

# **Doane University**

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Course Information**

BUS 629  
Employee Relations  
August 13- October 5 (autumn term)  
3 Credit Hours

### **Instructor Information**

Edward "Ed" F. Hoffman  
Doane University

### **Contact Information**

Email Address: [edward.hoffman@doane.edu](mailto:edward.hoffman@doane.edu)  
Phone: 402-477-2233

### **Communicating With the Instructor**

This course uses a "three before me" policy for student to faculty communications. When questions arise during the course regarding this class, please remember to check these three sources for an answer before asking me to reply to your individual questions:

1. Course syllabus
2. Announcements in Blackboard
3. The Q & A discussion board

This policy will help you in potentially identifying answers before I can get back to you and it also helps your instructor avoid answering similar questions or concerns multiple times.

If you cannot find an answer to your question, please first post your question to the Q & A questions discussion board. Here your question can be answered for the benefit of all students by either your fellow students who know the answer to your question or the instructor. You are encouraged to answer questions from other students in the discussion forum when you know the answer to a question in order to help provide timely assistance.

If you have questions of a personal nature such as relating a personal emergency, questioning a grade on an assignment, or something else that needs to be communicated privately, you are welcome to contact me via email or phone. My preference is that you will try to email me first. I will usually respond to email and phone messages from 8am to 5pm on weekdays, please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond.

If you have a question about the technology being used in the course, please contact the Doane University Help Desk for assistance (contact information is listed below).

### **Course Catalog Description**

This course examines current legal and social issues that affect employee to employer relations, employee to union relations and union to employer relationships. The course considers practical actions to address legal and social issues. Students learn how to identify, investigate and resolve issues across the employee life cycle. Topics include the role of the union, the role of HR in employee relations, common transactions within employment relationships, the assessment of risk in employment actions; quality of work life, culture and respect in the workplace, diversity and inclusion and handling formal complaints and discipline.

## Course Prerequisites

BUS 602

## Course Textbook and Materials

### Required Textbook:

LABOR RELATIONS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS, Tenth Edition (Pearson, 2013), Michael R. Carrell and Christina Heavrin, ISBN: 13-9780132730013

### Required Film:

American Dream **Release date:** March 18, 1992 ([New York City](#))

**Director:** Barbara Kopple

**Music composed by:** Michael Small

**Awards:** Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature, [MORE](#)

**Producers:** Barbara Kopple, Arthur Cohn

\*\*This film may be purchased on Amazon.

## Learning Objectives

### Course Objectives

1. Explain the concepts of employee relations and labor relations in the workplace.
2. Outline the history of labor relations aligned with the advances in the industrial age.
3. Explain union structure and organization as well as bargaining strategies used in the negotiation process.
4. Utilize appropriate bargaining strategies to develop lawful goals in negotiating a bargaining agreement.
5. Explain common “quality of work life” issues affecting the employment relationship including wage, affirmative action and employee performance issues.
6. Explain required employee benefits, age discrimination and employee testing.
7. Discuss unfair labor practices, individual rights and the handling of employee complaints and discipline.
8. Discuss ADR in the workplace setting and globalization's effect on labor.

### Unit objectives:

Week 1:

1. Explain the role of a human resources department in employee relations. (**Short essays, weekly quiz**).
2. Explain the concept of “labor relations” and why a collective bargaining agreement is important to this process. (**Paper, short essays and weekly quiz**).
3. Define “labor organizations” pursuant to Section 2 of the National Labor Relations Act and explain why an employee would or would not join a labor union. (**Paper, short essays and weekly quiz**).
4. Explain the threshold tests that must be met before the National Labor Relations Board has jurisdiction over a labor dispute. (**Short essays, weekly quiz**).

Week 2:

1. Explain the roots of the American Labor Movement including the growth of national unions. (**Discussion board, paper, short essays, weekly quiz**).
2. Explain early judicial regulation of unions and the rise of pro-labor legislation. (**Discussion board, paper, short essays, weekly quiz**).
3. Explain the national importance of the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike in relation to the nation as a whole and in the employment setting. (**Discussion board, paper, weekly quiz**).
4. Discuss the interplay between workforce diversity and unionization. (**Short essays**).

