**The Indiana Academy**

**SOC 5138**

**Workers in America (Spring 2023)**

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Office: B009D Elliot

Class Time: TR 11:30

Office Hours: MF 9-12, TR 9-11 and by appointment

*Course Description:* This course will explore the major issues and historical transformations of the American working class. Particular focus will fall on the institution of slavery as a labor system, the early attempts at solidarity, the rise of corporate capitalism, the emergence of labor organizations during the industrial period, the ideologies of the working class, and the impact of downsizing on workers. Specific attention will be given to the roles of gender, race, ethnicity, and technological changes in defining the experiences of the working class.

This course will be a seminar course. You should come to class having read the specific seminar assignment with some rough notes discussing important questions and impressions you might have about the readings. Class participation and preparation in this course will be essential.

*Required Texts:* Rodrigue, *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields*

Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*

Von Drehle, *Triangle*

*Recommended Texts:* Rosenzweig, et. al., *Who Built America?*

*Course Requirements:*

1. Seminars: Most of our class sessions will consist of seminar discussions. These seminars may either be open conversations or led by a student discussion leader. I hope to convey to you the importance of collegial discussion. I consider a seminar to be a “team activity,” therefore there will be a class “baseline grade” for the seminar. However, if you do not participate or it is clear that you did not read the assignment, your score will be adjusted accordingly. Excused absences will not harm your seminar grade. Seminar scores will be updated regularly. Altogether, the seminars will be worth 40 points.
2. Reading Journals: Each student will submit a daily journal on the assigned readings. The journals will be posted to Canvas. These journals are designed to give you an opportunity to prepare for the discussion and should be two full paragraphs long. The only requirement is that you provide enough detail from the reading to show that you read the assignment. As with the participation score, I will average the daily journal scores and enter them every 8 weeks or so. Each grading period will be worth 10 points, for a total of 20 points.
3. Book Review: Each student will complete a book review of the Rodrigue book. The review must be a **minimum of 3-4 pages**. I will post a guide on Blackboard to help you complete the review. The review is worth 40 points.
4. Project Proposal: Each student will prepare a proposal for their final research project. The proposal should include a general overview of the student’s proposed research, including significance, as well as a preliminary bibliography of at least 4 academic sources. The proposal must be a **minimum of 3-4 pages**. The proposal is worth 40 points.
5. Final Project: For the final assignment, each student will choose a topic related to American Working Class history and provide an analysis of a question of your choice using themes and topics from the class as well as outside academic sources. The final product of the research is up to the student.

*Late Policy:*

All major written assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the due date. Reading Journals are due by class time on the due date. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 5% for every 24 hours the assignment is late (up to a 50% penalty). Extensions will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances. No extension will be granted because a student is extremely busy. I will accept late assignments until noon on Friday, May 12.

*Attendance and Tardies:*

Attendance is required, per Academy policy. Unexcused absences will result in a grade deduction in participation. Late arrivals may be counted tardy, with late arrivals of more than ten minutes subject to being counted absent for the day.

*Academic Dishonesty:*

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be subject to the Academy’s policies on academic dishonesty. For a full discussion of this process and possible sanctions, please refer to the student handbook.

*Behavior and Computer/Electronic Device Policy:*

This class is expected to be a positive learning experience based on open communication and respect. You are expected to be collegial and to respect the rights of the other seminar participants. On that note, I expect you to be engaged with the class conversation, with no side conversations, sleeping, or playing on your cell phones or computers. Doing so will lead to a significant reduction of your seminar grade, as well as a potential unexcused absence. Furthermore, although you may use computers and electronic devices to access documents and your journal, using computers for non-academic purposes could lead to a banning of computers for all students. Continued disruptive activity can lead to removal from class (which would be an unexcused absence) and the sending of an APR.

*Canvas:*

Reading assignments and handouts will be posted on the class Canvas site. It is imperative that you check this regularly. You will also submit all written work via Canvas.

*Diversity Statement:*

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge and through university resources found at <http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/multiculturalcenter>.

*Content Statement:*

As with many history classes (and social science), the lectures, readings, and discussions [in this course] will include a range of topics that may be triggering, emotionally distressing, and difficult for some students. Engaging with topics such as slavery and human suffering is essential to this discipline. History seeks to understand the experiences and thought processes of former generations, whether for good or ill. Sometimes the language and word choices used by people in the past may be insensitive or politically incorrect today. Nevertheless, the goal of history is to understand the past within its own context and time. If a reading, image shown in class, or discussion is truly troubling to anyone, please do not hesitate to talk to your instructor. In some circumstances, an alternative reading can be assigned

*Disclaimer:*

I reserve the right to make changes to the course calendar at my discretion. I will give notice to the class as soon as possible after making any change.

*Course Calendar (Specific Readings are on Canvas)*

1/3 Introduction to the Course

1/5 The Old Labor History and the New

1/10 Work and the Origins of American Capitalism

1/12 Household Production and Market Capitalism

1/17 Rethinking Free Labor

1/19 Slavery and Freedom

1/24 *Reconstruction in The Cane Fields*

1/26 *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields*

1/31 *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields*

2/2 **Book Review Due Today**

2/7 TBA

2/9 TBA

2/14 Immigration and Contract Labor

2/16 The Gilded Age

2/21 Populism and Radicalism

2/23 Class and Culture

2/28 *Triangle*

3/2 *Triangle*

3/6-3/10 Spring Break: No Class

3/14 *Triangle*

3/16 *Triangle*

3/21 The West Virginia Mine Wars

3/23 The New Deal I

3/28 The New Deal II

3/30 **Project Proposal Due Today**

4/4 *Origins of the Urban Crisis*

4/6 *Origins of the Urban Crisis*

4/11 TBA

4/13 *Origins of the Urban Crisis*

4/18 Labor and Civil Rights

4/20 Women and Labor

4/25 Backlash

4/27 Public Sector Unions

5/2 The Decline of Labor

5/4 The New Gilded Age

5/10 **Research Project Due**