P., William Finlay, and Amy S. Wharton (2009). "Unions in America: The Struggles of the Labor Movement." Pp. 181-204 in *The Sociology of Work*. Oxford University Press.

**Policy brief:** National Labor Relations Act

**DUE:** News report for Unit II

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### **Unit IV: Transitions and mobility**

#### July 2: The school-to-work transition

Kerckhoff, Alan C. (2002). "The transition from school to work". Pp. 52-87 in Jeylan T. Mortimer and Reed W. Larson (Eds.), *The Changing Adolescent Experience: Societal Trends and the Transition to Adulthood*. Cambridge University Press.

### July 3: Independence Day Holiday

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None

### July 6: Networks and job finding among the working poor

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Newman, Katherine (1999). "Getting Stuck, Moving Up." Pp. 150-185 in *No Shame in My Game*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

**Policy brief:** Affirmative action

**DUE:** News report for Unit III

### July 7: Retirement

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Cahill, Kevin E., Michael D. Giandrea and Joseph F. Quinn (2006). "Retirement patterns from career employment". *The Gerontologist* 46(4): 514-523.

**Policy brief:** Social security

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## Unit V: The era of employee risk-bearing

### July 8: Flexible employment

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Kalleberg, Arne L. (2003). "Flexible Firms and Labor Market Segmentation: Effects of Workplace Restructuring on Jobs and Workers." *Work and Occupations* 30 (2): 154-175.

**Policy brief:** Vizcaino vs. Microsoft

### July 9: What is a bad job?

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Kalleberg, Arne L., Barbara F. Reskin and Ken Hudson (2000). "Bad jobs in America: Standard and nonstandard employment relations and job quality in the United States". *American Sociological Review* 65(2): 256-278.

**DUE:** News report for Unit IV

**Policy brief:** Health insurance

### July 10: Laid off—the effects of involuntary job loss

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Knapp, Tim and John Harms (2002). "When the Screen Goes Blank: A Television Plant Closing and Its Impact on Workers." *The Sociological Quarterly* 43(4): 607-626.

**Policy brief:** Trade Adjustment Assistance

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## Unit VI: Globalization and immigration

### July 13: The new global labor force

Blinder, Alan S. (2006). "Offshoring: The next industrial revolution?" *Foreign Affairs* 85(2): 113-128.

**Policy brief:** America Competes Act

### July 14: Why do people immigrate?

Bean, Frank D., Susan Gonzalez-Baker, and Randy Capps (2001). "Immigration and labor markets in the United States". Pp. 669-703 in Ivar Berg and Arne L. Kalleberg (eds.) *Sourcebook of Labor Markets: Evolving Structures and Processes*. New York: Kluwer Academic. (Part I)

**Policy brief:** Illegal immigration

**DUE:** News report for Unit V

### July 15: What kinds of jobs do immigrants get?

Bean, Frank D., Susan Gonzalez-Baker, and Randy Capps (2001). "Immigration and labor markets in the United States". Pp. 669-703 in Ivar Berg and Arne L. Kalleberg (eds.) *Sourcebook of Labor Markets: Evolving Structures and Processes*. New York: Kluwer Academic. (Part II)

**Policy brief:** H-1B visas

## Unit VII: Segregation of the labor force

### July 16: Gender segregation in occupations

Reskin, Barbara (1993). "Sex segregation in the workplace". *Annual Review of Sociology* 19: 241-270.

**Policy brief:** Comparable worth

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### July 17: The opt-out revolution

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Williams, Joan C., Jessica Manvell and Stephanie Bornstein (2006). "'Opt out' or pushed out?: How the press covers work/family conflict". The Center for WorkLife Law, University of California.

\*\*Read ONLY pages 4-9; 29-45 (page numbers in document, NOT Adobe Acrobat page numbers)

**DUE:** News report for Unit VI

**Policy brief:** Family and Medical Leave Act

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### July 20: The gender pay gap

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Blau, Francine D. and Lawrence M. Kahn (2007). "The Gender Pay Gap: Have Women Gone as Far as They Can?" *Academy of Management Perspectives* February: 7-23.

**Policy brief:** Lilly Ledbetter Act

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### July 21: Race and employers' perceptions of skill

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Moss, Philip and Chris Tilly (1996). "'Soft' skills and race: An investigation of black men's employment problems". *Work and Occupations* 23(3) 252-276.

**Policy brief:** Griggs v. Duke Power

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### July 23 (Thursday): FINAL EXAM, 8:00am to 11:00am

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\*\*\*Reminder: The Unit VII news report will be written in class. I will choose the news articles for the final. Bring your Unit VII readings and the news report guide.

## UNIT NEWS REPORT GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

#### Purpose of the assignment

Labor force issues tend to receive wide coverage in print media and television. The goal of this assignment is to integrate class material with current real-world examples. After each unit, you will be charged with finding a news story, either in written or video format, related to class material.

