

# LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS (LER)

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LER 83S: First-Year Seminar in Labor and Human Resources

3 Credits

LER 83S meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course provides a general introduction to the field of labor, employment relations, and human resources, as well as a more in-depth examination of an issue or topic related to the field and it does so in a small class environment. It also introduces first-year students to the University as an academic community, to their responsibilities as a member of that community, and to the wide range of the opportunities and resources available to them. The course fulfills both a first-year seminar and a general education or Bachelor of Arts social/behavioral science requirement. Class sessions stress discussion of assigned readings, debates, and/or talks by guest lecturers/speakers

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
First-Year Seminar  
General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

LER 100: Introduction to Labor and Human Resources

3 Credits

This course will provide students with an opportunity to develop an understanding of the role of work and the employment relationship in their lives from an individual, institutional and global perspective. The course begins with a series of lessons focusing on the meaning of work to each of us. Students will study motivation theories to help them understand the various needs that work can satisfy, from earning a paycheck to serving others. The course then moves to a description of the types of organizations that represent the employer, from mom and pop operation to the for-profit corporate environment. In this context students will be exposed to basic management concepts (e.g., authority; span-of-control) as well as the manner in which bureaucracy affects the nature of the workplace. Students will conclude this section with a study of the employment contract, particularly the manner in which the nature of at-will employment philosophies dominate U.S. labor markets. Part II of the course is a systematic study of several important issues associated with the human resource function and how it affects the individual workers. Students will study such topics of recruitment and selection not only from the perspective of the employer seeking to attract staff who will contribute to organizational efficiency and effectiveness, but also from the point of view of the applicants who seek to pursue positions consistent with their own personal needs and career aspirations. The HR function exists in every organization; however, in some situations students will work under a different set of rules. Part III will focus on the environment associated with labor unions and the various elements defining the relationships among employers, unions and employees. In addition to studying the history of the labor movement, students will develop an understanding of the collective bargaining process and its effect on their employment circumstances. Part IV addresses what has reemerged as a critical element in the relationship between workers and work: the globalization of the economy. Students

will learn about the opportunities and threats globalization presents. They will also study the development of global labor standards.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Global Learning  
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 136: Race, Gender, and Employment

3 Credits

This course will ask how race and gender affect work in the contemporary United States. We will consider how race and gender shape people's work opportunities, their wages at work, and whether they participate in paid or unpaid labor (or both). We will begin with an overview of work and the changes in the workforce over time; we will move to investigate how workplace structures reproduce gender and race inequalities; will ask how race and gender inequalities are informally maintained through education systems and social networks; will consider differing dimensions of inequality across poverty, immigration, and sexuality; and will consider how studying unpaid labor helps us better understand the formal paid economy.

Cross-listed with: AFAM 136, WMNST 136  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
United States Cultures (US)  
General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 136W: Race, Gender, and Employment

3 Credits

This course will ask how race and gender affect work in the contemporary United States. We will consider how race and gender shape people's work opportunities, their wages at work, and whether they participate in paid or unpaid labor (or both). We will begin with an overview of work and the changes in the workforce over time; we will move to investigate how workplace structures reproduce gender and race inequalities; will ask how race and gender inequalities are informally maintained through education systems and social networks; will consider differing dimensions of inequality across poverty, immigration, and sexuality; and will consider how studying unpaid labor helps us better understand the formal paid economy. The course emphasizes writing in the form of short assignments and longer papers as a means to develop comprehension of these ideas. This course is a writing intensive course designed to develop formal writing appropriate for a business context. We will use an active and engaged writing process using the course topics of diversity and employment inequality to strengthen writing skills.

Cross-listed with: AFAM 136W, WMNST 136W  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
International Cultures (IL)  
General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason  
Writing Across the Curriculum

LER 165N: Work and Literature

3 Credits

If you get a job out of college, work eight hours a day, fifty weeks a year, and retire at age 65, at that point you will have spent roughly one third of your adult, waking life at work. And that is just paid work. Add in housework, childcare, and other forms of unpaid labor and the share of your waking hours devoted to work creeps closer to one half. And those calculations may actually underestimate the influence work has over your life. What you do will determine where you live, how you live, and, perhaps, whether you believe you have ultimately done something meaningful with your life. With work playing such an outsized role in a life, you may as well understand it as best you can. Hence this class. In it, we approach the question of work from the perspective of two disciplines: labor and employment relations and literature. The field of labor and employment relations asks about the social and economic forces—markets, compensation, globalization, immigration, etc.—that shape work. By contrast, the discipline of literature takes a more subjective approach to the question of work. Very broadly speaking, it shows how the forces that shape work play out in individual lives. In short, it shows how individuals feel about the work they do or, in the case of the unemployed, they do not do. Together, the two disciplines provide a global and personal perspective on one of the most important parts of our lives. Students registering for the course will read representative selections from both domains, engage in course discussions, take exams, and write essays as they explore the variety of ways both labor and employment relations and Literature can prepare them for their work lives and help them understand the place of work in culture and society.

