Office Hours and Contact Information

Wednesday 2:45-3:45 pm. Please note that I am frequently around at other times as well and that you are welcome to drop by or to schedule an appointment outside regular office hours. I am located in Room 355 and my phone number is 777-4901. My email is klaasb@moore.sc.edu.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course provides an overview of labor and employee relations. It addresses the structure and operation of unions both within the US and abroad, policies and practices used by firms when operating in a unionized environment, and union avoidance strategies. It also addresses labor law, negotiation and bargaining processes as well as dispute resolution practices. It requires mastery of theories and concepts, regulatory frameworks, and historical and comparative perspectives. Further, it requires that this mastery be demonstrated in complex bargaining simulations and in labor relations case studies. These experiential exercises will afford significant opportunity to develop negotiation, communication, and analytical skills.

Shown below are key learning outcomes for this course:

- Students will be able to explain why labor unions emerged and what motivates employees to seek and join unions
- Students will be able to explain how legal and institutional structures affect labor relations processes
- Students will be able to analyze how labor relations strategies should be modified in response to the industry, economic, and cultural context
- Students will be able to assess claims made within arbitration hearings and develop rulings that reflect both the available evidence and arbitration norms and procedures
- Students will be able to explain how unionized workplaces operate and what managers can do to function effectively within a unionized setting
- Students will be able to describe and critique alternative union avoidance strategies
- Students will be able to describe how labor relations systems vary across different countries and explain the implications for firm strategy.
- Students will be able to describe the negotiation process and negotiation tactics that arise in collective bargaining
- Students will be able to describe how dispute resolutions systems operate and tactics that can be used to facilitate effective dispute resolution
- Students will be able to develop an effective bargaining strategy in a complex collective bargaining setting
- Students will be able to execute a bargaining strategy using communication, analytical, and interpersonal skills
Reading Material

The text for this course is a collection of chapters selected from a variety of texts as well as several cases. It was put together by McGraw-Hill and can be purchased at the university bookstore. The ISBN is 9781308583303 and the title is Labor Relations. In addition to the text, handouts and supplementary material will be made available on blackboard or distributed in class as the course proceeds.

Course Requirements

Quizzes. There will be unannounced quizzes given during the course of the semester. Each quiz will be relatively short and will cover reading material assigned for that day, material relevant for an upcoming group project, material covered in the prior class, or material covered that day in class. Since we have a number of group projects during the semester, it is important to keep up-to-date so as to allow for effective contribution. The quizzes are designed to provide an extra incentive to remain up-to-date. In total, the quizzes will be worth 15 points (out of 100 points available within the course). You will be allowed to substitute the score received on the final exam for your lowest quiz. You may also substitute the final test score for an additional quiz if that quiz was missed due to an approved absence. Additional options will be considered in situations where very difficult circumstances (e.g., an extended illness) resulted in multiple quizzes being missed.

Exam. The exam will be a take-home exam and will cover material from throughout much of the course. The exam will use long essay questions that will require analysis, application, and integration. The final will be worth 24 points (out of 100 points available within the course). The test will cover the assigned reading material, projects and exercises, as well as the material covered in class. The exam will be made available no later than December 2 and will be due on December 7.

Amazon in Germany. This case describes Amazon’s approach toward labor in its German facilities and the efforts by a powerful German union to convince Amazon to modify its approach. In this assignment you will be asked to address the merits of the approach Amazon took and also to assess whether a different approach should have been taken. Your task will be to develop a memo summarizing your evaluation. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the memo or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group. Memos should be typed and should be written in a professional manner. This exercise will be worth 7 points (out of 100 available in the course).

WBB and its U.S. Labor Policy. WBB is a large MNC headquartered in Europe. You have been asked to device a labor strategy for the US facilities that WBB recently acquired. In developing your strategy, you should first identify and explain key arguments in favor of taking an active union avoidance strategy. Then identify and explain key arguments in favor of a move toward neutrality. In explaining these arguments, you need to pay attention to differences between the US and WBB’s other locations in how unions operate and how the labor movement developed through the years. You then need to recommend which
approach to take (neutrality or active union avoidance). Explain your reasoning and discuss what steps you would take to effectively execute the recommended approach. This exercise will be worth 5 points (out of 100 available within the course). You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the memo or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group. Memos should be typed and should be written in a professional manner.

