

Rust Belt Simulation Syllabus Addendum
POLS 4310: The Leadup to & Aftermath of the 2020 US Election

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1. The Background

The City of Rossville, Ohio has always been the kind of place you want to raise your children. It's a tightknit community where most everyone knows you, and everyone looks out for one another.

It's 1950, and the 5 years since the end of World War II have made Rossville extremely prosperous. Situated on the banks of Lake Erie about halfway between Cleveland and Toledo, Rossville has thrived on post-war industrial growth. It is the home to the largest spark plug factory in the United States, owned by Zalinsky Auto Parts.

Zalinsky Auto Parts was founded in 1921 by Ray Zalinsky in Fort Wayne, Indiana with the goal of supplying auto parts to the burgeoning auto industry across the Midwest and the Ohio River Valley. In 1927, Zalinsky Auto Parts opened a factory in Rossville. Originally, this plant produced brake pads for the Duesenberg Motors Company. Eventually, these brake pads were being used in the manufacture of nearly all automobiles made in the United States. Rossville even weathered the Great Depression pretty well. There were some layoffs, but the factory kept working.

December 8, 1941 changed Rossville. With the declaration of war against Germany, Italy, and Japan, industrial production ramped up. By early 1942, the Zalinsky Auto Parts plant in Rossville switched over to production of spark plugs used in Sherman tanks and P-38 Lightning fighter planes, and eventually P-51 Mustang fighter planes. The factory never stopped working, even as the men in Rossville went to Europe and the Pacific, the women of Rossville kept the plant running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

After the war, the men came back. Many of the women who had run the factory for years returned to traditional roles as homemakers and mothers. But the economy boomed, and the factory kept working. The Zalinsky Auto Parts plant kept churning out spark plugs. Nearly every automobile manufactured between 1946 and today (January 1950) in the United States uses Zalinsky spark plugs made right here in Rossville, Ohio.

Rossville is one of those towns that has become synonymous with the American Dream. With a little hard work, you can own a home, a car, and even a television. Your kids can grow up in Rossville, knowing they're going to get at least as far as their parents did. It's a pretty ideal life.

2. The Actors

The greatest asset of Zalinsky Auto Parts is the hardworking Americans who build the best spark plugs in the United States. As with any industrial town, the economic strength of Rossville is the factory. The majority of the jobs in Rossville are working on the factory floor. Of course, with such a large and profitable business, Zalinsky has sent in a few executives to run the day-to-day operations of the plant. For every 4 workers, there is 1 executive at the Rossville plant.

The top executive in Rossville is the Vice-President of Manufacturing (VPM). The VPM in Rossville answers directly to the CEO and President of Zalinsky Auto Parts (Raymond Zalinsky, II, aka "The

Deuce”). Under the VPM are a number of Assistant VPMs who are in charge of various aspects of running the Rossville plant.

The pre-tax salaries for each executive are as follows:

Vice-President of Manufacturing: 0.85 extra credit points/week
Assistant Vice-Presidents of Manufacturing: 0.70 extra credit points/week

However, as this is post-war America, the marginal tax rate is pretty high for the highest earning Americans. The after tax salaries for each executive are as follows:

Vice-President of Manufacturing: 0.55 extra credit points/week
Assistant Vice-Presidents of Manufacturing: 0.47 extra credit points/week

The workers are unionized, and therefore, salaries are equal as per the collective bargaining agreement. The pre-tax and pre-union dues salaries of each worker are as follows:

Workers: 0.11 extra credit points/week

Taxes for workers are .02 extra credit points/week. Union dues amount to 0.01 extra credit points/week. After taxes and union dues each worker’s salary is:

Workers: 0.08 extra credit points/week

Workers receive fringe benefits as part of their compensation as well. They have health insurance and a pension.

Importantly, each week the union banks 0.01 extra credit points/week from each dues paying worker. This means if there are 15 dues paying workers, the union will bank 0.15 extra credit points/week.

Also, do not forget that you have bills to pay. This means mortgage, utilities, car payment, auto insurance, doctor visits, etc. Those costs must come out of your salary. You will be told each week what your bills for that week are. Any major changes in bills will be explained to you.

Finally, unionized worker salaries are determined by the collective bargaining agreement. Each collective bargaining agreement expires after 2 weeks. Both the union and the executives must submit their proposal for a new collective bargaining agreement to an arbiter prior to the expiration of the current collective bargaining agreement (see schedule below). The proposal from both the union and the executive must provide preferences regarding salaries, healthcare, pension, and layoff policy. The arbiter is free to choose one option or combine the two options. This arbitration is binding. If either party does not submit a proposal before the prior collective bargaining agreement expires, the union can call a strike, and/or the executives can lock the workers out. Keep in mind, if the executives and the union can come to an agreement and submit the same document, that will likely be accepted.

3. The Game

The purpose of this game is to bank as many extra credit points as possible. Each week you will be able to bank extra credit points which will be added to your final exam (campaign strategy assignment) grade. You can bank extra credit points by saving your weekly salary.

Thus, if your weekly take home salary is 0.08 extra credit points, you have the opportunity to bank all of these points. If you bank 0.08 extra credit points over 12 weeks, you will receive 0.96 extra credit points on your final exam grade. Given that your final exam is worth 30% of your final grade, banking 0.96 extra credit points increases your final grade in this class by about 0.29 points.

