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INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Tia Koonse, J.D./M.A., Legal and Policy Researcher Manager, UCLA Labor Center
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Office Hours: Bunche Hall 9246, Tuesdays 1:30 – 3:30 PM (before class) and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Using a combination of cases, statutes, news articles, films, and oral history, Labor & Employment Law will introduce
students to the history of organized labor, current debates and trends, and the basic structure of laws, regulations and
cases that govern organizing to improve workplace conditions. The course covers the primary federal acts and court
cases that govern strikes, picketing, boycotts, and union elections as well as state laws governing wages and hours, and
the right to work free from discrimination. The course also examines challenges to organized labor from inside and
outside the labor movement, including right-to-work legislation, dismantling of public sector unions, and racism, sexism
and anti-immigrant sentiment in the labor movement. The course emphasizes case studies and concludes with new
trends in labor organizing. Expect a mix of guest speakers, oral history, case excerpts, scholarly articles, news articles
and blogs, videos, small group work, and community engagement. Plan to read approximately 20 pages of reading
material per week, in addition to news articles and other class assignments.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Identify major federal laws related to unions and organizing, including collective bargaining, collective actions,
   lockouts, strikes, picketing, boycotts, and unfair labor practices.
2. Identify major trends in labor history and contemporary labor politics, including the rise and decline of unions,
   combatting racism, sexism and anti-immigrant sentiment in union culture, and the rise of worker centers, with a
   particular emphasis on Los Angeles.
3. Analyze statutes, cases, scholarly articles, blogs and news articles relating to workplace issues.
4. Speak publicly in formal and informal settings, presenting well-organized, accurate, and instructive information.
5. Discriminate among and evaluate the relevance and accuracy of sources.

REQUIRED READINGS
Students will find all required readings on Moodle labeled by week. In addition, students must subscribe to the Los
Angeles Times and sign up to receive a daily email that compiles labor and workplace news articles assembled by the
Labor Research Action Network (LRAN) (go to https://actionnetwork.org/forms/sign-up-for-todays-headlines to be
added to the listserv).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

15% Weekly Quizzes
Students will demonstrate their basic understanding of the week’s readings during short weekly quizzes.

25% Oral History Interview and Class Presentation
In 10 groups of 7 to 8 people, students will interview all three categories of interview subjects who:

1. Is currently organizing in any capacity to improve their own workplace conditions;
2. Does not currently work but wants to (“unemployed”), or who currently works but wants to work more (“underemployed”); and
3. Is active or formerly active in a labor union.

Following guidelines to be provided, relevant portions of interviews should be recorded and transcribed and students will present these interviews and their own analyses to the class.

Due: Students will sign up to present their interviews during 10-minute time slots available during Weeks 9 and 10, which take place on 11/26 and 12/3.

25% Weekly Homework
Written Summaries of Labor in the News
Students will write and turn in a summary of three news events per week related to labor and employment law (one event per paragraph, all in the same document). This will facilitate a discussion of each week’s breaking labor news.

Students may source two news events from anywhere (television, the LA Times, the LRAN Headlines listserv), but MUST summarize at least one from the Los Angeles Times each week. Students are required to subscribe to the LA Times (digital subscriptions are $1 for the first four weeks, and $16 each month thereafter) and join the Labor Research Action Network’s (LRAN) “Today’s Headlines” listserv, which emails a daily digest of labor, immigration, and education based news articles.

Due: At the beginning of each class. Students will submit online via Turnitin.

Other Homework as Assigned
In addition to weekly news summaries, students will be required to submit periodic homework assignments. Instructions will be provided in class and through the class website.

Due: As instructed via Turnitin.

25% Research Paper
Students will be required to write one 5 to 7-page research paper about one of three topics: (1) the current General Motors labor strike; (2) recent teacher strikes across the nation; or (3) the recent California Assembly Bill 5 (AB 5), which requires that many “gig” employers, like Uber and Lyft, classify workers as employees.

Due: Midnight, Saturday, 11/30 (Week 9).

