

# Global Labor Studies

The University of Illinois Global Labor Studies (GLS) program offers undergraduate classes to both traditional college students and working union members. Because GLS classes are entirely online, they provide a flexible schedule and easy-to-use web format. Students read lectures, textbooks, and web-based materials and watch online videos.

All courses are three credits and are offered in the spring, summer and fall semesters. Our instructors engage students in lively discussions about the materials, current events, and real-life case studies.

Upon the successful completion of six GLS courses, union members can earn a Certificate in Global Labor Studies from the University of Illinois. Full-time undergraduate students can earn a GLS Minor. In addition, GLS credits can be transferred to the National Labor College and applied towards a Bachelor's degree in Labor Studies.

We offer semester-long (15-week) courses at all levels, plus three 100-level classes in a compressed 6 1/2-week format. Summer classes are also offered in both 8-week and 12-week formats. All classes are three credits.

*The GLS program proudly offers unionists a scholarship that reduces tuition by 25 percent.*

**For more information please contact: (312) 996-2624 or [Illinoislabored@illinois.edu](mailto:Illinoislabored@illinois.edu)**

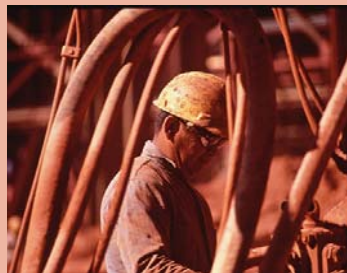


**LABOR EDUCATION PROGRAM**

School of Labor and Employment Relations

[www.illinoislabored.org](http://www.illinoislabored.org)

## Online Course Listings FALL, 2011



### **LER 100 INTRODUCTION TO LABOR STUDIES** Also offered as a 2<sup>nd</sup> eight weeks course

An introductory course that provides an overview of workers and unions in American society. Looks at economic, political, and workplace issues facing working people, why and how workers join unions, how unions are structured and function, and how unions and management bargain a contract. Provides a historical overview of the American working class and the labor movement, discusses the contemporary struggles workers and unions face in a rapidly changing global economy, and examines a case study at A.E. Staley of a labor-management conflict.

### **LER 110 LABOR AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS** Also offered as a 2<sup>nd</sup> eight weeks course

An introductory course which explores workers' rights movements such as the Wisconsin workers' protests, living wage campaigns, workers centers, and the immigrant rights movement. The class also looks at the role of labor unions organizing low wage workers – like hotel workers, security officers, and janitors -- allying with community organizations in dynamic labor struggles.

### **LER 120 CONTEMPORARY LABOR PROBLEMS** Also offered as a 2<sup>nd</sup> eight weeks course

An introductory course focused on problems and challenges facing American workers. Workers' issues explored in class include the economic crisis and unemployment; health care; globalization and plant closings; retirement; and employment laws.

### **LER 210 IMAGES OF LABOR IN FILM**

The course uses feature-length films to take an in-depth look at key labor strikes and organizing drives from the 1910s through the 1980s. Students view some of the most powerful films on worker and labor themes ever produced. The course studies the work lives and labor unions of miners; railroad porters; packinghouse workers; textile workers; and farm workers. We discuss the meaning of the events depicted in the films by situating them in historical context with detailed readings; engage the debates raised in the films about labor organizing methods and strike strategies that are relevant to today's labor movement; reflect on issues of race, gender, class consciousness, working conditions, union goals, anti-communism, and labor-management relations raised in the films and readings; analyze how effectively the films and Hollywood in general portray workers and unions; and compare and contrast the films.

### **LER 220 THE MEDIA, WORKERS, AND UNIONS**

This is a course about workers, unions, and how the news media tells their stories. It will look at the past, the present, and future. It will analyze how these stories are told in the mainstream and independent news media in the U.S., and it will examine the Internet's explosion and impact on these stories. We will look at how blogs, online videos, citizen journalism, and the fast changing world of Internet communication has given voice to workers and their issues. We will compare the print and online media with the work done in documentaries and the cinema. In addition we will look at the global telling of these stories. Lastly, we will examine the ways that unions can better tell their stories. *The class was designed and is taught by veteran labor journalist Stephen Franklin.*

### **LER 250 GRIEVANCE REPRESENTATION**

This is a practical course that examines how a union steward represents workers on the job, including how to investigate, write, and negotiate grievances; and how to utilize labor law to defend workers' rights on the job. Students work collectively to discuss how to resolve labor-management conflicts in case studies on insubordination, absenteeism, vacation, overtime, safety, and racial and sexual harassment grievances. The course also explores methods to build union strength through internal organizing such as collective action around grievances and contract campaigns.

### **LER 290 EMPLOYMENT LAW**

This course addresses and critiques the content, interpretation, and applications of the laws that govern employer-employee relations in the American workplace. It will explore the historical sources, underlying ideology, and current content of anti-discrimination and civil rights laws, of laws that seek to guarantee a safe and healthy workplace for all Americans, of laws that guarantee minimum wages and overtime pay, of legal protections of privacy on the job, of unemployment insurance and workers' compensation laws, and of laws that guarantee workers the right to collective action and collective bargaining. *The course was designed and is taught by labor attorney Maggie Cohen.*