

LBS 4401 Labor Contract Negotiations

Credit hours: 3
Prerequisites: none

Instructor: Sherman Henry
Office Phone: (305) 348-2371
e-mail: sh6920@bellsouth.net
Office. Hours: by appointment

Required Book:
Collective Bargaining & Industrial Relations
Harry C. Katz and Thomas Kochan
McGraw Hill Irwin 2004
ISBN 0-07-283700-4

Plus additional articles as posted by the instructor.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

The primary purpose of this course is to provide a foundation for Collective Bargaining and Negotiation Skills. It will offer a comprehensive view of the collective bargaining as it has developed, and its economic impact by examining processes, policies and practices so that labor practitioners will gain an appreciation and greater understanding about the process and how it is impacted by laws. Much is changing in labor laws and the power balance for employees in all sectors.

The major goal, therefore, is that you gain an understanding of the complexities and effects of labor negotiations as they impact workers and the economy on a day-to-day basis.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course examines the history and literature about the development and growth of contract negotiations in the United States. This course will explore the bargaining process and the legal environment for labor relations in the U.S. Students will understand the role of public and private sector unions and the collective bargaining relationship. To give students familiarity with and a working knowledge of labor relations, its laws and principles regulating employees in the United States.

The class will address the right of workers to engage in collective bargaining, through labor unions, and the statutory framework for collective bargaining, from initial organizing to established bargaining relationships. The course will also address the relationship between labor unions and the employees they represent, both members and non-members. In addition to the introductory text, students will read case studies and recent situations that have shaped the dynamics of labor-management and union-member relations globally.

By the end of the class, the teacher hopes that each student will be thoroughly knowledgeable about the basic labor negotiations, and will be able to apply legal principles to concrete situations unions face in the “real world”. Above all, the student will hopefully be able to think critically about these topics. A final expectation is that the student will critically analyze the environment for negotiating labor agreements and demonstrate this through the final examination.

READING & ASSIGNMENTS

You will need to have ready access to the textbook,
Collective Bargaining & Industrial Relations
Harry C. Katz and Thomas Kochan
McGraw Hill Irwin 2004
ISBN 0-07-283700-4

Each student is expected each week to write 1-3 pages of response to the questions for consideration following each chapter (check the reading schedule below), and to complete a written final examination during the first week of December, 2011 (to be scheduled).

Suggested schedule of reading and assignments:

Pick up text book and begin reading

Each week you will send me your responses to the questions from the readings.

Week 1, 8/23 Chapter 1, A framework for analyzing Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations

Think about how and why the Collective Bargaining process was formed. Questions to consider and inform yourself about: What was the general climate for bargaining in the public sector/private sector? What was the political climate and disposition of taxpayers/corporations? What are the implications and special status of public sector vs private employment?

Week 2, 8/30 Chapter 2, The Historical evolution of the US Industrial relations

Google the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). What are the main points (or rights) in this legislation? How did those points relate to the subsequent passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act? How did the passage of these laws impact labor negotiations?

Week 3, 9/6 Chapter 3, The legal regulations of unions and collective bargaining

Find the section in Florida law where At Will employment is described. Define At Will employment and describe how rights are expanded through the processes of exclusive representation and collective bargaining. How do "At Will" employment practices and "free-riders" pose a threat to unions and the collective bargaining process?

Week 4, 9/13 Chapter 4. The role of environment

How does labor supply and demand impact the bargaining process? What has been the effect of unions on compensation? What are typical government responses to loss of tax revenue and how do these strategies effect public sector employment?

Week 5, 9/20 Chapter 5. Management strategies and structures for collective bargaining

List the 5 most important management considerations in bargaining and prioritize those considerations. How do management priorities differ from union priorities in bargaining? How can a more cooperative spirit be created in labor negotiations?

Week 6, 9/27 Chapter 6, Union strategies and structures for representing workers

What are "yellow dog contracts" and are they legal? Why are unions usually not supportive of negotiating merit systems in collective bargaining agreements? What is

meant by the term “Exclusive Representative” and what are the legal implications as specified under Duty of Fair Representation Law?

Week 7, 10/4 Chapter 7, Union Organizing and bargaining structures

How are organizing strategies impacted by the bargaining climate? Do organizing tactics remain the same for all workers and union organizations? How do tactics differ and why? When and where is pattern bargaining effective? What are its benefits and drawbacks for workers and their organizations?

Week 8, 10/11 Chapter 8, The negotiations process and strikes

Why do workers strike? How did the Reagan Era Policies and Procedures change the labor relations environment for workers across the U.S.? Why is the right to strike so controversial and how does this right defy the idea of sovereignty of state: what are the issues on each side of this argument?

Week 9, 10/18 Chapter 9, Dispute resolution procedures

What constitutes an “Unfair Labor Practice?” What constitutes a “grievance?” What is the importance of the grievance process? What are the standards of “Just Cause” and can they be applied in an “At Will” environment?

Week 10, 10/25 Contract Terms and employment outcomes

Why do workers form and join unions? How do unions impact the economy and working conditions? What is the union impact on communities and the general standard of living?

Week 11, 11/1 Chapter 11 Administering the employment relationship

What is the grievance procedure and what is its purpose in day-to-day labor relations? How does the mediation process differ from the arbitration process? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each process? Give examples of impasse procedures and alternative dispute resolution processes workers have used.

Week 12, 11/ 8 Election Day (off)

Week 13, 11/15 Chapter 12 Participatory processes

What kind of participatory processes and practices are common in the public sector? Private sector? Could these processes undermine collective bargaining? How do ESOPs differ from other corporate structures?

Week 14, 11/22 Chapter 14 International and comparative industrial relations

How do global economic events and climate impact employee relations? Write a 3-5 page paper describing the current attacks on Public Sector employment and what the union response should be to those attacks; legally, educationally, politically and organizationally.

Week 15, 11/29 Chapter 15 The future of U.S. Labor Policy and Industrial relations

How might changes in the demographics of the workforce impact public sector policies in the future? How can a more cooperative spirit be created in labor relations?

Finals Week 12/6 Mr. Henry will administer the final exam.

GRADING AND EXAMS:

Chapter responses	50%
Discussion & participation	20%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

All assignments will be graded on critical thinking, contextual mastery; class participation, and writing skills.

You are expected to cover a large body of information with extensive and challenging reading and writing requirements. Completing these requirements and maintaining orderly, comprehensive responses to the chapter questions will take the place of the mid-term exam. I place so much emphasis on your continued and timely progress because it is how you will keep yourself on track with, readings, definitions, and ideas and facts emanating from this course. The final exam will be comprised of concepts, terms and definitions. As aspiring professionals your on-line communication through questions, comments and suggestions will be useful.