

Labor in Latin America: Markets, Movements, Politics, Law and Development

Labor, as a social position, a social movement and a capitalist market, has been central to the social, political and economic trajectories of Latin America. It continues to be a key topic in political, social movement and development discourses. Labor movements are important actors across the region. Employment is the main way most individuals experience large scale social processes like development, economic growth or crisis.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a broad overview of historical and contemporary labor issues in Latin America. We will look at the interaction between labor, social movements, political parties and the state in the making of labor law and policy in the region.

We will examine how these interactions shape labor markets and the outcomes they in part produce, not least of which is a strong effect on income and wealth distribution across societies in the region. We will look at how these interactions have shaped the broader political arenas in these countries. We will place these dynamics within the context of Latin American- and specific countries'- insertion into the global capitalist world economy and the geopolitical contexts from the late 19th to the early 21st Centuries.

This course will proceed by covering: (1) Macro sociological theories regarding labor; (2) a broad history of labor in the region and (3) particular cases and topics in the contemporary era.

Students will select a particular country or countries and a labor-related topic of their own on which they will conduct research and write a sociological research paper.

Course Organization, Policies, Assignments and Grading

Each week will be a mix of going over a selection of readings, Academic Research & Writing modules to learn about various steps in conducting research and writing, and workshop sessions.

Your grade for the class will be determined by four areas: (1) class attendance and participation will count for 15% of the overall grade; (2) five “scaffolding” assignments that will work on specific parts of the research papers will count for 5% each, or 25% of the overall grade; (3) the completed First Draft of the research paper will count for 50% of the overall grade and (4) revisions to the paper based on my feedback for a revised research paper will count for 10%.

The attendance and participation grade will be based on: (1) Attendance at seminar meetings; (2) participation in discussing the readings; (3) participation in peer review for assignments and (4) attendance and participation in office hours/research paper workshops.

All graded assignments are due the Thursday of the week indicated by 11:59pm to the bCourses website, with a 10% deduction per day late. The schedule for graded assignments is as follows:

Week 4: Topic Proposal – Country, Labor issue or movement, Time Period, Analytical Issue

Week 6: Literature Review – Annotated Citation List on specific topic

Week 8: Historical & Structural Background – Annotated Source List

Week 10: Theoretical Engagement – Analytical Memo with citations

Week 12: Research Paper Outline – Incorporate and expand on first 4 assignments

Week 14: First Draft Research Paper

Week 16: Revised Research Paper – Incorporate instructor feedback

Final Research Paper

Your main product in this course will be an original sociological research paper that deals with a specific labor topic in one or more Latin American countries. The basic requirements for the paper are a length of 4,500-5,000 words and at least 5 scholarly and 8 total sources.

The papers should include a formal thesis/argument that structures the paper and engages with sociological theory, a historical and structural background to your specific topic and a thorough overview of the topic. You will need to include a literature review and a works cited section.

The research paper workshops and office hours each week are a dedicated place to work on your research papers. Students can make an appointment to meet with me one-on-one or as a group or can use the space to work alongside your fellow students and seek guidance as needed.

Materials for Class Use

Throughout the process of writing your research papers and scaffolding assignments, your best resource will be Writing for Sociology: Second Edition, a guide from the Sociology Department. It has very useful information about the organization, formatting and composition of papers and about how to use citations properly, as well as the scaffolding assignments. It is available at:

http://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf

All the other course readings and materials will be made available on the bCourses website.

Course Website

The first order of business in this class will be making sure you have access to the course website on bCourses. Class information, announcements, readings, assignments, grades, materials from seminar meetings and feedback for your work will appear on the bCourses website. The website is where you will submit your work. Let me know right away if you have trouble accessing it.

Honor Code, Plagiarism, Academic Integrity and Ethics

UC Berkeley has adopted the following Honor Code:

“As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honest, integrity, and respect for others.” The hope and expectation is that you will adhere to this code.

Plagiarism

To copy text or ideas from another source without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, see, for example:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism>
<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/misconduct/prevent-plag.html>

Academic Integrity and Ethics

Honesty and integrity are of great importance in all facets of life. They help to build a sense of self-confidence, and are key to building trust within relationships, whether personal or professional. There is no tolerance for dishonesty in the academic world, for it undermines what we are dedicated to doing – furthering knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

Your experience as a student at UC Berkeley is hopefully fueled by passion for learning and replete with fulfilling activities. We also appreciate that being a student can be stressful. There may be times when there is temptation to engage in some kind of cheating in order to improve a grade or otherwise advance your career. This could be as blatant as having someone else sit for you in an exam or submitting a written assignment that has been copied from another source. And it could be as subtle as glancing at a fellow student’s exam when you are unsure of an answer to a question and are looking for some confirmation. One might do any of these things and potentially not get caught. However, if you cheat, no matter how much you may have learned in this class, you have failed to learn perhaps the most important lesson of all.

