

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ONLINE COURSES OFFERED IN LABOR STUDIES

What is an online course?

An online course is an online seminar and is the same as a classroom course, except the entire course takes place online. There are no face-to-face meetings where you are required to participate in order to pass the course. You are not required to log onto the course at any specific time. You are however, expected to read, complete, and submit all required assignments; answer and post responses to the online discussion forums demonstrating your knowledge of the assigned readings (remember to post in a timely manner – generally, the later you post to the forum, the lower your grade); and read all relevant messages and or materials posted by the instructor.

What is a compressed course?

A compressed course is a course is shortened version of a regular full-length course. The time is shortened but the content of the course is the same and therefore the course becomes like an intense seminar.

Our compressed courses run for 6 weeks. Compressed courses are offered each fall, spring, summer I and summer II semesters. You are required to do just as much work as in a regular 15-week semester course. To do well in compressed courses you must be able to work independently, seek help when you need to, be very diligent, set aside enough time per day to complete all readings, post to the discussion forums, read other students' and the instructor's forum posts, and take assigned tests or complete assigned papers.

Where do I find the course?

Labor Studies' courses are taught on Oncourse. Go to: <http://oncourse.iu.edu>.

The course will not include time for you to learn to navigate Oncourse. Students who need technical assistance and support with Oncourse should:

1. Read "Getting Started with Oncourse: Student Guide." Before you log-in, look to the top left for "Student Resources" and view or download this and other helpful information.
2. Once you are logged in, there is a "help" link under the words Oncouser.iu.edu in the upper right corner, which contains a detailed navigation tutorial. Take time to go though the entire program if you aren't already familiar with it.
3. Contact the Oncourse Help Desk if you have questions: 855-6789.
4. As well, many courses have an Online Student Assistant who can help you. Email the OSA through Oncourse email.

Do I have to log onto my course at designated times?

Web-based courses are designed to be very flexible. Your web-based course is available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. While you do need to log into the course on a regular basis

to participate in student discussions, you do not have to log onto your course at designated times during the week. Online discussions take place in discussion forums, where students and instructors interact with one another at various times throughout the week, please log into the class at times convenient to you and at times designated by the instructor from time to time. Check emails daily.

What about books?

You must buy your books for the class to be able to follow the content of the course. Review the syllabus posted by your instructor. This will have the required book needed for the course. You can purchase your book through IUB or TIS bookstores. You also have the option of the Barnes and Nobles Bookstore online where you can request in-store pick-up and delivery to your nearest IU bookstore, just as you would in a face-to-face course.

What about grading

Each week you do the reading and then log in at various times to read and post to graded discussion forums based on instructor-posed questions. Generally, participation in the forums is 20%-40% of your course grade. Oncourse has a feature that tracks the number of times you use the forum, respond to someone's posting and post to the forum, and this helps the instructor evaluate your participation and knowledge as well.

Exams offered by the instructor may be multiple-choice and/or true/false, using Oncourse "Tests and Surveys" under "Tools," or essay exams done at home and emailed to the instructor. The syllabus will outline course requirements. Generally, instructors use the Oncourse Grade Book (under the "Tools" menu) to post grades on discussion forums and exams.

How do I contact the instructor?

You can email your instructor through Oncourse email. You can also call your instructor or use another email account if such information is provided on the syllabus. However, since DLS online courses are offered statewide, your instructor may be at another campus, so personal walk-in and office appointments may not be an available option.

What computer hardware and software do I need in order to take an online course?

You can take online courses using an Internet browser (Netscape or Internet Explorer) on a PC or Macintosh computer with Internet access. Online students should be comfortable typing, using basic word processing, and navigating within Internet sites. Downloadable lectures and exams are generally written in Microsoft Word. Of course, the faster your Internet connection (DSL or cable), the easier it will be for you to move quickly through course material on Oncourse.

What is the Labor Studies Program?

Labor Studies is a statewide, independent unit with faculty on six of the nine IU campuses. We also teach online at Southeast, East and Columbus. We are a relatively small program with 16

full-time instructors on all six campuses, plus a number of part-time/associate instructors. Click on www.labor.iu.edu for more information on the Labor Studies Program.

What is the Labor Studies Program about?

The field of Labor Studies analyzes issues facing workers and labor from a multi-disciplinary perspective, drawing on and synthesizing the fields of sociology, history, law, economics, political science, business, and industrial relations.

The Labor Studies Program mission statement states that the Labor Studies Program in the School of Social Work is a multidisciplinary program that “provides credit and non-credit university-level education for current and future workers to increase knowledge, understanding and critical thinking about work and labor organizations within today’s global context; broadens access to the university for working-class and other underserved constituencies, providing opportunities for life-long learning and college degrees; collects, systematizes and creates new knowledge in collaboration with our students; examines the global socio-economic system and the impact of its inequalities on working people; promotes respect for workers and understanding of working class histories, experiences, perspectives and knowledge; empowers our constituents to be engaged citizens, and social and political agents of change who will create a more just and equitable world of work”.

Labor Studies is not a “Human Resources” or “Industrial Relations” program. In all Labor studies classes you should assume the instructor will take a pro-worker and pro-labor stance, although rigorous analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and flaws of the labor movement are expected.

Can I earn a degree from Indiana University entirely online?

Yes. The Labor Studies Program offers a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree, and Associate of Science (A.S.) degree, and a Certificate of Labor Studies. It is now possible to fulfill all your Labor Studies requirements towards these degrees through online courses. In addition, IU offers a growing number of other web-based courses that you can take to fulfill the other requirements of the degree.