Week 3:

1. Explain the concept of an appropriate bargaining unit. (**Discussion board, paper, weekly quiz**).
2. Evaluate union structure by discussing the bargaining unit and the types of bargaining units. (**Paper, short essays, weekly quiz**).
3. Explain union organization processes, including the representative election process. (**Discussion board, short essays, weekly quiz**).
4. Analyze the elements, ethics and bargaining strategies used in the negotiation process. (**Short essays, paper, weekly quiz**).

Week 4:

1. Use appropriate negotiation strategies to develop bargaining goals. (**Paper**).
2. Utilize bargaining strategies in a negotiation process. (**Discussion board, paper**).
3. Define sexual harassment in the workplace and provide at least two examples of sexual harassment. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).
4. Describe a workplace scenario involving religious accommodation. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).
5. Describe national origin discrimination providing examples. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).

Week 5:

1. Discuss typical union and management wage concerns. (**Discussion board**).

2. Explain the different processes used in negotiating wages. (**Discussion board, weekly quiz, video**).
3. Discuss affirmative action in the workplace and whether it is still needed. (**Video presentation**).
4. Discuss appropriate employee performance standards and evaluations. (**Discussion board, weekly quiz**).

#### Week 6:

1. Explain the purpose of employee benefits and what benefits are “required” benefits. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).
2. Explain the concept of “pay for time not worked” including the benefits that are typically offered to employees. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).
3. Define the calculation of seniority and its effect on promotions and layoffs. (**Weekly quiz, short essays**).
4. Discuss restrictions on employee activities in the workplace including alcohol and drug testing and use of social media. (**Discussion board, paper, short essays**).

#### Week 7:

1. Explain what union organizing activities are protected under the National Labor Relations Act. (**Short essays, weekly quiz**).
2. Discuss unfair labor practices in the organizing process. (**Discussion board, short essays**).
3. Explain the steps in an employee grievance procedure. (**Paper, short essays, weekly quiz**).
4. Discuss employee misconduct, disciplinary procedures and grounds for discharge. (**Short essays, weekly quiz**).

#### Week 8:

1. Discuss the arbitration process in the employment setting including the history of its use, issues of arbitrability and hearing procedures. (**Short essays, paper**).
2. Discuss the concept of globalization and its effect on labor. (**Discussion board, short essays**).
3. Discuss the labor movement outside the United States. (**Discussion board, short essays**).

## Course Requirements

### Online Course

This is an online course and therefore there will not be any face-to-face class sessions. All assignments and course interactions will utilize internet-based technologies.

### Attendance Policy

You should plan to work on this course every day. This means that you must have a reliable and consistent internet connection throughout the duration of the course. It is strongly recommended that you not take any vacations during this course. This is a condensed, fast-paced course and it would be extremely difficult to catch up after a prolonged absence.

### **Course Preparation and Participation**

*Preparation* for class means reading the assigned readings & reviewing all information required for that week. *Attendance* in an online course means logging into the Blackboard and on a regular basis and *participating* in the all of activities that are posted in the course.

### **Studying and Preparation Time**

The course requires you to spend time preparing and completing assignments. A three-credit course requires 144 hours of student work. Therefore expect to spend approximately 18 hours a week preparing for and actively participating in this 8-week course.

### **Computer Requirements**

Minimum computer requirements for the successful use of Blackboard:

[http://www.doane.edu/about-doane/offices/its/help-and-support#min\\_requirements](http://www.doane.edu/about-doane/offices/its/help-and-support#min_requirements)

Minimum computer requirements for success in this course:

- Reliable computer and internet connection
- A web browser (Chrome or Mozilla Firefox)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader (free)
- Adobe Flash Player (free)
- Word processing software—Microsoft Word or Google Docs
- Webcam and mic

### **Email and Internet**

You must have an active Doane University email account and access to the Internet. *All instructor correspondence will be sent to your Doane University email account.* Please plan on checking your Doane Gmail account regularly for course related messages.