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Thursday, August 29th – Theories of Labor (Marx)

Recommended Readings: Karl Marx “Wage Labor and Capital” and “Fragment on Machines”
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/index.htm>
<https://archive.org/details/TheFragmentOnMachinesKarlMarx>

I will introduce myself and the course, go over the syllabus and class policies, enrollment issues, and discuss grading. I will present the structure and requirements of the research paper.

In the second part I will do an introduction to Marxist Labor theory based on the two readings. The readings are only recommended, but please watch this short video (5 minutes) to prepare.

<https://youtu.be/Lh0bBHCyL3A>

Hand out **Research Paper Guidelines and Grading Rubric**

Week 2 - Thursday, September 5th – Theories of Labor (World Systems)

Silver, Beverly J. 2003. "Introduction." Pp. 1–40; "Chapter 4: Labor Movements and World Politics" Pp. 124-167 and "Chapter 5: Contemporary Dynamics in World-Historical Perspective" Pp. 168-179 in *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

"Recasting labor studies in a long-term and global framework, the book draws on a major new database on world labor unrest to show how local labor movements have been related to world-scale political, economic, and social processes since the late nineteenth century. Through an in-depth empirical analysis of select global industries, the book demonstrates how the main locations of labor unrest have shifted from country to country together with shifts in the geographical location of production. It shows how the main sites of labor unrest have shifted over time together with the rise or decline of new leading sectors of capitalist development and demonstrates that labor movements have been deeply embedded (as both cause and effect) in world political dynamics. Over the history of the modern labor movement, the book isolates what is truly novel about the contemporary global crisis of labor movements."

Academic Research & Writing Module – How to find academic sources on your topic - Day at library with social science librarian.

Hand out **Assignment 1 – Research Topic Proposal**

Week 3 - Thursday, September 12th – Labor, Capital and Surplus Populations

Clover, Joshua. 2019. "Introduction: A Theory of Riot." Pp. 1–31; "Chapter 7: The Long Crisis" Pp. 129-152 and "Chapter 8: Surplus Rebellion" Pp. 153-174 in *Riot. Strike. Riot: The New Era of Uprisings*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.

Clover's book broadens our conception of the long-term trends of labor, as social position and social movement, within global capitalism. This book allows us to theorize such key concepts as "informal" employment, unemployment and surplus populations under conditions of increasingly capital-intensive, rather than labor-intensive, capitalist production as it has evolved over time. It also broadens our conceptions of the tactical repertoires of class struggle beyond formal strikes.

Academic Research & Writing Module – How to find and assess media sources.

Week 4 - Thursday, September 19th – Labor in the World System/Labor in Latin America

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1983. "Capitalism and the World Working Class: Some Premises and Some Issues for Research and Analysis" Pp. 17-21 and Joan W. Scott "Questions for Future Discussion and Research" Pp. 249-254 in *Labor in the World Social Structure*. Beverly Hills,

CA: Sage Publications.

Bergquist, Charles. 1986. "Modern Latin American Historiography and the Labor Movement." Pp. 1–19 in *Labor in Latin America*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Peer Review – Assignment 1 - Topic Proposal

DUE: Assignment 1 –Topic Proposal

Week 5 - Thursday, September 26th – Labor, the State and Critical Junctures

Collier, Ruth and David Collier. 1991. "Overview" Pp. 3–23; "2. Context: The Labor Movement and the State in Latin America" Pp. 40-55 and "3. Labor: Emergence of Worker Organization and Protest" Pp. 59-99 in *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

"In the course of capitalist development in Latin America, one of the fundamental political transitions has been the emergence of worker protest and an organized labor movement, along with the varied responses of the state to this new actor within society. During a relatively well-defined period in most countries, a historic change took place in the relationship between the state and the working class. An earlier pattern – in which repression was generally a far more central feature of the state response to worker organization and protest – gave way to state policies that launched the "initial incorporation" of the labor movement. State control of the working class ceased to be principally the responsibility of the police or the army but rather was achieved at least in part through the legalization and institutionalization of a labor movement sanctioned and regulated by the state. In addition, actors within the state began to explore far more extensively the possibility of mobilizing workers as a major political constituency" (3).

