I. Course Description

How do we protect workers? We will focus on the role of government in protecting rights of citizens. Labor movement history will serve as a starting point for a discussion of modern systems for protecting workers from unsafe work places and compensating them for injuries that do occur. Law will be reviewed that protects individuals against class based discrimination and creates a “right” to work.

II. Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

Discuss the history of worker protection law

Describe the role of government in protecting the safety and well being of citizens

Discuss legal issues underlying several worker protection policies

Discuss the legal basis for compensation for injuries to health and property, and its application to worker protection

Demonstrate techniques of persuasive legal research, writing and oral presentation
III. **Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations**

Students are encouraged to introduce issues of current interest from the media or from their workplace for discussion. These issues will be incorporated into the curriculum when appropriate.

Through lecture and discussion, we will review public law that focuses on the role of government in protecting the safety and well being of citizens. Review of labor movement history will serve as a starting point for a discussion of modern systems for protecting workers from unsafe work places and compensating them for injuries that occur.

In addition, we will review law that protects individuals against class based discrimination and creates a “right” to work.

Each week students will write a short paragraph or one page outline that answers a question based on the reading assignment.

Each student will conduct legal research and write five pages on the legal aspects of an environmental or public health problem. A rough draft must be submitted for review with the instructor before a final draft is submitted. The paper must advocate a public policy that might solve the problem, and include at least 10 primary references.

Each student will prepare and present a 6-8 minute persuasive speech in class based on the legal research and writing project. Students will critique each other.

Students will work in groups and prepare a classroom presentation regarding a public policy issue. Groups will research issues, identify stakeholders and advocate solutions. Presentations will be made from the perspectives of the various stakeholders. An outline of research materials with at least 10 primary references must be submitted.
IV. Evaluation and Grading

Students will be evaluated as follows:

Weekly assignments: 30 points
Legal research and writing exercise: 40 points
Oral persuasive exercise: 30 points

1. Grading Criteria –
   A/N option must complete all assignments to a C- level (70%) and letter grade will be determined by total effort as follows:

   A = 95 -100 points (4.0) Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
   A- = 90-94
   B+= 87-89
   B = 83-86 points (3.0) Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
   B- = 80-82
   C+ = 77-79
   C = 73-76 points (2.0) Represents achievement that meets the minimum course requirements
   C- = 70-72

   S - Achievement that is satisfactory will be expected to complete all assignments and receive a minimum of 70% to receive a passing score (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor but may be no lower than a 70%).

   F (or N) -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I

   I - (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year, after which time the “I” converts to an “F” or “N”.
2. **Grading Option** – Students may change the grading option without permission and as specified by the University without penalty during the initial registration period or during the first two weeks of the term. **The grading option may not be changed after the second week of the term.**

3. **Course Withdrawal** – Students may withdraw from the course through the second week of the term without permission. After the second week, students will be required to obtain permission from their advisor and course instructor (via e-mail to the SPH Student Services Center) and a “W” will remain on their transcript.

4. **Course Incomplete** – An incomplete grade is permitted only in cases of exceptional circumstances and following consultation with the instructor. In such cases an “I” grade will require a specific contract with the instructor for timely completion of remaining assignments. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year, after which time the “I” converts to an “F” or “N”.

5. **Scholastic Dishonesty** – Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the student conduct code broadly defined as “any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing – which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper – or substantially similar papers – to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors involved; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student’s work.” Scholastic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of “F” or “N” for the entire course.

V. **Course Text and Readings**

*Environmental and Worker Protection Law*, Custom Publishing Service from West Group, West Group, 2001, 0-314-24612-6

VI. **Weekly Schedule**

A) History of labor movement

B) Worker protection

Wages
Conditions of work
Hazard communication and right to know
Workers compensation
Family Medical Leave Act
C) Civil rights

   Rehabilitation Act
   Americans with Disabilities Act

D) Working with uncertainty

   It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disability conditions (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located in Suite 180 McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak Street. Staff can be reached by calling 612/626-1333 voice or TTY. The website is http://disserv3.stu.umn.edu/index2.html.