**Union Organizing Project: Union and Firm Perspective.** This exercise will be worth 8 points (out of 100 points available within the course). In the first part of this exercise, your team will be asked to develop a strategy for organizing new members for unions affiliated with Change to Win. You will receive information outlining different options for where to focus scarce resource for organizing. Your task will be to develop a memo summarizing your recommendations for where to focus organizing resources and your recommendations for communication strategies and messages designed to ensure the success of the organizing drive. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the memo or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group. Memos should be typed and should be written in a professional manner. In the second part of this exercise, your team will be asked to determine how to respond to a request from a union that your firm sign a neutrality agreement for a new facility that your firm is developing. You will receive information about both the firm and the setting in which the firm is operating. Your task will be to develop a memo summarizing your recommendations for the general manager and the rationale behind your recommendations. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the memo or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group. Memos should be typed and should be written in a professional manner.

**FM: Conflict, Leverage, and Concession Bargaining.** This exercise will be worth 5 points (out of 100 available in the course). In this exercise, your team will be asked to make a recommendation about whether to ask the union to re-open a labor contract and negotiate concessions that would be beneficial to the firm. Management is at a point where it has significant leverage and now must decide whether to use this leverage. Your task will be to develop a memo summarizing your recommendations and the rationale behind your recommendations. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the memo or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group. Memos should be typed and should be written in a professional manner.

**Mediation Exercise.** In this exercise, you will be assigned to the role of a union leader, a management leader, or a mediator. In this exercise, labor and management has reached an impasse over a collective bargaining contract after several weeks of negotiation. The mediator’s task is to work toward a solution that both parties can accept. The task for both labor and management is to cooperate with the mediator while at the same time protecting the interests of their side. The grade for this assignment will be based on the outcome of the mediation and also on a written assessment of the mediation process. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of the written assessment or it may be asked to discuss whether your
group agreed with what was presented by another group. This exercise will be worth 6 points (out of 100 points in the course).

**Arbitration Case.** This exercise will be worth 6 points (out of 100 points available within the course). In this exercise, you will be asked to review the facts associated with one or two arbitration cases where an employee is appealing his/her termination. You will be asked to interpret the contract and use arbitration rules and norms to determine whether to rule in favor of the grievant (either fully or in part). You will be asked to submit a written arbitration ruling. Your written ruling should be similar to the writing ruling that arbitrators submit to management and the union when they have reached decision. The ruling should summarize the key facts of the case and clearly explain the basis for the ruling. It is critical that both parties understand the basis for the decision, including how the ruling was informed by contract language and accepted rules and norms within arbitration. Your ruling should be typed and written in a professional manner. You will need to be prepared to present your ideas to the class. Your group may be asked to present a five minute summary of your ruling or it may be asked to discuss whether your group agreed with what was presented by another group.

**Collective Bargaining Exercise.** The mock bargaining exercise will be worth 24 points. Negotiating in teams of three to four, you and your group will be responsible for re-negotiating a collective bargaining agreement either on behalf of the employer or the union. That is, there will be union teams and management teams that will negotiate head-to-head over a multi-day period.

You will be graded on how well you identify the problems and key issues with the current contract as it pertains to your organization and on how well you are able to achieve, through negotiations, your objectives in the final contract. Your grade will be affected by how well you identify key issues confronting your team as you develop your first offer. These issues will need to be addressed in your “bargaining book” that you prepare in advance of the negotiations. The “bargaining book” should be typed and should be written in a professional manner. Your grade will also be significantly affected by your final contract. Please note that your grade will be determined, in part, by how well you do relative to the other groups participating in this exercise. Finally, your grade will also be affected by the rationale offered in support of the final contract and also by how effectively you communicate that rationale. You will also need to present your bargaining strategy and the bargaining results to the class.

**Peer Evaluations.** Within 24 hours of the completion of the final assignment at the end of the semester, please submit by email peer evaluations rating your contribution and the contributions of your team members to each group project. Ratings should be sent to labor.usc@gmail.com. For each project, list the names of the team members (including yourself). Then allocate 100 points across the group members based on relative contribution. So, for example, if you had four members of the team that contributed equally, each should receive 25. If you had 3 group members that contributed equally and one that did significantly less, you might go for 30, 30, 30, 10. It is recommended that you record your evaluations during the course of the semester as each project is completed. Please describe why group members deserve the allocation that you specified. Detailed comments are particularly critical when you believe that group members did not make an
equal contribution. On your peer evaluation ratings, you might discuss whether team members differed in their level of preparation for the group meeting, whether one or two individuals took the lead in writing the paper, or whether a team member was careless or sloppy in work that they completed. You might also indicate whether there were differences in the quality of performance during team meetings. Did one team member contribute more or better ideas, engage in more constructive give-and-take with other group members about the content of the paper, or help facilitate productive group sessions? Were there differences in the degree to which team members attended and participated in group meetings?