10% Attendance and Participation:
I will administer a quiz promptly when class starts that will function as an attendance sheet. Each absence will result in an automatic deduction of 5% of the class grade. Grades may be increased by up to 5% for outstanding participation.
GRADING POLICY

A 100 to 93.4; A- 90-93.3; B+ 86.7-89.9; B 83.4-86.6; B- 80-83.3; C+ 76.7-79.9; C 73.4-76.6; C- 70-73.3; D 65-69.9; F 64.9 and below.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, EXTRA CREDIT, AND PLAGIARISM

Attendance and Participation

For all the obvious reasons (everyone has a wealth of experience with the workplace and will benefit from each other’s perspectives, this class is short, it lasts for 3 hours, and the instructor is currently a practicing attorney during the work week, among others), **attendance and participation will affect your classroom experience and your grade a great deal**. Students are expected to attend every class and to do so having read the assigned materials and prepared the assigned work. There are no excused absences and students must arrive to class on time. Each absence will result in an automatic deduction of 5% of the class grade. I value your time and have designed each class to be useful and informative for its entire duration and will treat early departures like absences. If you have a conflicting work schedule or ongoing family or personal obligations, please don’t hesitate to make arrangements with Kean Flowers, the class TA, or myself, to address this in advance.

Extra Credit

Students can earn extra credit throughout the course by attending specified community events and submitting a one-page summary of the event and their reflections about how the event relates to the themes of the class. In addition, your grade may be marked up by up to 5% based upon outstanding class participation.

Late Work

Late assignments will be accepted for up to half of full credit, no matter what the reason, and no late papers will be accepted after the term ends. Students may receive an incomplete in case of emergency.

Plagiarism

**Writing is hard! Please note that there are important sources of assistance for writing**, like the UCLA Writing Center. To make an appointment or drop-in hours, please refer to their website: [http://wp.ucla.edu/wc/](http://wp.ucla.edu/wc/).

That said, I expect you to do your own research and critical thinking. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Turnitin contains a feature that rejects papers that have plagiarized. I know that sometimes it’s difficult to say novel things or cite sources appropriately and occasionally plagiarism occurs without intent; for this reason, **you will have one opportunity to correct your paper to remedy any plagiarism**.

Plagiarism is considered a gross violation of the University’s academic and disciplinary standards. Plagiarism includes copying someone’s work and claiming it your own, or presenting someone else’s language, ideas, or works without giving that person due credit. Plagiarism is cause for formal university discipline and, at my discretion in consultation with the department chair, may result in:

1. the individual paper that contains plagiarized material receiving an F,
2. the plagiarizing student receiving a lower grade or a failing grade in the course,
3. the instructor reporting the incident of plagiarism to the Department Chair,
4. the student with repeat offenses being referred to Student Affairs for disciplinary action,
5. the student being suspended or expelled.

In addition, once a student plagiarizes, said student will not be allowed to drop the class but must accept the grade earned.
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DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES
If you have a disability that means you require, for example, additional time for quizzes or different access, please inform me and contact the Office for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible at A255 Murphy Hall, (310) 825-1501, (310) 206-6083 (telephone device for the deaf). Website: www.osd.ucla.edu

GRAMMAR, SYNTAX, AND PUNCTUATION GUIDES
APA style http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01
MLA http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/

Class Schedule

Week 1, 10/1: Introduction to Labor Law & Overview of the Class
1. Read “Week 1” reading and turn in summary of 3 news articles related to labor and workplace.
2. Topics:
   a. What laws govern work? Who enforces them?
      i. Labor Law: The Acts, the NLRA and the NLRB
      ii. Federal Employment Law: Title VII, the DOL the EEOC
      iii. California Employment Law: the IWC, FEHA and the DIR and DFEH
   b. The Employment Relationship and Union Protections
      i. Employment At Will
      ii. Working Under Contract
      iii. Union Jobs: Collective Bargaining Agreements
   c. Our Class’ Narrative Arch
      i. The Dark Ages: Before Organized Labor
      ii. The “Golden Age” of the American Labor Movement
      iii. Challenges to Organized Labor from Inside and Outside
      iv. New Solutions in Labor: Why Los Angeles Leads the Way
3. Introduction to Course Materials
   a. How to Read Cases
   b. Statutes, Regulations, and Bills
   c. News about the Workplace
   d. Movies, Books and Radio about the Workplace
4. Videos (if time): Slavery by Another Name and Triangle Fire