This course uses Blackboard for the facilitation of communications between faculty and students, submission of assignments, and posting of grades. The Blackboard Course Site can be accessed at <http://bb2.doane.edu>

### **Campus Network or Blackboard Outage**

When access to Blackboard is not available for an extended period of time (greater than one entire evening - 6pm till 11pm) you can reasonably expect that the due date for assignments will be changed to the next day (assignment still due by midnight).

### **Technical Support Contact Information**

For technical assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, please contact the Doane University Technology Office Help Desk:

Phone: 402-826-8411

Email: [helpdesk@doane.edu](mailto:helpdesk@doane.edu)

Web: <http://www.doane.edu/about-doane/offices/its/help-and-support>

### **Late or Missed Assignments**

ALL assignments must be finished and turned in to complete the course. Communication about late work is crucial. Unless the instructor is notified BEFORE the assignment is due and he or she provides an opportunity for the student to submit an assignment late, points may be taken off for a late assignment.

### **Submitting Assignments**

All assignments, unless otherwise announced by the instructor, must be submitted via Blackboard. Each assignment will have a designated place for submission.

### **Drop and Add dates**

If you feel it is necessary to withdraw from the course, please contact your advisor for full details on the types of withdrawals that are available and their procedures.

### **Subject to change notice**

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

### **Academic Integrity**

Doane University expects and requires all its students to act with honesty and integrity, and respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. Academic dishonesty, the act of knowingly and willingly attempting or assisting others to gain academic success by dishonest means, is manifested in various measures. Gehring, et al, (1986) suggests that four categories of academic dishonesty exist:

- a. Cheating
- b. Fabrication
- c. Facilitating academic dishonesty
- d. Plagiarism

For more information on academic integrity, please visit the website:

<http://catalog.doane.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=191>

## **Course Grading**

### **Grades and Grading Scale**

Assignment of letter grades is based on a percentage of points earned. The letter grade will correspond with the following percentages achieved. All course requirements must be completed before a grade is assigned.

A      100 – 90

B	89 – 80
C	79 – 70
D	69 – 60
E	59 and below

**See the requirements for the specific assignments on Blackboard.**

### **How to Succeed in this Course**

- Check your Doane email regularly
- Log in to the course web site daily
- Communicate with your instructor
- Create a study schedule so that you don't fall behind on assignments

### **Accessibility Statement**

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, professional disability specialists and support staff at Doane University facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Doane University staff coordinate transition from high schools and community colleges, in-service training for faculty and staff, resolution of accessibility issues, community outreach, and collaboration between all Doane University regarding disability policies, procedures, and accommodations.

### **Accessibility Services**

Doane University Access/Services for Students with Disabilities

<http://www.doane.edu/disability-services>

Contact Person: Angie Klasek Phone: 402.466.4774 Email: [angie.klasek@doane.edu](mailto:angie.klasek@doane.edu)

### **Academic Support**

Contact Person: Tere Francis Phone: 402.466.4774 Email: [terese.francis@doane.edu](mailto:terese.francis@doane.edu)

### **Student Services**

<http://www.doane.edu/gps/student-services>

### **Student Conduct Statement**

Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in *Doane University Policy Manual*.

Appropriate classroom behavior is defined by the instructor. This includes the number and length of individual messages online. Course discussion messages should remain focused on the assigned discussion topics. Students must maintain a cordial atmosphere and use tact in expressing differences of opinion. Inappropriate discussion board messages may be deleted if an instructor feels it is necessary. Students will be notified privately that their posting was inappropriate.

Student access to the course Send Email feature may be limited or removed if an instructor feels that students are sending inappropriate electronic messages to other students in the course.

### **Instructional Technology Accessibility and Privacy Policies**

<http://www.doane.edu/instructional-design-services/policies>

**Syllabus Disclaimer**

The instructor views the course syllabus as an educational contract between the instructor and students. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. Students will be notified in a timely manner of any syllabus changes face-to-face, via email or in the course site Announcements. Please remember to check your Doane University email and the course site Announcements often.