

LABOR STUDIES: A.A., A.S., B.A., B.S., B.P.S.

As a student of Labor Studies, you will examine the topics of work, workers and worker organizations. You will study the history of the labor movement, labor law and collective bargaining, and focus on current problems and policies generated by changes in the global economy, technology, the workforce and the workplace.

You will sharpen your skills in writing and research and critical reading and thinking, as, together with a faculty mentor, you create a program to meet your specific needs and goals. Labor Studies is an interdisciplinary field which draws on the methodologies and subject matter of the social sciences and humanities and other interdisciplinary areas, such as American studies, women's studies and African-American studies.

Degree programs in Labor Studies offer students the opportunity to develop individualized degree plans based on their intellectual, professional, and personal interests. General program guidelines can be found on the "Program Details" tab, and students will work with an academic mentor to choose courses that meet the guidelines and address each student's individual interests. Students can also work with their academic mentors to identify applicable transfer credit, prior college-level learning, and possible course equivalencies. Working with a mentor and using SUNY Empire's educational planning process, students can develop a specialized concentration in Labor Studies by following the general program guidelines as well as any applicable concentration guidelines. Students may also develop their own concentrations.

For more information about general undergraduate degree requirements, please visit Earning an Undergraduate Degree (<http://catalog.esc.edu/undergraduate/earning-undergraduate-degree/>).

Labor studies degrees are offered online and through The Harry Van Arsdale, Jr. School of Labor Studies (<https://www.esc.edu/labor-studies-school/>) in New York City.

Labor Studies comprises an examination of work, workers and worker organizations both historically and in a contemporary context.

Labor Studies is an interdisciplinary field that draws upon the methodologies and subject matter of the social sciences and humanities. Scholars in other interdisciplinary fields, such as American studies, women's studies and African-American studies, have also helped to define Labor Studies methodologically.

Concentrations in Labor Studies generally include studies that focus on aspects of history, sociology, economics and politics pertinent to labor. In addition, Labor Studies students should be able to express their ideas clearly, both orally and in writing, and should be capable of undertaking research in relevant areas.

While Labor Studies degree programs will vary in focus and approach, they should include exposure to:

- historical perspectives on the changing nature of work and the role of workers in effecting social change;
- theories of social stratification and the interaction of class, race and gender;
- examinations of economic, social and political change as they affect workers in the United States and internationally;

- and quantitative or other methodological perspectives appropriate to the concentration.

A variety of degree designs can correspond to the guidelines. While no individual degree program need include all of the following, Labor Studies students consider such topics as:

- The breadth of labor studies – the interdisciplinary characteristics of Labor Studies; methodologies that labor studies specialists draw from the social sciences and humanities; subject matter from other disciplines relevant to labor studies.
- Labor history – the impact of workers and labor movements on historical development; how history has shaped labor's role in society; how organized workers and those outside trade unions have come to recognize distinct interests and traditions; how workers formulated strategies for defending and extending their interests in light of employer interests and government policy.
- Institutional dynamics – what labor organizations do and how they function; how workers utilize political institutions to achieve their goals; how family, community and educational structures define labor; how racial, gender and ethnic identities influence work, the workplace and the labor movement.
- Social and cultural factors – how class, racial, ethnic and gender divisions function within society; how social identities are formed and social inequalities maintained or modified; how people experience and affect social structures and institutions.
- How the economy affects labor – how market economies create the framework for labor movements; how worker and employer interests manifest themselves in the workplace; how wages are determined; how local, regional and international economic development affect labor.
- Labor-management relations – how workers organize unions; how workers bargain for and enforce contracts; how labor addresses such issues as wages, hours, health and safety, and social benefits; how management responds to worker strategies; how legislation mirrors and influences labor relations; how government's role in labor-management relations changes.
- Workers outside the United States – the degree to which the histories, interests and institutions of workers in other countries are similar to those of their counterparts in the U.S.; regional or global trends that affect workers in different parts of the world.
- Images of workers – how images of work, workers and their organizations are depicted in literature, the arts and the media; how workers create images of themselves.
- Theories of the labor movement – philosophies that analyze, influence and reflect labor's growth; how the labor movement shifts divergent perspectives regarding short-term and long-term objectives.

NOTE: The Labor Studies area of study is offered only in New York City and through online study.