

ATPT-1660: LABOR IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

Cuyahoga Community College

Viewing: ATPT-1660 : Labor in American Society

Board of Trustees:

September 2025

Academic Term:

Fall 2025

Subject Code

ATPT - Appld Indus Tech - Painting

Course Number:

1660

Title:

Labor in American Society

Catalog Description:

Instruction in nature of work and role of unions in American society, including history of workers and unions from early republic to contemporary era, role of unions at workplace and in society, relationship of workers and unions to economy, law, and democracy.

Credit Hour(s):

2

Lecture Hour(s):

2

Requisites

Prerequisite and Corequisite

: Admissions to Painting Technology apprenticeship program, or departmental approval.

Outcomes

Course Outcome(s):

N/A

Objective(s):

1. Evaluate the role of unions at the workplace and in American society.
2. Analyze the changing nature of work and workers roles in society during the growth of market and industrial capitalism.
3. Analyze the growth and development of unions in American society.
4. Assess the contemporary nature of American workers and unions and their relationships to the economy, the law, and American democracy.

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Quizzes
2. Exams
3. Classroom participation

Course Content Outline:

1. Introduction
 - a. Work and society
 - b. What unions do
 - i. collective bargaining
 - ii. voice
 - c. Labor, business, and democracy

2. Labor in America: artisans and farmers
 - a. An artisan republic
 - b. Artisans into workers
 - c. Slave labor
 - d. The market revolution
3. Labor in America: The Industrial Revolution
 - a. Industrialization
 - b. Workers responses
 - i. daily resistance
 - ii. strike
 - iii. boycott
 - iv. politics
 - v. unions
4. Labor in America: unions and the AFL
 - a. Early unions
 - b. Utopian effort
 - c. Revolutionaries
 - d. American Federation of Labor
 - i. 1886: eight hours for what we will
 - ii. bread and butter
 - iii. building trades
 - iv. the painters
5. Labor in America: industrial unionism
 - a. 1919: workers and Red
 - b. Producers to consumers
 - c. The Great Depression
 - d. Responses
 - i. AFL
 - ii. FDR and the New Deal
 - iii. radicalism and 1934
 - iv. the Wagner Act and the 2nd New Deal
 - v. CIO
 - e. Limits and rivalries
 - i. 1946: missed opportunities
 - ii. Taft-Hartley
 - iii. purge
 - iv. AFL vs. CIO
6. Unions since World War II
 - a. The liberal consensus
 - i. union leadership
 - ii. corruption at home
 - iii. corruption abroad
 - iv. the merger: AFL-CIO
 - v. 1968: coming apart
 - b. Complacency and decline
 - c. Reagan's attack
 - d. Union revival
7. Unions and society
 - a. Unions and the economy
 - b. The law: workers without right
 - c. Collective bargaining
8. Unions and democracy
 - a. Union democracy
 - b. American democracy
 - c. Organize

The Course Schedule is subject to change due to pedagogical needs, instructor discretion, parts of term, and unexpected events.

Resources for the Instructor

American Federation of Labor Congress of Industrial Organizations. *The Builders: The Seventy-five Year History of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO*. American Federation of Labor Congress of Industrial Organizations, 1983.

Bronfenbrenner, Kate and Sheldon Friedman et al, eds. *Organizing to Win New Research on Union Strategies*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998.

International Brotherhood of Painters Allied Trades Joint Apprenticeship Training Fund. *Apprenticeship, Work, and Society*. Washington, DC: Internat'l Brotherhood of PaintersAllied Trades Joint ApprenticeshipTraining Fund, 1996.

Zeiger, Robert H. *American Worker, American Unions*. 2nd Edition. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994.

[Top of page](#)

Key: 656