Of course, the world is not static, and therefore, your weekly salary is not fixed. Depending on circumstances, you may see your work circumstances change. This could include, but is not limited to, changes to salary, position in the company, and employment status. But it is important to recognize, the changes in circumstances are **NOT RANDOM**.

Changes in circumstances are deeply tied to changes in public policy. This means that those making policy matter. Put differently, elections have consequences.

All residents of Rossville will be presented with a choice between two candidates with policy platforms that differ to one degree or another on the Monday of each week. You should be aware that candidate policy platforms are not entirely fixed. Candidates have the ability to adjust their policy platforms, to a degree, through Wednesday of each week. You should ask yourself, what might make a candidate change their platform?

As we all know, resources matter for elections. Candidates need money to run campaigns, and poorly funded campaigns are at a substantial disadvantage.

In this simulation, extra credit points are resources. Each individual in Rossville from the VPM down to the workers can give up to 0.20 extra credit points to their preferred candidate for office. Additionally, under the Taft-Hartley Act, the union can give up to 0.30 of its banked extra credit points to a candidate. Importantly, the union needs to devise a system for distributing its banked extra credit points to candidates. This means the union must create a decision-making apparatus.

On the Friday of each week, the election will be held. The percentage of extra credit points given to each candidate will determine the odds that that candidate wins. Deciding on a winner will be done through drawing candidate names from a hat. If Candidate X received 60% of the extra credit points given to candidates in a week, X's name will be on 60% of the slips in the hat.

Once a candidate is elected, public policy will change. This will change the economic context, which could very well change your work circumstances.

4. Choosing a Starting Career

Each student in the class will be randomly assigned a number on the first day of class. We will then use a random number generator to determine starting career. We will first choose the Vice-President

of Manufacturing. The random number generator will produce a number. The student who holds that number will begin their career as the Vice-President of Manufacturing of the Rossville Zalinsky Auto Parts plant.

We will then use the same process to choose all Assistant Vice-Presidents of Manufacturing. Anyone who is not an executive at the end of this process will be a worker.

5. The Role of Dr. Williams

Dr. Williams is every person in the world who does not live in Rossville. Most importantly, this means, he will write and adjust the policy platforms for each candidate for President. If a person or organization wishes to talk to a candidate, they need to talk with Dr. Williams.

Importantly, Dr. Williams also serves as a political consultant. If an individual or an organization wishes to employ a political consultant to help best achieve their political goals, they can speak to Dr. Williams. However, you should note, consultants are not free. The cost in extra credit points to hire the consultant will be negotiated on an individual basis.

Dr. Williams will also act as the arbiter with regard to the collective bargaining agreement.

6. The Grading

This is not simply a simulation for extra credit. The extra credit you bank will applied to your final exam grade. **However, this simulation is worth 25% of your overall grade in this class.** You are not graded on how well you play the game, but rather, how well you learn from the game.

At the end of the simulation, you will be required to write a report on your activity during the simulation. This report is to be no longer than 7 pages in length. This is to be turned in on November 30 (see schedule below).

There are three (3) parts to this report. First, you must explain what you did during the simulation. Second you must provide rationales for your actions. Third, and most importantly, you will discuss what you would do differently if you were to do the simulation again.

The first and second sections of this report will be worth 25% of your grade on this project, respectively, with the third section accounting for 50% of your grade on this project. This means that you need to think very clearly about, and articulate where you believe you made mistakes, why those were mistakes, how you would act differently, and why you think that would have produced an improved outcome for you in the simulation.

7. The Schedule

August 24

- Careers are randomly assigned

WEEK 1

August 30

- Union must submit to Dr. Williams a basic constitution (questions about what should be included does not constitute hiring a consultant)
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released
- Cost of living is announced

September 1:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

September 3:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 2

September 6:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

September 8:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

September 10:

- Winning candidate in election is announced
- Union and executive collective bargaining agreement proposal must be submitted to Dr. Williams

WEEK 3

September 13:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

September 15:

- Revised platforms released

- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

September 17:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 4

September 20:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

September 22:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

September 24:

- Winning candidate in election is announced
- Union and executive collective bargaining agreement proposal must be submitted to Dr. Williams

WEEK 5

September 27:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

September 29:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

October 1:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 6

October 4:

- Policy changes are announced

- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

October 6:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

October 8:

- Winning candidate in election is announced
- Union and executive collective bargaining agreement proposal must be submitted to Dr. Williams

WEEK 7

October 11:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

October 13:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

October 15:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 8

October 18:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

October 20:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

October 22:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

- Union and executive collective bargaining agreement proposal must be submitted to Dr. Williams

WEEK 9

October 25:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

October 27:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

October 29:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 10

November 1:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

November 3:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

November 5:

- Winning candidate in election is announced
- Union and executive collective bargaining agreement proposal must be submitted to Dr. Williams

WEEK 11

November 8:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced

- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

November 10:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

November 12:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

WEEK 12 (LAST WEEK)

November 15:

- Policy changes are announced
- Changes in salary are announced
- Changes in cost of living are announced
- Preliminary candidate policy platforms for election are released

November 17:

- Revised platforms released
- By 11:59pm, individuals and organizations must inform Dr. Williams of how much extra credit they wish to donate to which candidate.

November 19:

- Winning candidate in election is announced

NOVEMBER 30: FINAL REPORT IS DUE BY 10:50AM