

Labour Movements: Contemporary Issues and Images

Labour Studies 301

Section: D200

Term: 2011 Fall

Instructor: Dale McCartney

Email:

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Discussion Topics: Since 1976, the average wage of working Canadians has decreased steadily. Canadians are working longer hours today than they did a generation ago, they have more debt than they had in the past, and they are less likely to receive benefits from their employers. The number of Canadians working in the lower-paid service sector has grown massively in the past generation. Not coincidentally, with all of these changes, unionization rates in Canada have been decreasing over the past thirty years as well, especially in the private (non-government) sector. If any of these facts concern you, or you want to know how they might be reversed, or even if you just want to prepare yourself better for the job market and work in Canada, LBST 301 is the class for you.

This course will be an examination of these issues, and many more related to work in Canada. We will look at how race and gender impact workers and unionists in Canada; workers and unions and their portrayal in the media; the idea of class culture, and the role that culture plays in working peoples lives; the thorny issue of political parties and the working class; and the changing position of workers around the world as a result of globalization. All of these topics will be explored with a mixture of readings, lecture, and occasional in-class films.

Labour Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to studying work, workers, and trade unions, and is of interest to students who study any of social sciences or arts, or who are just interested in the activity most of us spend most of our lives doing: work.

Grading: Grading Breakdown:

Participation: 20%

Writing Assignment 1 Media or class culture paper (6-8 pages): 25%

Writing Assignment 2 Globalization paper (12-15 pages): 35%

Take home final exam: 20%

All students are expected to read SFUs policies concerning academic dishonesty.

[T 10.02 and T 10.03]. The policies can be read at these websites:

www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-02.htm and www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10.03.htm.

Required Texts: David Camfield, *Canadian Labour in Crisis: Reinventing the Workers Movement*, Halifax: Fernwood books, 2011.

All other readings will be on reserve at Bennett Library.

Recommended Texts: None

Materials/Supplies: None

Prerequisite/Corequisite:

Labour Movements: Contemporary Issues and Images

Notes: None

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