Academic Research & Writing Module – How to find other relevant sources of data.

Hand out **Assignment 2 – Literature Review – Annotated Citation List**

Week 6 - Thursday, October 3rd – Labor, the State and Aftermaths of Critical Junctures

Collier, Ruth and David Collier. 1991. Selections. Pp. 100–106; 113; 123-124; 128-129; 155-157; 161-168; 349-350; 353-367; 396-406; 421; 438-439;455-456; 467-469; 483; 493-497. in *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Peer Review – Assignment 2 – Literature Review

DUE: Assignment 2 – Literature Review

Week 7 - Thursday, October 10th – Labor, the State and the Heritage of Critical Junctures

Collier, Ruth and David Collier. 1991. Selections. 498-513; 526-527; 545-546; 570-574; 609-610; 632-635; 639-641; 652-656; 664-667; 680-681; 690-694; 698-699; 712-714; 719-722; 741-742. in *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Academic Research & Writing Module – How to find historical background sources for topic.

Hand out **Assignment 3 – Historical & Structural Background – Annotated Source List**

Week 8 - Thursday, October 17th – Labor, the State and Shaping the Political Arena

Collier, Ruth and David Collier. 1991. “Conclusion: Shaping the Political Arena.” Pp. 745–774 in *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, The Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Peer Review – Assignment 3 – Historical & Structural Background

DUE: Assignment 3 – Historical & Structural Background

Week 9 - Thursday, October 24th – Globalization and Labor in Latin America

Downs, Andrew, Rafael Gomez, and Morley Gunderson “The Impact of Liberalization and Globalization on Labor Market Policies in Latin America” Pp. 221-304 in *Economic Reforms, Growth and Inequality in Latin America* Edited by G. Indart (2004).

Academic Research & Writing Module – What is a thesis statement? What is a sociological argument? What is engagement with sociological theory?

Hand out **Assignment 4 - Theoretical Engagement – Analytical Memo with citations**

Week 10 - Thursday, October 31st – Women and Work in Mexico’s Maquiladoras

Cravey, Altha J. 1998. “5. The New Model: A Case Study of the Maquiladora Industry.” Pp. 71–100 in *Women and Work in Mexico's Maquiladoras*. Rowan & Littlefield Publishers.

Peer Review – Assignment 4 – Historical & Structural Background

DUE: Assignment 4 – Theoretical Engagement

Week 11 - Thursday, November 7th – Labor Reform in Contemporary Latin America

Cook, Maria Lorena. 2007. “Directions in Labor Reform” Pp. 29-58 in *The Politics of Labor Reform in Latin America: Between Flexibility and Rights*. Penn State University Press.

Academic Research & Writing Module: How to structure an academic sociology research paper.

Hand out **Assignment 5 – Research Paper Outline**

Week 12 – Thursday, November 14th – Labor Market Precarity in Chile

Sehnbruch, Kirsten. 2013. “A Precarious Labor Market” Pp. in *Democratic Chile: The Politics and Policies of a Historic Coalition, 1990–2010*. Kirsten Sehnbruch and Peter M. Siavelis, Eds.

Peer Review – Assignment 5 – Research Paper Outline

DUE: Assignment 5 – Research Paper Outline

Week 13 – Thursday, November 21st – Informal Sector & Labor Movements (Colombia)

Collier, Ruth Berins and Palmer-Rubin, Brian. 2011. “*Latin America’s New World of Work: Changing Traits of Work and Problem Solving.*” Working Paper, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, University of California, Berkeley.

Rosaldo, Manuel. “Revolution in the Garbage Dump: The Political and Economic Foundations of the Colombian Recycler Movement, 1986-2011” in *Social Problems*, Volume 63, Issue 3, August 2016, Pages 351–372, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spw015>

Academic Research and Writing Module – How to revise and edit a research paper.

Week 14 – Thursday, November 28th – THANKSGIVING BREAK

NO CLASS – Post Readings for Week 15

Week 15 – Thursday, December 5th – Current Events in Latin American Labor

I will post some current events stories from media and primary sources to discuss. TBA.

Peer Review – First Draft of Research Paper

Final Office Hours/Workshop

FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Week 16 – Thursday, December 12th - RRR WEEK

Return First Draft of Research Paper with comments

FINAL EXAM WEEK – Thursday, December 19th

REVISED DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE