Course Description:

Globalization. Outsourcing. Technological displacement. Immigrant labor. These issues are not new to the 21st century but rather have a long and complex history in the United States. How have workers in America responded to such changes and challenges? This discussion-based course will address this large question by exploring the history of labor and working-class life since 1877. We will examine the different ways that laborers organized themselves and struggled for control over their work and their lives, not only on the shop floor, but also in community organizations, through ethnic associations, and by their particular partisan affiliations. We will consider the nature and evolution of labor and of the working-class cultures from the late nineteenth-century to the early twenty-first century. Attention will be paid to the complex ways that work, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and political beliefs shaped the lives of laborers, informed the meaning of class, and supported or restricted labor organizing and workers’ ability to claim their own power.

Course learning outcomes:

• to analyze the central argument in secondary sources and to assess the author’s use of evidence in making that argument
• to explain different ways scholars have tried to understand the meaning of class and class formation
• to explain the origins, growth, and transformation of working-class collective action in terms of trade societies, unions, and political parties in the United States
• to analyze the role of ethnic, religious, racial, gender and sexuality-based social networks in shaping the experiences and lives of workers in different time periods
• to appraise the role of the state in limiting or advancing the ability of workers to collectively voice and defend their class-based concerns
• to explain why there has not been a successful independent labor party in the United States

Course Requirements and Evaluation

1. Our discussion-centered seminar demands ongoing scholarly engagement and participation. Students must attend every weekly session and be prepared to participate actively and meaningfully. Students must arrive in seminar with the ability to articulate key argument(s) and aims, conceptual and methodological frameworks, body of evidence, and historiographical issues presented in the readings. A record of class absences and tardiness will negatively affect a student’s participation grade. You are allowed one unexcused absence. Absences (beyond the
one allowed unexcused absence) will be excused only with written, verifiable documentation of the reason why you missed class (i.e., a doctor's note; notes from parents are not acceptable).

2. One **book/oral presentation**: Each class session will begin with an oral presentation (7–10 minutes) based on the book assigned for the week. During the presentation, the student will do the following:

   a. Identify the book’s central argument.
   b. Briefly discuss one concrete example of how the author supports their argument.
   c. Briefly discuss one strength of this historical study.
   d. Identify one limitation or challenge of this historical study.
   e. Identify two open-ended questions for discussion. **Email these questions to the instructor by 7:00 p.m. on the day before of the presentation.**

3. One **short essay** (3 - 4 pages) based on the monograph selected for the book presentation (see above). This essay should function as a critical review of the book at hand; it should not be a book report. It will be the written, fuller, and more formal counterpart to the book presentation. It should state the book’s aims and argument(s), assess its use of evidence, and weigh its strengths and limitations. It should also consider how the book expands or complicates our understanding of U.S. labor and working-class history.

   This small essay will offer the instructor an opportunity to assess a student’s reading comprehension and provide feedback on their writing. The essay must meet these requirements: 3 - 4 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins all around the page. Students must submit one (1) electronic copy to Turnitin.com by 11:30 a.m. on the day of the oral presentation.

4. A **research plan** that will guide the final research project. The plan will include three parts: 1) an identification of a research question or problem in 1–2 sentences, 2) a preliminary list of 8–10 primary sources with appropriate bibliographic information, and 3) an identification of three (3) secondary sources produced by historians, which will offer historical context and additional evidence. Examples of primary sources include newspaper articles, government reports, pieces of legislation, legal cases, sociological studies, autobiographies, pamphlets, letters, diaries, and union records. The secondary sources may be articles and books assigned for class.

   Students are encouraged to discuss their research ideas and process with the instructor before submitting the research plan. Students will submit their research plan via Turnitin.com by **Friday, November 17th at 11:59 p.m.**

5. One **research essay** (10–12 pages) based on a historical question/problem of a student’s choice but informed by the themes of the class. Students may conduct research on a particular union, organizing campaign, working-class community, labor law, or labor alliance, among other topics. Essays must rely on 8–10 primary sources and 3 secondary sources (see above). Students will use material from primary sources to address their research question and to construct and defend a thesis. The task is to persuade and convince the reader of an argument by drawing on
examples, episodes, and selections from primary sources and placing the discussion in its historical context.

