

Labor and Employment Relations in South Africa

LBS 4500/ ISP 4770/ ISP 5500/ ISP 7500 & IR 7550

Spring-Summer 2007

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Course Description.

This course examines the evolution and development of the South African labor and employment relations system, particularly in the post-apartheid period after 1994. Topics covered include:

- The history and development of the South African labor movement and its role in overcoming apartheid;
- The impact of globalization and neoliberal economic policies on the workplace and the larger society;
- Organizational and workplace restructuring in response to these changes;
- Managing diversity and equity in the post-apartheid workplace;
- Work and gender issues;
- Occupational and environmental health issues with a particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS;
- Employer labor relations and human resources strategies; and
- Emerging union bargaining and organizing strategies in a global economy.

Course Texts.

Leonard Thompson, A History of South Africa. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001

Edward Webster, and Earl Von Holdt, eds. Beyond the Apartheid Workplace. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005

Course Reader to be provided by instructor with an additional set of readings for graduate students.

Course Requirements.

35% Journal

30% Briefing Paper and Post-Trip Revision

15% Discussion Leader Presentation

20% Class Participation

Participation. Class attendance and participation are vital. Therefore students are expected to:

- Be prepared for each session,
- Arrive on time for each session,
- Contribute to class discussions, and
- Participate fully in guest presentations and discussions

All absences from class must be discussed with the instructor, preferably prior to the absence.

Journal. The journal is not a summary of the readings or the class sessions. It is intended to help students integrate the learning from the readings, class discussion and tours and apply that learning to a comparative understanding of U.S. and South African labor and employment relations. The journal should include reflection on experiences in and out of class, including your experience translating the South African experience into the U.S. context. Graduate students will be expected to incorporate readings from graduate student reader and reflect on the themes raised in the readings such as convergence of labor relations systems and their impact on national economic performance.

The course requires sustained engagement with the course materials. During the tour, you should be constantly looking for situations where you can test your understanding. You are required to make a journal entry everyday. The instructor will randomly collect journals over the term of the course, including in South Africa.

Briefing Paper. Prior to departure, each student must prepare a briefing paper on a mutually agreed upon topic related to labor and employment in South Africa. The briefing paper should be 6 to 8 pages in length and include a bibliography. Copies of briefing papers will be provided to all participants and they will be discussed and clarified upon arrival in South Africa. Briefing papers will prepare you for leading a discussion on this topic with practitioners and fellow students from South Africa. Upon return from South Africa, you will be asked to revise and expand your briefing paper to include new understandings from your experience in South Africa and to compare and contrast the approach to this topic in South Africa, with that in the U.S. Graduate students will be expected to indicate how their research on their topic informs the the themes raised in the graduate student reader.

Schedule. In addition to the June 2-16 trip to South Africa, the course will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the following Saturdays: May 12, May 19 and June 30.