

# LABOR AND GLOBAL WORKERS' RIGHTS (LGWR)

## LGWR 510: International Labor Law

### 3 Credits

Seminar exploring international labor law, including its standards, reviewing bodies, procedures, information sources, remedies, and overall strengths and weaknesses. LGWR 510 International Labor Law (3) Because globalized production systems call for globalized rules for workplace rights, a body of international labor law is rapidly developing. Designed principally for global labor activists, this course equips students to evaluate the role that international labor law – its sources, participants, mechanisms, and remedies – plays in the promotion of labor rights in the global economy. A centerpiece of the course looks at the International Labor Organization, whose complex processes introduce students to the generally "soft" rules of international workplace regulation. Beyond the ILO, the course looks at other bodies – some global, others regional or bilateral – that require or encourage compliance with decent working standards. It also addresses how private parties can create either voluntary "codes of conduct" or negotiated framework agreements spelling out labor rights. Across all of these topics, students take up cases covering the broad range of labor struggles (affecting unions, children, women, immigrants, forced laborers, etc.). Critical to the course is the student's gaining familiarity with the surprising variety of information available on working conditions around the globe. As the course progresses, students are asked to formulate opinions on which international labor law forum holds the greatest potential to help with selected worker rights issues in selected countries. Students will review evidence suggesting that labor activists make their best use of international labor law when they link legal action to outreach, education, research, and "on the ground" organizing to enhance chances for success.

## LGWR 520: Global Workers' Rights

### 3 Credits

This course analyzes struggles to promote workers' rights across a variety of economic, political, and geographic contexts. The stakes of such efforts are high at a time when worker movements face a barrage of new and old challenges. Political attacks, privatization, capital mobility, and automation have contributed to a decades-long decline in union membership in many of labor's traditional strongholds. Meanwhile, the vast majority of the world's workers—particularly women, immigrants, and informal workers—remain unorganized. In this course we will ask, what is the relationship between transformations in global political and economic processes, local labor control regimes and working conditions, and forms of worker resistance? What is the role of such movements in increasing the power of women, people of color, LGBTQ people, and immigrants? What catalyzes worker organizations to expand their focus from members' narrow economic interests to broader struggles for social justice, human rights, and democracy? The first unit of this course analyzes classical and contemporary theories of capitalist development, workplace control, and worker resistance. We will develop a sociological approach that understands workers not as free agents, but as actors embedded in economic, political, and cultural structures. In the second unit, we will analyze the history of the U.S. labor movement, paying careful attention to the way that work has been structured by class strata, gender, race, and region, and the implications for workers'

self-organization. The third unit focuses on case studies of worker movements in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Cross-national comparisons will provide leverage for analyzing the complex interaction between movement contexts, ideologies, strategies, and outcomes. We will study how worker movements are shaped and constrained by the states within which they are embedded, but also, how they can sometimes transform the state—for example, by pushing for democratic transitions and workers' rights policies. The fourth unit addresses pressing challenges facing the contemporary global labor movement and potential pathways forward. We will analyze innovative strategies for organizing informal workers, building global labor solidarity, and forging alliances between the labor and climate justice movement.

## LGWR 530: Chinese Labor Rel

### 3 Credits

Since it opened its economy to private investment in 1978, China's planned economy has been turned into a market-driven economy. Relying heavily on export-oriented industries, China serves as a 'spatial fix' for Western capital, which eagerly searches for new sites of investment and business opportunities. As a result, China has become a gigantic manufacturing hub and the second largest economy in the world. The massive inflow of foreign investment, the pro-business developmental strategies of the Chinese state, and weak legal enforcement of workers' rights have rendered workers victims of economic reform. This course will examine labor relations in post-socialist China. It will cover topics such as the development of China's economic reform, the employment and working conditions of workers, trade unions and the collective bargaining system, the state's role in employment relations, the labor law system, and the role of civil society and non-governmental organizations in the country's labor relations. In addition to China, this course will focus on Vietnam (another post-communist country in Asia), and Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea (three of the four Asian Tigers). It will investigate how these countries are similar to or different from China in terms of socio-economic development and labor relations. Moreover, the course examines labor relations in China and other countries by drawing upon analytical and theoretical concepts on subjects such as the state, the legal system, the economic system, class relations, and civil society.

## LGWR 540: Research Methods in labor and Global Workers' Rights

### 3 Credits

This course introduces students to social science research methods and writing skills as they relate to workers and labor policy.

## LGWR 550: Protest in the Fields: Agricultural Workers and Rural Organizing in a Global Context

### 3 Credits

The agricultural industry accounts for an enormous share of the global political economy, employing 1 billion people and representing 1 in 3 of all workers. Nonetheless, the organization of agricultural workers is often dismissed as too difficult, given the precarity, isolation, citizenship status, and technological displacement of these workers. This course provides a broad exploration of these global and national shifts in food production, tracing the transformations in the agricultural sector and the labor conditions of agricultural workers in the United States and across Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. It considers how agricultural workers have developed new and innovative organizing strategies to demand economic and political rights. Drawing on diverse examples from the United Farm Workers to the global farmers' organization La Via