All research essays must meet these requirements: 10–12 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins all around the page. Students will submit one (1) electronic copy via Turnitin.com by **Wednesday, December 13th at 11:59 p.m.**

6. **Late Work:** Students will have the opportunity to submit late assignments without penalty if they provide documentation to excuse the tardiness. Acceptable forms documentation include a doctor’s note, a court notice, or another official document. All late assignments without documentation to excuse the tardiness will be downgraded by one full letter grade (e.g., B+ to C+) for every business day (Monday thru Saturday) that the assignment is late.

7. **Final grades will be determined as follows:**

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<tr>
<td>Engagement and participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
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<td>Small Essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Plan</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Research Essay</td>
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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Email & Blackboard**

Students must check their Graduate Center email on a regular basis. They should also ensure their Blackboard account links to an active email address. Emails will keep students updated on matters related to assignments and schedule changes. Announcements and any supplementary materials will also be posted on Blackboard, which should be checked each week.

**Laptop Computers, Cell Phones, and Other Gadgets**

Students may use laptop computers, iPads, and tablets for educational purposes only. In other words, students may use these devices to take notes and access class readings.

Please respect our academic endeavor. Do not text, browse the internet, and engage in any activities unrelated to our course when our class is in session. **Disregard for this policy will lower a student’s participation grade.** Audio and/or video recording of class meetings using any device is prohibited.

Students who ignore this policy will receive a first-time warning. Students who ignore this policy a second time will receive an automatic “D” for class participation during the term and lose the privilege of using laptops/tablets for reading and note taking. Continued disregard of the policy will result in an “F” for participation during the term.
Respect, Safety, and Classroom Behavior

The classroom is a safe and professional space. The instructor will not tolerate personal attacks, use of derogatory language, and unprofessional or aggressive behavior that detracts from a productive and safe learning environment. Students must not engage in any activity that disrupts class: texting, snoring, walking in and out of the classroom, and any other unprofessional behavior.

Communication with Instructor

We are entering into a professional relationship. Students should interact and communicate with faculty members in a professional manner. Email messages must be written in basic English; please do not use textspeak. The instructor will typically respond to email messages within 24 hours on weekdays and by Monday morning on weekends. Please plan accordingly whenever questions or concerns present themselves.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty and CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity

“The Graduate Center of the City University of New York is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty include—but are not limited to—plagiarism (in drafts, outlines, and examinations, as well as final papers), cheating, bribery, academic fraud, sabotage of research materials, the sale of academic papers, and the falsification of records. An individual who engages in these or related activities or who knowingly aids another who engages in them is acting in an academically dishonest manner and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the bylaws and procedures of The Graduate Center and of the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York.”

For more information on GC standards and procedures, as well as the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, see: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is Graduate Center and CUNY policy to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class is advised to speak directly to the manager of Student Disability Services, located in Student Affairs, room 7301, or call 212-817-7400 as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.

For more information about Student Disability Services, visit: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/student-disability-services
Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with CUNY’s Policy on Sexual Misconduct, “the Graduate Center seeks to create and maintain a safe environment in which all members of our campus community — students, faculty, and staff — can learn and work free from fear of sexual assault and other forms of violence. The City University of New York and The Graduate Center prohibit gender-based harassment of any kind, by students, faculty, and staff. Harassment is unwelcome conduct that may include sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Harassing conduct, also implicated by sexual assault, domestic and intimate partner violence, or stalking on any CUNY campus, creates a “hostile environment” which, when sufficiently severe or pervasive, may limit or interfere with a student’s ability to participate in educational activities, or an employee’s ability to perform his or her job.”


Required Readings:

All books are required reading for this course and can be purchased at the online bookstore, Akademos.
Akademos list for HIST 75500-01 https://gc.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/3939681
Akademos list for ASCP 81500-03 https://gc.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/3906595/

If you plan to purchase the books elsewhere (Amazon, etc.) be sure to get the correct edition. A copy of the readings has also been placed on reserve at the Mina Rees Library. The library also has electronic copies of some of these books (which you can access through links in the library catalog).
E-reserve link: https://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/er.php?b=c
Password: HISTHaverty-Stacke

James Green, Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America (Random House, 2007 paperback).
ISBN 1-400-03322-5


ISBN: 0-807-84679-1


**Posted on Blackboard as a pdf (under “course materials”):**

Schedule

Week 1 (Aug. 30): Introduction to the course/schedule presentations

Week 2 (Sept. 6): James Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America.*


*Reminder: Friday, Nov. 17—Research Plan due*

Nov. 22—NO CLASS—HAPPY THANKSGIVING!


*Reminder: Wednesday, December 13—Research Paper due*