#### Format

After locating a relevant article, your goal is to write a **3- to 4-page** (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, default margins) analysis linking your news story to class material. You should **only** use class material covered in the preceding unit. The report should consist of three portions:

- (1) a brief statement of the relationship between the news articles and class material,
- (2) a critical evaluation of the article, applying class material to the articles, and
- (3) your reaction to the news story and the unit readings.

A hard copy of your article (or the web address of the program from which you drew a video news story) should accompany your news report.

#### News sources

A source should be long enough that you can make meaningful statements about its content and link it to class material (however, article summaries or academic articles are not acceptable).

All sources should be recent, within the past five years; the general idea of the project is to see how class concepts apply to the world today.

I have arranged for a tutorial, run by the Davis Library staff, on using the web to search for relevant news sources. The date of the tutorial is listed in the class calendar.

#### Points and due dates

Each unit news report will be worth **36** points, and will each be worth 10% of your grade.

**Three** points will be deducted for not meeting the minimum page length.

News reports are due **two** days after we wrap up a unit, submitted online ten minutes before the start of class (at the latest before late penalties of 10% per day begin to accrue). Due dates are listed in the class calendar.

## THE DETAILS

### Elements to include

#### 1) Introduction

The introduction should provide *a statement of the relationship between the news articles and class material*--a paragraph that lets me know, in broad terms, what you will discuss in the application section. How does the article you have chosen exemplify the concepts you will include in your review? The introduction is a *brief* summary of the article and a statement of the specific concepts you will use. The aspects of the news article and the class concepts discussed in the introduction should correspond *exactly* to the aspects that are discussed in depth in the application.

By the end of the introduction I should know (1) what readings you are using, (2) what concepts from the readings will be employed in your analysis, and (3) how your article relates to the concepts.

#### 2) Application

In what ways is the article a good example of the concepts or theories you've chosen? Draw only from the class material you included in your introduction; do not draw in concepts or theories that you have not already introduced into the paper. The goal of the application is to clearly link class material to the article. You should thus take care that the link between class material and the article is made clear.

In the application, *you should define class material in sufficient depth*--part of the goal of this assignment is to clearly demonstrate that you understand the readings. To this end, you should include AT LEAST THREE quotes from the readings, properly cited with the author and page number. These quotes should accurately capture the essence of the concepts you are using.

Major issues students have had with this in the past:

- 1) Discussing the article and class material separately; class material should be the context in which the article is discussed.
- 2) Not exploring issues in sufficient depth. This usually happens when students try to cram too many issues into the report.
- 3) Speculation: Extrapolating from what is presented in the article; going beyond the bounds of what is actually presented.
- 4) Assuming I will fill in the gaps in definitions. I will not. I already know the material. I want to see that you know it, too.

#### 3) Reaction

In this section, I want you to provide a personal evaluation of the article. Did you agree or disagree with the message of the article? Why? Did the article resonate with or contradict your own experiences and beliefs? The reaction is NOT a summary or conclusion. It should consist solely of your opinions and experiences.

## GRADING RUBRIC (WHAT I WILL BE LOOKING FOR)

Criteria	Points			Weight
	1	2	3	
Introduction	Introductory statement does not clearly link the article to class material; introduction fails to discuss either the article or the concepts to be used	Introduction links movie and class material, but fails to adequately summarize the main points to be covered in the subsequent sections	The relationship between article and class material is explicitly stated and fully justified; introduction provides a clear statement of what to expect in the application section	x 1
Application of concepts to article	Class material is not from the preceding unit; article and concepts used are unrelated; application shows misunderstanding of concepts; application focuses heavily on class material without connections to article or vice versa	Connections between article and class material are made, but lack depth; application of concepts is slightly inaccurate; application only partially demonstrates mastery of concepts	Connections between article and class material are clearly articulated in sufficient depth that instructor does not need to infer meaning of concepts; concepts are used correctly; class material and article are given equal weight and are tightly connected	x 3
Quotes	Quotes poorly explain concepts	Quotes are somewhat appropriate, but generally refer to only a portion of a concept	Quotes capture the essence of the concepts contained in the reading	x 3
Reaction	Reiterates class material or article; reaction is unrelated to article or class material	Shows some critical evaluation of the article/class material, but in insufficient depth	Reaction is insightful, in-depth, and directly related to class material and article	x 3
Copy of article	Article is unrelated to class material	Article is only loosely related to class material	Article clearly relates to class material	x 1
Presentation	Contains significant grammatical or compositional errors; reads like a very rough draft	Some spelling, grammatical, or compositional errors; reads like a first draft	Few to no errors in grammar or composition	x 1

## POLICY BRIEFS GUIDE

### OVERVIEW

#### Purpose of the assignment

The goal of this assignment is to explore the legal and political framework surrounding labor markets. When labor markets begin to malfunction, problems are rarely resolved without intervention from either governments or courts. Policy briefs provide an opportunity to explore how legal and government institutions help resolve seemingly intractable issues facing workers. This group project will give you a chance to explore how the issues we read about in class are addressed and (sometimes) resolved.

