Labor Studies & Employment Relations

**Labor Unions and Social Movements Concentration or Minor**

Do you want to help people achieve dignity at work – along with better treatment and a higher standard of living? Are you intrigued by recent social movements around immigration and other issues? Do you realize that New Jersey is one of the most unionized states in the U.S. and that by studying unions you can have excellent employment opportunities? **We offer this focus either as a concentration within the Labor Studies and Employment Relations major or as a minor!**

**Careers related to Labor Unions and Social Movements**

- **Union organizer or staff representative.** Some people find their life’s passion in helping other people form a union. Union organizer is one of the entry-level jobs open to those with this minor or concentration. Staff representatives negotiate contracts, train union activists, lobby public agencies, and help employees who have grievances. A graduate degree is usually needed to become a staff representative. Consider our 5-year combined Bachelors/Masters program.

- **Labor relations specialist.** Labor relations professionals work for private and public organizations that have union-represented employees. They negotiate contracts for the employer, handle grievances, interface with human resource departments, and attempt to prevent future labor relations problems. Although a graduate degree is usually required for these positions, the undergraduate program is an excellent place to start.

- **Researcher.** Unions, interest organizations, think-tanks, and universities all employ researchers. Research can be web-based, involve fieldwork, surveys, and/or data analysis – and may or may not be combined with public policy advocacy. Unions, for example, need people who can analyze a corporation’s financial situation, and a bachelor’s degree can lead directly to this type of job; other research positions may require graduate study.

- **Labor relations agency staff.** Neutral public agencies regulate the field of labor and employment relations, run representation elections, and help resolve labor disputes. The National Labor Relations Board, the NJ Public Employment Relations Commission, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service all are agencies of this type. An undergraduate concentration in Labor Unions and Social Movements is the place to start if you want a career as a “neutral” in such an agency. But earning a graduate degree can greatly expand the opportunities available to you in this area.

For requirements, please see reverse...
For the minor: To complete a minor in Labor Unions and Social Movements, six courses are required. You must take (a) One 100-level Labor Studies & Employment Relations course, (b) at least four courses from the list below, and (c) one other course at the 200 level or higher offered by the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department.

For the major concentration: To complete a concentration in Labor Unions and Social Movements, you must fulfill all the requirements of the major, including at least four courses from the list below. Courses in the concentration count toward the major.

Courses specific to the Labor Unions and Social Movements concentration or minor:

Must take at least four:
- 37:575:201 U.S. Labor & Work before the End of Reconstruction
- 37:575:207 NJ Labor History
- 37:575:310 Labor Relations in Professional Sports
- 37:575:314 Collective Bargaining
- 37:575:319 Leadership and Governance of Labor Unions
- 37:575:322 American Labor Unions in Politics
- 37:575:335 Women and the Labor Movement in the U.S. and Globally
- 37:575:340 American Labor Law
- 37:575:350 Public Sector Collective Bargaining
- 37:575:357 Social Movements, Social Change and Work
- 37:575:359 Organizing for Social Change
- 37:575:360 Union Organizing

Labor Studies & Employment Relations Faculty Involved in this Area

David Bensman, Professor, PhD, Columbia
Will Brucher, Instructor, PhD, Brown
Dorothy Sue Cobble, Professor II, PhD, Stanford
Adrienne Eaton, Professor, PhD, Wisconsin
Janice Fine, Associate Professor, PhD, MIT
Charles Heckscher, Professor, PhD, Harvard
Carla Katz, Assistant Teaching Professor, J.D., Seton Hall
Michael Merrill, Professor of Professional Practice, PhD, Columbia
Francis Ryan, Instructor, PhD, Pennsylvania
Sue Schurman, Professor II, PhD, Michigan
Marilyn Sneideman, Professor of Professional Practice, MSW., Wisconsin
Paula Voos, Professor, PhD, Harvard

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