Week 2, 10/8: The NLRB and an Introduction to “Economic Weapons”
1. Read “Week 2” readings, turn in summaries of 3 news articles, turn in “Slavery By Another Name” assignment.
2. Quiz 1.
3. Topics:
   a. Key Labor Laws Then and Now (Norria LaGuardia, NLRA, Taft Hartley, Landrum Griffin)
   b. Concerted Activities
   c. Duty of Fair Representation
   d. Unfair Labor Practices
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4. Video: Norma Rae

Week 3, 10/15: Strikes, Pickets, and Boycotts and Intro to Union Organizing Drives
1. Read “Week 3” readings, turn in summaries of 3 news articles.
2. Quiz 2.
3. Record your oral history group members and selected research paper topic at the course sign up page.
4. Topics:
   a. Access to employees during union election drives: Excelsior Underwear, Inc.
   c. What Unions Do: Recognition Cards, Election Propaganda, Discrimination based on Union Activity
   d. What Employers Do: Restrictions on Solicitation and Distribution Interference, Restraint or Coercion, Interrogation of Employees, Polling of Employees
   e. Election Propaganda, Incentives to Employees

Week 4, 10/22: Winning! Elections and Collective Bargaining
1. Read “Week 4” readings, turn in summary of 3 news articles.
2. Quiz 3.
3. Topics:
   a. The process of union elections
   b. What’s it all for? An introduction to contract bargaining.
   c. The Duty to Bargain in Good Faith: NLRB v. A-1 King Size Sandwiches
   d. Mandatory v. Permissive Subjects of Bargaining
4. Video: Lockout

Week 5, 10/29: What’s It All For? Maintaining Contracts, Shop Stewards, and Grievances
1. Read “Week 5” readings, turn summary of 3 news articles.
2. Quiz 4.
3. Sign up for your oral history presentation date at the course sign up page. Submit 3 research questions for your research paper via Turnitin.
4. Class Exercises: Grievance and Arbitration, Collective Bargaining

Week 6, 11/5: Sexual Assault in the Custodial Industry and Union Responses
1. Read “Week 6” readings, turn in summary of 3 news articles.
2. Quiz 5.
3. Guest speaker: Sandra Diaz, USWW, about the Ya Basta! Campaign

Week 7, 11/12: Grocery Workers on Strike! Collective Bargaining in the Private Sector Today
1. Read “Week 7” readings, turn in summary of 3 news articles
2. Quiz 6
3. Guest speaker: Rigo Valdez, UFCW 779, about the recent grocery worker contract campaign

Week 8, 11/19: Worker Centers on the Come Up! New Models in Organizing
1. Read “Week 9” readings, turn in summary of 3 news articles
2. Quiz 7
3. First set of Oral History Presentations
4. Guest Lecturer: Mindy Garland and Malcolm Harris, LA Black Worker Center; Marissa Nuncio, LA Garment Worker Center
5. Topics:
   a. LA Black Worker Center
   b. Immigrant Workers and the Transformation of the Los Angeles Labor and Worker Center Movements
   c. The Garment Worker Center
6. Video may be one of: *Matewan, Struggles in Steel, Salt of the Earth*

Week 9, 11/26: No class; term papers due Saturday 11/30

Weeks 10, 12/3: Worker Centers on the Come up! New Models in Organizing
1. Read “Week 10” readings, turn in summaries of 3 news articles
2. Quiz 8
3. Final Oral History Presentations
4. Guest Lecturer: Aqui Soriano, Pilipino Worker Center and Maegan Ortiz, Institutio del Educacio Popular del Sur de California, from the California Domestic Worker Coalition; Alexis Nava-Perez, Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance
5. Topics:
   a. Organizing Low-Wage Workers against Wage Theft
   b. Legislative Reform as Strategy
      i. Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights

***This syllabus will likely evolve based on the needs of the classroom. I reserve the right to make changes based on my discretion with advance notice to you.***