Negative peer evaluations can result in a reduction in the number of points a student ultimately receives from the group projects/assignments. For example, if a student received, from all of the group projects, 65 points, negative peer evaluations would result in this number being reduced when assigning the overall grade for the course. Further, if warranted by the peer ratings, these reductions could be dramatic. The final grade may be affected by the failure to submit peer evaluations.

Class Contributions. Your final grade could be affected by participation and behavior in class. Opportunities exist for contribution to case and class discussions. Exceptional performance could positively affect the final grade assigned. A negative effect on the final grade assigned could occur when there are clear deficiencies in contributing to in-class activities and/or behavior that interferes with the conduct of class.

Make-Up Assignments. Missed projects or exercises due to illness or other approved absences will be addressed toward the end of the term, either by offering an alternative assignment or including additional questions on the exam.

Group Membership. The instructor will announce group membership when a project is made available. Group membership will vary across the different projects. This class requires a number of group assignments, which can be difficult to juggle in light of other commitments and obligations. Group members may be terminated by other group members if they are unable or unwilling to participate in the project. Both the instructor and the group member should be notified of this by email. Terminated group members can submit their assignment on an individual basis. Options for completing an individual assignment are limited when there are significant in-class role play requirements.

Submission of Assignments. Projects, the take-home, and peer evaluations should be emailed to labor.usc@gmail.com. Projects should be submitted prior to class on the date listed on the syllabus. For group projects, please ensure that the email address for each member of the team is shown on the From or Cc line.
Course Outline

August 26  The Evolution and Development of Unions: A Global View  
Slides 1-35  
Katz, Kochan, & Colvin, The Historical Evolution of the U.S. Industrial Relations

September 2  The Evolution and Development of Unions: A Global View  
Slides 36-72  
Budd, Comparative Labor Relations  
Amazon in Germany Case Due

September 9  Union Structure and Internal Dynamics  
Slides 73-95  
Union Leadership  
Fossum, Union Structure and Governance

Union Organizing  
Slides 96-131  
Budd, Labor Law  
WBB and its US Labor Policy Case Due

September 16  Negotiating a Collective Bargaining Agreement  
Slides 132-174  
Fossum, Contract Negotiations  
Blackboard: IAM-Boeing Contract  
Blackboard: Teamsters-UPS Contract  
Union Organizing Project: Union and Firm Perspective Due

September 23  Union Organizing Simulation  
Marc Chini, EVP, Synchrony

September 30  Strikes and Impasses  
Slides 175-207  
Fossum, Impasses and their Resolution  
FM Case Due

October 7  Contract Negotiations and Strikes: The USW-Shell Case Study  
Scott Ballard, VP, Shell Oil

October 14  Contract Administration and the Grievance Process  
Slides 208-243  
Fossum, Contract Administration  
Fossum, Grievance Arbitration

October 21  Mediation Exercise

Arbitration Exercise Due
October 28  
Collective Bargaining Exercise  
Mediation Evaluation Due  

November 4  
Collective Bargaining Exercise  

November 11  
Collective Bargaining Presentations  

November 18  
Boeing and Union Organizing  
Towanna Tindall, HR Director, Boeing South Carolina  

December 2  
Managing Labor Issues at Ingersoll-Rand: A Global Perspective  
Greg Hays, VP, Ingersoll-Rand  

As can be seen, we will have some presentations by distinguished practitioners. Because their schedules are a bit more fluid, adjustments to our class schedule may be necessary.
University of South Carolina Honor Code:

It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this Honor Code or who knowingly assists another to violate this Honor Code shall be subject to discipline.

The Honor Code is intended to prohibit all forms of academic dishonesty and should be interpreted broadly to carry out that purpose. The following examples illustrate conduct that violates this Honor Code, but this list is not intended to be an exhaustive compilation of conduct prohibited by the Honor Code:

Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance, or attempting to give or receive such assistance, in connection with the performance of any academic work.

Unauthorized use of materials or information of any type or the unauthorized use of any electronic or mechanical device in connection with the completion of any academic work.

Access to the contents of any test or examination or the purchase, sale, or theft of any test or examination prior to its administration.

Use of another person’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgment of source.

Intentional misrepresentation by word or action of any situation of fact, or intentional omission of material fact, so as to mislead any person in connection with any academic work (including, without limitation, the scheduling, completion, performance, or submission of any such work).

Offering or giving any favor or thing of value for the purpose of influencing improperly a grade or other evaluation of a student in an academic program.

Conduct intended to interfere with an instructor’s ability to evaluate accurately a student’s competency or performance in an academic program.

Whenever a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate this Honor Code, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member or instructor of record prior to engaging in such conduct.