General Education: Humanities (GH)

General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)

General Education - Integrative: Interdomain

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 201: Employment Relationship: Law and Policy

3 Credits

Most Americans spend a third of their adult lives at work. This course examines the legal rights and rights and obligations of employers and employees in US workplaces. No previous course in law is necessary. The course begins with an overview of general legal concepts necessary to an understanding of the US legal system. That sets the stage for an examination of the employment contract, a cornerstone of employment law. The main body of the course examines such topics as sexual harassment, drug testing, wage and hour regulation, immigration, health care, pregnancy, family leave, workers' compensation, employee privacy, and unionization. This introduces students to landmark federal and state employment statutes, regulations, and cases. As students learn about workplace rights and obligations, they discuss the public policy issues underlying most debates. Throughout, students are encouraged to argue policy questions from the different perspectives of employers, employees, and the public. Being both "employee-" and "employer-centric," the course is designed for the generalist as well as the major in the field. Thus, its content helps to prepare literally any future employee with vital liberal arts and career-related knowledge, while at the same time providing a foundation for students who choose to specialize in human resources or labor relations.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 202: Understanding Employee Behavior

3 Credits

The course will be offered at an introductory level. It is designed to encourage students to explore individual and group behavior at work. The ability to describe, explain and analyze concepts in this course is critical to appreciating the dynamics that determine organizational outcomes. In this context, students will learn basic tools that will assist them in developing management, supervisory and leadership skills. Because the concepts from this course are the foundation of human resource management and employee relations, it is essential to master them in order to be an effective human resource management or employee relations professional. The conceptual learning in the course will include individual differences, diversity, attitudes, fairness perceptions, motivation, decision making, leadership, teams, negotiation, organizational culture and its role in the external context.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

General Education: Social and Behavioral Science (GS)

GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 304: Labor and Employment Relations Fundamentals

3 Credits

The course surveys the main elements of modern labor and employment relations systems in the U.S. and beyond. The course encourages students to use a framework for evaluating workplace outcomes according to three yardsticks: efficiency; equity; and voice. Focusing primarily on employee voice, the course introduces students to a variety of mechanisms that bring democracy, worker engagement, and worker influence to the workplace. Among these mechanisms are U.S.-style collective bargaining, non-union systems of worker involvement, European works councils, and a new variety of "alt-labor" initiatives from around the world. In its single largest unit, the course focuses on U.S. workplaces, beginning with the historical and legal foundations of the modern U.S. labor relation system. This includes units examining union organizing campaigns, collective bargaining, and dispute resolution systems. Concluding weeks of the course look at issues surrounding the push for workplace flexibility, a comparative labor relations look at other country practices (include European works councils), emerging issues in global supply chains, "alt-labor" institutions and practices, the role of gender, race, and diversity initiatives at work, and the impact of automation and artificial intelligence on the future of work.

**Prerequisites:** LER 100

LER 305: Human Resources Fundamentals

3 Credits

This course will provide students with an opportunity to understand and apply important concepts concerning human resources in the workplace. Students will learn to think of the issues in the class from both the employees' and organizations' perspectives. The course begins with

a description and analysis of the role human resource managers play in supporting employees' personal needs as well as an organization's strategic objectives. The discussion traces the changes in that role historically, as well as the contemporary understanding of HR's part in helping stakeholders succeed. Against this backdrop, students will study three critical variables affecting HR's involvement in management: the individual; the organization; and, the law. Each of these foci illustrates variables with which HR managers must contend. The course presents these variables through a variety of lenses: law, psychology, sociology, history and literature. Students will also spend considerable time studying the various functions HR plays in recruiting, selecting, training, evaluation, compensation, labor relations and safety. In these portions of the class, students will learn to understand the functions not only from the organization's, but also from the employees' perspective. The discussion of functional areas will end with application of the concepts studied to the global business environment in which HR increasingly operates. Throughout students will not only learn the mechanics of, for example, the selection process, but how processes support an organization's and individual's pursuit of their unique purposes. Consistent with the liberal arts environment in which LER students enroll, the final project requires students to apply the concepts learned concerning the HR function to their everyday lives, helping students to reflect on the difference HR processes can have on both the organization but equally important on the employee. As a Gen Ed course (GS), the course qualifies as a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) course consistent with the B.A. Fields category.

**Prerequisites:** LER 100

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

General Education: Social and Behavioral Scien (GS)

GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication

GenEd Learning Objective: Global Learning

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

LER 312: Employment Relations to Research Methods in Labor and Employment Relations

3 Credits

The objective of this course is to enhance students' abilities to use a range of methodologies to evaluate and conduct research in the field of employment relations and human resource management. LER 312 Employment Relations to Research Methods in Labor and Employment Relations (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. The objective of this course is to enhance students' abilities to use a range of methodologies to evaluate and conduct research in the field of employment relations and human resource management. It covers core concepts such as the scientific method, literature search, the logic of hypothesis formulation and testing, measurement, sampling and data collection methods, and basic statistical analysis. To accomplish these objectives, the course utilizes readings, lectures, class discussions, exercises and assignments, student presentations, and examinations.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 400: Comparative Employment Relations Systems

3 Credits

Analysis of structure and elements of employment relations systems in developed and developing areas. LER 400 LER 400 Comparative Employment Relations Systems (3) (IL)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course explores

contemporary topics in employment relations in the world. The course examines seven examples of employment relations systems, each carefully chosen to illustrate important variations in employment relations practices. It also provides an overview of economic globalization and its impact on employment relations. Topics include global sweatshops, child labor, the diffusion of human resource practices, and corporate social responsibility. The first country case is Germany, which provides an example of a country with strong national unions and a highly developed system of works councils. The Swedish case exemplifies a long-tradition of centralized bargaining and tripartite relations that is now in transition. The third case, Japan, illustrates some of the initial experiences with team work, just-in-time production, and employee commitment through job security and training. China offers an example of a socialist system in transition that has become an economic powerhouse through massive export processing zones, government controlled unions, and wage competition. Brazil provides an important example of a Latin American country with a state dominated employee relations system. South Africa offers a case of highly politicized employment relations in a country in transition from extreme racial segregation to a democracy. Finally, India represents Asia's other economic powerhouse, with an English speaking workforce that is drawn to the booming call center industry and export-oriented production. The second half of the course looks at broader themes related to the topic of globalization. Sweatshops in Mexico and child labor in India examined alongside the diffusion of high-end human resource practices in Brazil. In this section, student will also study inter-governmental institutions such as the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund. The final unit of this section examines the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), recent attempts by corporations -at times in coordination with labor unions-to establish basic sets of rules or standards for their employees wherever units of the corporation might be located in the world today.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits in Labor and Employment Relations

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

International Cultures (IL)

LER 401: The Law of Labor-Management Relations

3 Credits

Development of Anglo-American law regulating collective bargaining, with emphasis on American labor-management relations under Wagner, Taft-Hartley, and other acts. LER 401 The Law of Labor - Management Relations (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course will examine the evolution of labor law in the United States. The N.L.R.A. itself, and the decisions of the National Labor Relations Board (N.L.R.B) and the courts, will be examined in order to gain an understanding of the current legal framework underpinning our system of labor-management relations. Major issues to be examined include the rights of employees to union representation; the formation of bargaining units; the conduct of organizing campaigns and elections; the duty to bargain; strikes, striker's rights, and lockouts; picketing, boycotts, and related activity; the enforcement of collective bargaining agreements and the duty to arbitrate; union members' rights and responsibilities, the duty of fair representation; and federal-state relationships in labor relations. Also covered in the course will be the legal framework for public sector labor-management relations, with specific attention paid to Pennsylvania Acts 111 and 195. The course will be taught from a liberal arts perspective, meaning that societal factors influencing the law-history, politics, and economics-will be emphasized. Student performance will be evaluated by means of tests, short papers, and such reports as may be required. This course is complementary to others in

Labor Law, including LER 434, Collective Bargaining and LER 435 Labor Relations in the Public Sector. The course requires no special facilities or equipment; however, students enrolled are expected to have computer skills sufficient for communication and word processing purposes.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits in Labor and Employment Relations or Political Science

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 403: International Human Resource Studies

3 Credits

Course exploring human resource management from an international perspective. LER 403 International Human Resource Studies (3) (IL)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course on International Human Resource Management expands beyond the traditional disciplines of HRM through a broader consideration of the impact of national contexts on these areas of organizational practice. The first question addressed is whether "HRM" actually means the same thing in different countries, especially given that the term "HRM" was developed from US management practice and scholars. This opens the discussion as to how institutions and culture at the national level help to shape management practice. As organizations become increasingly global, these issues of national culture and institutions can often stand in the way of a seamless progression of HRM across national boundaries. From a national culture perspective, the course compares how people in different countries see themselves and others around them, and how expectations, values and beliefs can differ in the workplace. This understanding is drawn from frameworks of national culture which describe the culture's multiple dimensions. This enables students to identify why and how it may be different working with colleagues from other cultures, as well as understanding the implications this can have for designing appropriate HRM practices. From a national institutions perspective, the course compares how institutions such as legislation, state intervention, trade union influence, education systems, and the respective power of shareholders versus stakeholders can impact on patterns of HRM and employee relations practices in different countries. For example, comparisons are made between economies with very high levels of employment regulation, explaining local employee rights and benefits, and those in which firms have more autonomy to choose how to manage their employees. From a strategic perspective, the course looks at how multinational enterprises are managing this cultural and institutional complexity, making strategic choices in international HRM to ensure they achieve the ultimate balancing act of thinking global but acting local. It considers different strategies firms might take (from complete standardization of HRM to complete localization) and how this then translates into different roles and activities for the IHRM function. This section also explores how these firms manage their international staff (expatriates), as well as finally exploring ethical issues around outsourcing activities to lower-cost countries, and the impact of a more globalized workforce on diversity and work-life balance issues.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

International Cultures (IL)

LER 409: Leadership Development: A Life-Long Learning Perspective

3 Credits

The course examines the continuing influence of social and environmental factors in shaping leadership and leadership development. LER (OLEAD) 409 Leadership Development: A Life-Long Learning Perspective (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. Current social conditions, such as financial crises, ineffective solutions to local, national, and international problems and corrupt leaders, call for more effective and ethical leadership on a broad scale. The positive and moral transformation of social institutions requires active participation and leadership of more authentic transformational leaders. This course will discuss authentic transformational leadership development from a life span developmental perspective. More specifically, it will focus on how an individual develops his/her leadership skills, potential, and capacity in his/her childhood, school, social organizations, colleges, and work organizations. The primary purpose of this course is to help students understand how family, educational, and other environmental factors have helped and/or will help them develop their transformational leadership potential and leadership effectiveness, in addition to gaining a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in respect to personality, individual difference, motivation, values, emotions, self-awareness, and identity. The fundamental objectives of this course are to help students 1) increase self-awareness; 2) to help students to know more about their sense of self, including self-identity, self-awareness, self-efficacy, and other types of self-concepts; 3) to understand the effect of life span influences in an individual's leadership development.

**Prerequisite:** 6th semester standing

Cross-Listed

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 410: Employment Strategies for People with Disabilities

3 Credits

Develop knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to understand and practice effective employment strategies in working with people with disabilities. This course is designed for students to develop knowledge, skills, and necessary resources to understand and practice effective employment strategies in working with people with disabilities, including individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds. Students will develop skills on networking with employers (e.g., social media, professional organizations, interviewing employers, etc.) for building professional contacts and networks. Various forms of labor market information will be analyzed to identify both challenges and opportunities for people with disabilities in different sectors of the labor market (primary and secondary). Throughout the course, students will learn about disability issues in the workplace (e.g., laws, policy, stigma, accommodations, etc.). A strong emphasis will be on understanding how laws and policies impact employment for people with disabilities, and students will identify legal and illegal practices. Best employer practices will be identified regarding mitigating disability impact on both employees (current and future) and employers. This course will incorporate Assistive Technology (AT) applications so students will be able to identify appropriate AT devices to assist people with disabilities in obtaining and retaining employment along with applicable strategies for working with employers in developing employment opportunities in today's changing world of work. Students will understand how disability is a critical component of workforce diversity and strengths people with disabilities bring to the workplace. Students will identify how people with disabilities should

prepare for the employment process including training opportunities (formal and informal), resume development, interview preparation, and initiatives to promote increased employment outcomes. Different disability populations (e.g., youth, Veterans, aging workers, etc.) will be discussed including common barriers for employment as well as how to create opportunities in different employer settings.

Cross-listed with: RHS 410

#### LER 424: Employment Compensation

3 Credits

Development and management of employee compensation systems. LER 424 Employment Compensation (3) Employment Compensation provides an overview of compensation programs, practices, and strategies. This course examines various compensation systems, that serve as an integral component of human resource management operations. Upon completion of this course, students will have a better understanding of compensation program design and development, the criteria used to compensate employees, and challenges that compensation professionals may encounter. Requirements for this course include regular attendance and participation, completion of three case studies, three project assignments, and three examinations which will consist of short answer and multiple choice questions.

**Prerequisite:** LER 201 and sixth-semester standing  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

#### LER 425: Employee Benefits

3 Credits

The examination of employee benefits programs used by employers to meet the welfare needs of employees and their families. LER 425 Employee Benefits (3) This course is a comprehensive survey of the programs, principles and trends in planning and administering employee benefit programs for private and public employers. The objectives for this course are to provide students with an understanding of employee benefit programs and their broad implications for the workplace, the role of employee benefits in motivating and retaining employees, and the recent trends in employee benefit offerings and cost containment approaches. Topics covered include strategic and tactical planning considerations used in implementing and changing benefit programs, discretionary and mandatory benefits, Social Security, health insurance structures, disability and life insurance programs, workers' compensation, retirement programs, executive benefits, paid-time off programs and accommodation and enhancement programs. This course builds on introductory general foundation courses in human resources and labor relations. It provides students with a working knowledge of employee benefits and its important role in human resources and labor relations careers. Students must select and write a research paper on a benefits topic of special interest. Course grades will be determined from examinations and the research paper.

**Prerequisite:** LER 201 and 6th semester standing

#### LER 426: Staffing and Training Strategies in Organizations

3 Credits

This course focuses on the theory and practice of human resource staffing and training in organizations.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits in Labor and Employment Relations (LER) or Human Resources and Employment Relations (HRER)  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

#### LER 427: Organizational Context for Human Resource Management and Employment Relations Professionals

3 Credits

This course examines human resource management (HRM) and employment relations (ER) from a strategic perspective embedded in a complex and evolving organizational system. To be effective, students must understand how different organizational strategies interface with the entire set of HR/ER practices put in place. This approach also requires an ability to connect business functions, governance, organizational metrics and financial considerations with investments in the broader HR/ER system. The goal of this course is to build business acumen by providing a foundational understanding of the components of a strategic and proactive HR/ER system. Through active learning, this course will encourage the development of analytical skills, personal competencies, and in-depth understanding of how various HRM and ER parts work together to shape organizational success. Students are more effective in their roles when they understand organizational strategic typologies, business functions, and governance structures that can affect the structure and implementation of the HRM/ER functions. Other topics include vertical and horizontal integration of the supply chain, and mergers and acquisitions, both of which are important to the work context. Basic finance and accounting concepts relevant to HRM/ER such as profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow enable students to understand how managers and leaders make resource decisions. Students gain credibility with other organizational decision makers by better understanding concepts such as earnings per share, return on assets (ROA) and return on investment (ROI). Understanding the time value of money and implications for decisions regarding investments in people enables students to be more effective in decision-making roles. The goal is to provide students with the fundamentals of the business context as relevant to their roles as HRM and ER professionals. The use of metrics and measures to provide feedback to the organization and individual employees will be examined. The criticality of understanding appropriate metrics and the importance of finding or creating valid, reliable, and bias-free metrics is explored. Learning how to create balanced score cards and associated HRM/ER scorecards can provide actionable insight to all organizational stakeholders. Finally, exposure to conceptual frameworks related to ethics and risk assessment will enable students to apply such frameworks in an organizational context. The goal is to have HRM and ER students develop a deep understanding of perspectives, practices, and tools that connect HRM and ER policies and practices to an organization's context and strategy.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100 and 3 credits in Labor and Employment Relations (LER)

#### LER 428: Total Rewards

3 Credits

This course requires students to learn the link between company's strategy and compensation, and understand core policies necessary to develop effective compensation systems. The core policies include internal alignment, external competitiveness, and employee contribution. First, theoretical frameworks of human resource management and corporate strategies will be discussed to define the relationship between company's strategy and compensation philosophy. Students then will

study how to establish internally consistent and fair pay levels for various jobs using techniques such as job analysis, job evaluation, and competency analysis. The course then will discuss how to collect and analyze salary data and covers 'pay for performance' where students learn the concept of performance management and various incentive practices at the individual, team, and organizational levels. The course will be finalized with the discussion of employee benefits. In this section, students will discuss various benefit options that companies can provide, and various legal issues.

**Prerequisites:** LER 100

LER 434: Advanced Collective Bargaining and Contract Administration

3 Credits

This course examines, at an advanced level, the theory, practice, and impact of the major phases of union organizing, collective bargaining, and contract administration. Upon completion of this course students should be able to describe, explain and participate, at an advanced level, in the major phases of labor relations: union organizing campaigns; collective bargaining (including its preparation phases); grievance processing; mediation; and arbitration, as practiced in industries in the U.S. private sector subject to the National Labor Relations Act, as amended, and the Railway Labor Act. Students will also develop concrete negotiation and grievance administration skills and have the opportunity to apply those skills, with the benefit of observations and feedback. Part 1 of the course reviews the structure of collective bargaining, the determination of bargaining units, and theories of effective labor negotiation. Further foundational study looks at the law applying to the determination, compositions and scope of bargaining units, as well as the law of collective bargaining, grievance handling, and arbitration. The main body of the course introduces students to different schools of effective technique in the negotiation of labor disputes. Part 2 of the course examines the subjects and processes of collective bargaining in detail. In this portion of the course, the course requires small teams of students to conduct out-of-class exercises. The first asks students to resolve a dispute over bargaining unit determination. In this phase of the course, teams of students negotiate a comprehensive new collective bargaining agreement in a hypothetical (simulated) case study. Similarly, students will conduct an exercise in the processing of grievances through a grievance procedure and, in some case, ultimate arbitration. In the latter procedure (arbitration), students will role-play in union representative, management representative, and arbitrator roles, assigned to writing either advocates' briefs or an arbitration award. The course will also include an exercise in the mediation/conciliation of a labor dispute

**Prerequisite:** LER 304

LER 435: Labor Relations in the Public Sector

3 Credits

Analysis of labor relations problems within different areas of public employment. LER 435 LER 435 Labor Relations in the Public Sector (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. Upon completing this course, students should be able to identify the legal frameworks that govern collective bargaining between employers and unions in federal, state and local governments. Students should also be able to explain the process of collective bargaining in the government sector and the special circumstances that make public sector bargaining different from private sector bargaining. At course end, students should be able to identify the parties involved in public sector bargaining, including those involved in dispute resolution, and explain

their priorities in the labor relations process. Students should come to understand and articulate the reasons why it is important to study and more fully comprehend the public sector labor relations process. Together, we will explore the distinctions between public and private sector employers that impact labor relations in the public sector, in order to better understand those distinctions. Also, we will explore the principal historical differences between negotiations in the public and private sectors, in order that students can better articulate those differences. In addition, we will work to understand the principal arguments for and against the right to strike for public sector employees, as well as other impasse resolution processes. Finally, we will work to identify and discuss the challenges facing public sector labor relations in the near term and in the intermediate term.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits in Labor and Employment Relations  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 437: Workplace Dispute Resolution

3 Credits

Dispute resolution practices and procedures used in the workplace and employment law settings. LER 437 LER 437 Workplace Dispute Resolution (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course examines dispute resolution procedures in unionized and nonunion workplaces. The course begins with an examination of grievance procedures in unionized workplaces and the system of labor arbitration. Students will read labor arbitration decisions and learn how to research arbitration issues. The second major theme of the course is an examination of the design and use of nonunion workplace dispute resolution procedures. Students will read descriptions and analyses of examples of nonunion grievance procedures. Finally, the course will look at procedures for resolving employment law disputes and the major public policy debates surrounding mandatory nonunion arbitration procedures. Students will read some of the major legal cases in this area of the law and perspectives both for and against mandatory arbitration. A key objective of the course is to enable students to both understand and think critically about different alternative dispute resolution procedures and their role in employment relations. As part of achieving this objective, the course will include simulated dispute resolution exercises to provide students with experience in using techniques such as arbitration, mediation, and peer review. Additional course requirements include regular class attendance and participation, and paper assignments based on each of three main sections of the course. This course builds on and is complementary with other coursework in Labor and Employment Relations in the areas of employment relations, employment and labor law, and human resource management. It also compliments courses in other departments in the area of dispute management and resolution, including the Minor in Dispute Management and Resolution. LER 437 may also be taken as an elective by students in the MS in Human Resources and Employment Relations and compliments coursework in the graduate program.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 444: Workplace Safety and Health: Principles and Practices

3 Credits

The role of employees, unions, employers, and government in dealing with work-related safety and health issues. LER 444 Workplace Safety and Health: Principles and Practices (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. Workplace Safety and Health: Policies and

Practices focuses on the roles of employees, unions, employers, and government in addressing work-related safety and health issues. The course will introduce students to the three interrelated fields of workplace safety, workplace health, and environmental protection. Students will be provided with an overview of key issues within these fields and gain an appreciation for their importance within the workplace. Students will also become familiar with the fundamental concepts involved in the management of workplace safety and health issues. LER 444 satisfies requirements within the Labor Studies and Employment Relations major and may be taken as an elective. LER 444 is complementary to other courses dealing with employee relations and legal principles within the workplace.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100 or sixth-semester standing  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 445Y: Politics of Affirmative Action

3 Credits

Examines history, politics, and economics of the use of special programs to advance racial interests in the U.S. PLSC 445Y / AFAM 445Y / LER 445Y Politics of Affirmative Action (3) (US)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. The objectives of this course are to introduce students to the relationship between affirmative action and other policies purportedly designed to end racial inequality in the U.S. This course approaches the study of affirmative action in the context of the historic racial discrimination and inequality that Black Americans have faced since the founding of the Nation. The purpose of this course is to help students think about how contemporary and historic affirmative action policies relate to race, concepts racial inequality, the historic and continuing causes for racial inequality, public opinion, American politics and economic thought. The course materials will lead students through scholarly and popular articles, books and video presentations on the topic. It is hoped that students will become familiar with the history of affirmative action from its conception. Students will gain an intimate understanding of affirmative action economic and social outcomes on various racial groups. No prior knowledge is assumed, however a knowledge of civil rights history, quantitative methods, and constitutional law will be useful. The Politics of Affirmative Action satisfies the requirements for major and minor electives for the African American Studies, and major and minor electives for Political Science, and Labor Studies and Industrial Relations. Students are evaluated on the basis of an examination, term paper, class participation and class presentations of papers.

**Prerequisite:** AAA S 100 level course and PL SC001 or PL SC007  
Cross-listed with: AFAM 445Y, PLSC 445Y  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
United States Cultures (US)  
Writing Across the Curriculum

LER 458Y: History of Work in America

3 Credits

A study of selected problems in the history of work in the United States, especially since 1877.

**Prerequisite:** HIST 021 , HIST 156 , or LER 100  
Cross-listed with: HIST 458Y  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
United States Cultures (US)

Writing Across the Curriculum

LER 459: Collective Bargaining in Professional Sports

3 Credits

Students will learn how collective bargaining works in professional sports and how it compares to bargaining in other industries.

**Prerequisite:** 4th semester standing and LER 100

LER 460: Ethics in the Workplace

3 Credits

The course will explore ethics from both a normative and behavioral perspective. A key operating assumption of this course is that every employee of an organization has a responsibility to demonstrate ethical leadership. The course will emphasize the importance and applicability of shared mutual accountability. Four interrelated and mutually reinforcing subject areas will be explored in the course at the individual, organizational and transnational levels ; business ethics, ethics in unionized firms, corporate social responsibility, and sustainability. Students will develop their abilities to articulate their own moral values and to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas within an organizational setting. Students will analyze situations using ethical theories and learn to advocate for particular management and labor relations approaches, practices and policies based on ethical considerations. While no one view of ethics is identified as "best," students learn to recognize, evaluate, compare and apply different approaches. Students also will develop their abilities to identify, read, and explain academic literature related to the topic of ethical leadership from a management and employment relations perspective.

**Prerequisites:** 7th Semester standing LER 304, LER 305

LER 464: Communication Skills for Leaders in Groups and Organizations

3 Credits

Theory-and research-based communication skills for leaders dealing with work-related problems in contemporary groups and organizations. LER 464 Communication Skills for Leaders in Groups and Organizations (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. LER 464 Communication Skills for Leaders in Groups and Organizations is a survey of theory, research, and practice related to the communication processes by which individuals in groups and organizations exercise influence, whether or not they occupy positions of acknowledged leadership, and may be taken as part of an Labor and Industrial Relations major or minor, or as an elective by students in other disciplines. The course is offered once each academic year and has an enrollment limit of 40 students per offering. The course requires no special facilities. It extends to other courses in the major primarily in the areas of Industrial Relations and Human Resources. It is also complementary to courses focusing on groups and organizations in Sociology, Psychology, Management, and Engineering. During the course, students are exposed to a variety of theoretical perspectives on the study of leadership, learn about research illuminating its functions, and become acquainted with communication practices derived from and/or suggested by such theories and research that contribute to the exercise of influence and, thereby, effective group and organizational performance. These terminal outcomes define the objectives of the course. Focus will be on leadership as both role-related behavior and goal-directed behavior, regardless of roles that members of groups and organizations occupy.

Cross-listed with: OLEAD 464  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 465: Collective Decision Making

3 Credits

Application of theories of decision making to work-related issues in groups and organizations requiring collective resolution and action. LER 465 Collective Decision Making (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course presents a broad overview of theories, research, and practices in decision making as related to work-related choice making in groups and organizations and is open to students majoring or minoring in Labor and Industrial Relations, as well as to students who may wish to use the course as an elective. The course is offered once each academic year and has an enrollment limit of 40 students per offering. It requires no special facilities. L I R 465 extends to other courses in the major, primarily in the areas of Industrial Relations and Human Resources. It is also complementary to courses dealing with decision making in groups and organizations in sociology, psychology, and management. Of particular interest are decision making practices, as well as theories that account for them, in single-motive situations (in which participants in the process are pursuing a common goal) and mixed-motive situations (in which two or more of the participants are competitively related, but must cooperate to achieve their objectives). Hence, the course deals both with (1) conventional decision making, as in the case of boards, task forces, problem-solving groups, and quality circles or teams, appropriate to single-motive situations and (2) processes, such as bargaining, negotiation, and dispute management/ resolution, appropriate to mixed-motive situations. The course also deals with the influence of organizational culture on decision-making in both types of situations. Upon completing L I R 465, students will have been exposed to a broad array of theoretical perspectives on decision making in groups and organizations, will be familiar with research testing these theories, and be aware of decision making practices suggested by theory and research that are useful in situations requiring collective choice and action. These terminal outcomes of the course reflect the objectives.

Cross-listed with: OLEAD 465  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 466: Labor Union Structure, Administration and Governance

3 Credits

This course provides a comprehensive description and analysis of the manner in which the American Labor Movement is structure, administered and governed as it pursues economic, social and political objectives.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100  
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
United States Cultures (US)

LER 468: American Labor Unions

3 Credits

Students will examine, debate and gain a fundamental understanding of the current state of the American labor movement.

**Prerequisite:** LER 100

LER 472: Work-Life Practices and Policies

3 Credits

Explore the causes and consequences of conflicts between work, family, and other life commitments, and how these may be resolved. LER 472 Work-Life Practices and Policies (3)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. The interdisciplinary field of work-family and work-life developed as a result of middle-class women's entry into the labor force, a movement that generated conflict between family and paid work commitments. Overall, the course addresses the reasons the field developed, relevant theoretical perspectives regarding the issues, and related problems as well as proposed solutions at both the public and private sector levels. The overarching objectives of the course are to expand students' understanding of conflicts between work and family commitments, and how these might be resolved through private and public sector initiatives. Specifically, the course concerns how individuals, families, and organizations interact to help hinder the achievement of balance between work and life commitments, and relevant effects on those involved. The changing demographics of the family, laws and trends around working time, father and mother time with children, the expanded need for elder care, work-life programs such as flextime, concierge services, paid parental leave, part-time careers, paid time-off banks, and the role of unions, corporations and government legislation are covered. The course attempts to link the likely future needs of students to broader trends in society and how balance could be achieved at the level of individuals, families, other stakeholders in the community, and for society as well. Fields of research relevant to the course include labor studies, women's studies, Industrial/Organizational psychology, the sociology of work and of family, and child development. Students will be evaluated on the basis of class participation, through two in-class examinations, and through a final written or oral project providing a chronology and analysis of an adult's work-family history. The course is offered most fall and spring semesters, and typically 30 students are enrolled.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits of LER  
Cross-listed with: WMNST 472  
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 475: Labor in the Global Economy: U.S. and South African Perspectives

3 Credits/Maximum of 3

This course focuses on how the nature of work is changing in the global economy, and the implications for economic opportunity and inequality in both . LER (GEOG) 475H Labor in the Global Economy: U.S. and South African Perspectives (3) This seminar focuses on how the nature of work is changing in the "new economy" and the implications for economic opportunity and inequality in both the United States and South Africa. Sections of the course examine: theoretical approaches to understanding contemporary process of labor restructuring, including globalization, rise of an information economy, and growth in service sector employment; case studies of restructuring processes in different industrial sectors in both the U.S. and South Africa; and innovative labor organizing initiatives at a local, regional and global scale. This course aims to develop a framework for understanding the nature of contemporary processes of economic restructuring and its impact on the world of work. Drawing on research in both a South African and U.S. context, key case studies in the changing nature of work will be examined. This will provide a deeper understanding of how broad macro-level changes in the nature of contemporary capitalism are mediated by a variety



of technological, political, and socio-economic factors in particular industries and geographic contexts. Finally, an in-depth look at workers' responses to these changes at different scales (local, regional, global) will help deepen our understanding of the contested nature of workplace restructuring while exploring promising strategies for improving working conditions. This is a reading-intensive course dealing with the theoretical literature on rapid economic restructuring and how this is shaping work and employment. It is run in collaboration with the Sociology of Work Program at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, with video-conference discussions linking the two courses.

**Prerequisite:** a minimum of 12 GEOG or LER credits before taking the course (or permission of the program).

Honors

LER 480: Current Issues in Human Resources

3 Credits

Examines current issues in the field of human resource management, including innovative work schedules, telecommuting, non-traditional office environments, etc. LER 480 Current Issues in Human Resources (3) Students will study current trends that are shaping human resources management. These trends include information technology, internationalization, new organizational forms, changing demographics, and competitive landscape. Examples of topics include use of social media in human resource management, virtual work, managing an aging workforce and working across international boundaries. The course is case based and as such explores experiences of actual companies. Students will study and discuss the strategies, successes and failures of companies and how these issues and challenges relate to the human resources function. Timely readings that expose students to theoretical structures underlying these changes will be part of this course. In addition, because this is a current issues class, students will be expected to actively follow trending news in the business world through news media and critically examine how it is shaping the human resource management practices. This course will serve as a complement to MGMT 100, MGMT 341, MGMT 441 and LER 100, LER 201, LER 401 and LER 434.

**Prerequisite:** 3 credits of Labor and Employment Relations and 6th semester standing and up

LER 485: The Business Side of Human Resources

3 Credits

Students will examine the interface between HR, the business model, and other aspects of the business organization. LER 485 The Business Side of Human Resources (3) Students will have the opportunity to learn about important business issues in human resource management that will introduce them to the interface between human resources and other areas of the operation of a business. This course will focus on subject matter that will better prepare students for the broader role that human resource managers are being requested to play in terms of contributing to the profitability of their employers. In the investigation of the course material, students will be exposed to real life examples and experiences, interaction with outside human resource professionals and guest speakers that will broaden their understanding of the concepts learned in their previous course work in human resources and labor relations. Some examples of the subject matter that will be addressed in this course are: Human resource and business ethics; Basic introduction of the interrelationship of human resources and business finance and accounting; Human resource metrics; Employment process; Leadership

and relationship building; Communication in the workplace; Professional networking; Business etiquette; Human resource culture in business. The course is best designed for senior and graduate students who have serious interest in pursuing employment in human resources and/or labor relations.

**Prerequisite:** 6th semester standing and 6 credits of Labor Studies and Employment Relations

LER 488: Career Development Seminar I

1.5 Credits

This course features an introduction to several useful career development resources, development of a personal profile of your career-related strengths and interests, exploration of career options, creation of a career development plan, and guidance for securing prospective internships and other relevant experiences. LER 488 Career Development Seminar I (1.5) This course is the first of two 1.5-credit seminars designed to help students plan and launch their career in labor, employment relations, or human resources. This seminar features an engaging discovery-oriented approach to career development that includes exploration of the world of work, students' personal needs and preferences, and strategies for finding an optimal match in the world of work. This experiential course immerses students in the process of charting their career path and preparing for success as a professional. This seminar fosters the development of practical career management skills that can be applied throughout the students' entire career. This seminar, the first in the two-part series, will help students to chart an overall career track as a professional in labor, employment relations, or human resources. This course features an introduction to several useful career development resources, development of a personal profile of career-related strengths and interests, exploration of career options, creation of a career development plan, and guidance for securing prospective internships and other career development experiences.

**Prerequisite:** 4th semester standing

LER 489: Career Development Seminar II

1.5 Credits

This course is the second of two 1.5-credit seminars designed to help LER majors launch their career in labor, employment relations, or human resources. Both seminars guide students through the process of charting their career path and preparing for success as a professional. This seminar focuses on helping students to cultivate their professional brand, plan a job search strategy, market themselves as a professional in the world of work, manage a variety of interview challenges, and strengthen key work habits that are valued by employers and essential to success as a professional. LER 489 Career Development Seminar II (1.5) This course is the second of two 1.5-credit seminars designed to help LER majors launch their career. The first seminar in the series is targeted toward juniors, while the second is designed for seniors. Both seminars guide students through the process of charting their career path and preparing for success as a professional. This seminar requires students to complete specific career development activities and then complete reflection and application exercises related to those activities. Utilizing a discovery-oriented approach, this course helps students to cultivate their professional brand, plan a job search strategy, market themselves as a professional, manage a variety of interview challenges, and strengthen key work habits that are valued by employers and essential to success as

a professional. The course incorporates services offered by Penn State Career Services and the Liberal Arts Career Enrichment Network.

**Prerequisite:** LER 488

LER 494: Research Project

1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 494H: Research Project

1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Honors

LER 495: Labor Studies Internship

1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Supervised practicum in labor relations setting with union, management, or government agency.

**Prerequisite:** prior approval by department

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 496: Independent Studies

1-18 Credits/Maximum of 18

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

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 497: Special Topics

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject which may be topical or of special interest.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

LER 499: Foreign Studies

1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences  
International Cultures (IL)