Campeſina (the Peasant Way), we will diſcuſs the ſtruggles for rural unions, environmental rights, land access, and food ſovereignty. The goal of the course is to provide ſtudents with an overview of how the agricultural ſector reproduces racial, economic, gender, and national inequities, while also highlighting the potential power that agricultural workers hold to reſhape and reconfigure the global economic ſystem. The firſt half of the course offers an overview of the political and economic hiſtory of the agricultural ſector, beginning in the eighteenth century and extending to the current day. This part of the course analyzes the ſhift from ſmall-family farming to industrial agricultural production, as well as particular iſſues ſuch as women's access to land, the role of international agencies that regulate the agricultural ſector, and the riſe of organic farming. Building on theſe insights, ſtudents will develop an original theſis and write a paper that explores how theſe changes in agricultural production unfolded in one particular country. The ſecond half of the course analyzes how rural populations have organized for workers' rights within this ſhifting industry. This ſection of the course examines a diſverſe range of rural organizing efforts, from ſlave revolts to farmer and farmworker movements to tranſnational attempts to promote food ſovereignty.

#### LGWR 560: Gender, Race and Labor in Comparative Perspective

3 Credits

This ſeminar takes a broad approach to gender by placing it into conſervation with race and ethnicity, as well as other lines of difference and inequality, including claſs, nation, and age, thinking through the dynamic relationship between gender, race and labor from a variety of ſituated and comparative perſpectives. The course begins with two orienting, interwoven perſpectives: firſt, feminist efforts to bring women's experiences, in all their diſverſity, from the margins to the center of knowledge; and ſecond, the uſe of gender as a category of analysis-in this way, we will underſtand gender as relational, in order to ſtudy and learn from the lives and experiences of men and tranſ people, as well as women. Lectures, diſcuſſions, and readings in this ſeminar will draw upon ideas from a range of academic diſciplines, addreſſing queſtions around intersectionality theory, maſculinities, the global diſviſion of reproductive labor, and gendered labor and the ſtate all within the context of a tranſnational and always globalizing world, but with a focus on gender and race-taken together-as an intersectional, critical lenſ of analysis for underſtanding multiple relations of power in which we are all embedded, and which ſhape our experiences. Though gender is an aſpect of all ſocial life, this course pays particular attention to gendered and racialized dynamics in the workplace, in the labor proceſs, and in everyday working lives. This course will examine changes in occupational ſegregation on the baſis of race, gender, and immigration ſtatus, with a focus on low-wage workers and the growing informal ſector. It will also investigate thoſe workers' particular ſets of challenges for recognition by the ſtate, unions, and worker centers. And through a comparative, critical perſpective, this course focuses the ſtudy of gender, race and labor across global and tranſnational ſpaces.

#### LGWR 596: Individual Studies

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Creative projects, including nontheſis reſearch, that are ſuperviſed on an individual baſis and which fall outside the ſcope of formal courses.

#### LGWR 597: Special Topics

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 18

Formal courses given on a topical or ſpecial intereſt ſubject which may be offered infrequently.

#### LGWR 597C: Labor and Employment Relations in China Comparative Perspective

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 18

ſince its open up in 1978 to private investment, China's planned economy has , been turned into a market-driven economy. Relying heavily on the , export-oriented industries, China ſerves as a "ſpatial fix" for Western , capital, which eagerly ſearch for new ſites of investment and buſineſs , opportunities. As a reſult, China has become a gigantic manufacturing hub and , the ſecond laeſt economy in the world. The maſſive inflow of foreign , investment, the pro-buſineſs developmental ſtrategies of the Chinese ſtate , pluſ weak legal enforcement in the country have rendered workers victims of , the economic reform. This course will examine labour relations in , poſt-ſocialiſt China. ,

#### LGWR 894: Capstone Experience

3 Credits

Superviſed, professionally-oriented ſtudent activities that conſtitute the culminating experience for the program.

#### LGWR 895: Internship

1-6 Credits

Superviſed, professionally-oriented, off campus, non-group instruction, including field experiences, practicums, or internſhips. LGWR 895 Internſhip (1-6) The Labor and Global Workers' Rights (LGWR) internſhip aims to provide MPS in LGWR ſtudents with hands-on experience in labor and global workers' rights. The internſhip will build and reinforce the ſtudents' ſkills by enabling them to apply what they have learned in the claſſroom to a real-world labor and global workers' rights ſetting. As the MPS in LGWR is a professional degree, an internſhip in a real-world labor and global workers' rights ſetting is critical to ſtudents' academic and professional ſucceſſ. ſtudents complete their internſhips with US or international labor unions or a labor-oriented organization ſuch as a worker center, labor NGO, or labor reſearch inſtitute. Through the internſhip, ſtudents will learn about priorities, policies and practices that theſe organizations have regarding workers' rights and/or international labor iſſues. ſtudents may also gain insight, for example, into the challenges that American unions have with building working relationships and alliances with unions in other countries while also addreſſing global dynamics affecting working conditions and workers' rights. Prior to the beginning of the internſhip, ſtudents will work with their internſhip adviser to develop individualized learning objectives. Theſe learning objectives will ſhape a ſtudent's experience at the internſhip ſite and the types of projects the ſtudent will complete. The learning objectives will also provide the ſtudents with a metric by which they can evaluate their effort and performance.