

**Queen's University**

Fall 2011

**Department of Economics**

Charles Beach  
Dunning 231

**ECONOMICS 261**

**Canadian Industrial Relations**

(Monday, 8:30-10:00; Thursday, 10:00-11:30)

**Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to the Economics of EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS or LABOUR RELATIONS. It will focus on the rules and operations of employee-employer relationship. Emphasis will be put on the workplace environment in the Canadian economy and its effects on key labour market outcome variables. Important institutional facts and economic theories of labour relations will be presented. Applications to Canadian industry and distinctive features of the Canadian labour environment will be considered.

Topics covered include: Description of the Canadian Labour Market, Industrial Relations in Competitive and Non-Competitive Labour Markets, Internal Labour Markets, Reasons for Joining Unions, Union Preferences, Human Rights in the Workplace, Labour Relations Boards, Effects of Collective Bargaining on Wages and Employment, Strikes, and Technological Change and Industrial Relations.

**Textbook**

The textbook for the course is:

Morley Gunderson and Daphne Taras, Canadian Labour and Employment Relations in Canada, Sixth Edition (Pearson Addison Wesley Publisher, 2009).

Copies of this text are available at the Queen's Bookstore (for about \$126 new, \$90 used) and are recommended to be purchased.

Copies of the previous edition of the text are on reserve at Stauffer Library.

Lecture material will also be drawn from other sources including:

Alton W.J. Craig and Norman A. Solomon, The System of Industrial Relations in Canada, Fifth Edition (Prentice Hall Canada, 1996).

Helmar Drost and H. Richard Hird, An Introduction to the Canadian Labour Market, Second Edition (Thompson/Nelson, 2006).

Robert Hebdon and Trevor C. Brown, Industrial Relations in Canada (Thompson/Nelson, 2008).

Fiona A.E. McQuarrie, Industrial Relations in Canada, Second Edition (John Wiley & Sons, 2007).

Jon Peirce, Canadian Industrial Relations, Second Edition (Pearson Education Canada, 2003).

Larry Suffield, Labour Relations, Second Edition (Prentice Hall Pearson Publishers, 2008).

Anil Verma and Richard P. Chaykowski, Eds., Contracts and Commitment: Employment Relations in the New Economy (IRC Press, 1999).

### **Prerequisites and Grading**

Requirements: Students should be familiar with introductory microeconomic theory and with high school algebra and basic geometry. Thus, students must be familiar with the material of Econ 110 or Econ 111.

The following formula will be used to determine grades:

2 assignments: 30%  
Mid-Term Exam: 20%  
Final Exam: 50%

### **Office Hours**

I will have office hours (Dunning Hall 231) following the lectures:

Monday: 10:00 – Noon  
Thursday 11:30 – 1:30

I am also often around at other times as well. I can be contacted by e-mail at:  
beachc@econ.queensu.ca

### **Course Outline**

The material will follow the Gunderson-Taras textbook fairly closely:

- I. The Actors in the Employment Relations System
- II. The Environment of Employment Relations System
- III. The Structure and Process of Employment Relations
- IV. Outcomes of the Labour Relations System

### **Academic Resources**

Students should be aware that a webpage of Arts and Science academic resources is located at:  
<http://www.asus.queensu.ca/acsfacts>