#### Format

Your goal is to write a **6- to 7-page** (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, default margins) analysis exploring a policy and linking it to the day's reading.

I will set up a blackboard page for each team to facilitate collaboration. Group pages are located under "Communication" → "Group pages." Class time will also be set aside for groups to work on their policy briefs. It is up to you, as a team, to determine how work will be divided among yourselves.

#### Writing and presenting your findings

The findings of your policy brief—both the summary of the policy and its connection to the day's reading—will be presented to the class. Because the class will not be familiar with the policy at hand, it is your job to inform them. Thus, your presentation will include three parts that answer three questions:

- (1) Draw from the day's reading to "set the stage" → What problem(s) gave rise to the policy or court case?
- (2) Summarize the policy or court case, focusing on how the policy addresses the issues at hand → What aspects of the problem are addressed?
- (3) Discuss the effectiveness of the policy or legal decision → Was the problem solved?

After briefly outlining the reading, you should discuss, within the context of the day's reading, why the policy or court case was necessary.

#### Citing sources

All sources must be properly cited in a bibliography at the end of your report.

#### Points and due dates

Each policy brief will be worth **60** points, and will each be worth 10% of your grade.

**Three** points will be deducted for not meeting the minimum page length.

Policy briefs and all supporting documents should be posted on blackboard's discussion board before the start of class on the day your policy brief is due. Posting on the discussion board gives everyone a chance to learn more about the policies covered by each group.

## THE DETAILS

### Elements to include

#### **1) The problem as discussed in the assigned reading**

The first part of the policy brief should draw from the assigned reading to outline the problem. What problem is the related policy designed to counteract? This first part should be devoted to “setting the stage.” You should not, at this point, discuss the policy itself. This section should clearly demonstrate why there was a need for government or legal intervention. Policies and lawsuits rarely arise out of the blue; by the time labor force issues get to courts or Congress, a crisis is imminent. Your job is to draw from the readings to outline the crisis that gave rise to the intervention.

When discussing the problem, your group should go beyond simply summarizing the day’s reading. Your group should pull from the reading the main issues that the related policy is designed to address.

#### **2) Policy summary**

In this section, you should outline the policy or court case. What are its main features, and what aspects of the problem is it designed to resolve? Unlike the first section of the policy brief, this part requires you to put your research skills to use. Your group must conduct the necessary research and provide appropriate citations at the end of the paper.

The policy summary should discuss the policy in the context of the problems outlined in the reading. How does the policy attempt to rectify the problems discussed in the reading? To answer this, you will need to tightly link your research with the assigned reading. By the end of this section, you should have clearly demonstrated the how the policy relates to the problem.

#### **3) Resolution**

In the final section, you should discuss the effectiveness of the policy or court decision. Was the problem adequately addressed? If you were a judge or politician, would you have handled things differently? Do you think the decision was appropriate given the scope of the problem? Basically, did the policy fix the problem? If not, suggest further measures that might be taken in the future.

#### **4) Works cited**

Be sure to include a bibliography citing the sources used in your policy brief.

## GRADING RUBRIC (WHAT I WILL BE LOOKING FOR)

Criteria	Points			Weight
	1	2	3	
Introduction of the problem	Does not clearly outline the problems that necessitated the related policy; introduction of the problem simply summarizes the article without narrowing down the main points	The main points are somewhat unrelated to the policy; introduction of the problem does not accurately capture the nature of the issue	The main points are distilled from the reading and accurately capture the essence of the problem that the policy is designed to resolve	x 2
Policy summary	Description of policy or court case is scanty or incorrect; policy not clearly connected to the day's reading	Policy summary is mostly accurate; some disconnection between policy summary and the day's reading	Policy summary is in-depth and accurate; policy or court case is clearly explained in terms of how it addresses problems outlined in the day's reading	x 4
Resolution	Resolution is not discussed in depth or is not accurate; does not answer whether the policy fixed the problem; resolution is lacking in critical analysis	Resolution discusses whether the policy solved the problems discussed in the day's reading, but could use more depth; does not assess if the policy is really the "best" solution	Shows critical analysis of whether the policy actually solved the problem; resolution discusses further issues the policy did not address and shows consideration of whether the policy was really the "best" solution	x 3
Works cited	Few sources used	Uses a variety of sources, but could use more support	Policy brief is well-researched and uses ample sources	x 3
Class presentation	Presentation does not cover the main points of your written policy brief	Presentation covers many of the main points, but there are major gaps	Presentation covers all of the major aspects contained in your policy brief and gives a complete picture of the issue, the policy, and its resolution	x 8