

Service and Research Based Learning in Labor Studies (Tools Report)

A Report Submitted January 25, 2000 by:

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Grant activities began Spring quarter, 1999. Steve Marquardt, a PhD candidate in History began working in late Spring quarter to develop and expand the program's range of labor contacts, find experiential learning opportunities for students at all three campuses and all program levels (service learning, research seminars, and internships), help the Bothell and Tacoma programs to develop their own new course-based offerings, and conduct outreach activities to make students aware of the new opportunities for academic work with labor. Three meetings of faculty and staff from the three campuses have taken place since June, for sharing of information, discussion of common problems, and brainstorming of new initiatives. In addition Marquardt has sent out regular three-campus "Tools Updates" informing program participants of developments and contacts, and made frequent visits to the individual campuses and their respective labor constituencies.

The original grant proposal envisioned three levels of student opportunities for experiential academic work with labor, and labor related institutions and organizations: service learning, research seminars, and internships. With the help of the resources provided by the Tools grant, the Center has been able to develop and expand its offerings on all three levels. Attached reports describe these activities on the Tacoma and Bothell campuses in some detail. The remainder of this report will focus on three-campus and Seattle-specific program developments.

Service Learning

As a result of our newly broadened range of labor contacts (and of the ferment in Seattle social justice organizations as a result of the November-December WTO events) the

Labor Studies' program's introductory course was able to offer a wide array of service-learning opportunities. With considerable assistance from the Carlson Center, 34 students from the introductory course found service-learning placements Fall quarter 1999. As in past years, the Carlson Center greatly facilitated these placements, but Labor Studies' new staff resources made it possible for the first time to quickly develop new opportunities for a number of students whose interests lay outside of the sites in place before the course began. In addition, we began to refer students in non-Labor Studies classes on the Seattle campus, in programs from Forestry to Geography, to labor-oriented service learning opportunities. It is noteworthy that several of these opportunities were initially developed by the Bothell and Tacoma programs, an indication of the productive resource-sharing involved in the three-campus approach.

Research Seminars

While the graduate student assistant was involved in the initial meetings with labor groups that ultimately led to the seminar offerings in Tacoma and Bothell, faculty from those campuses, with the time-off and staff assistance provided by the grant, carried out most of the course development. Their reports are attached.

The Seattle campus' 1999 research seminar involved teams of students, who carried out research in support of five ongoing or potential (exploratory) labor organizing campaigns. Unions included the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech-CWA), the United Farm Workers, and the Building Trades Council, among others. While in some cases the research led to decisions not to undertake an organizing campaign (a very important research result) other research is now being used in active campaigns to organize unorganized workers. There were also two additional projects that were more academic and policy-oriented. One student co-authored a paper with Margaret Levi and a graduate student, Matt Moe, that involved data on the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and is soon to be published. Two students worked on a follow-up survey on labor-management cooperation in the public sector as part of the Ford funded project directed by Levi and Professor Jon Brock.

Union representatives were uniformly impressed by the quality and quantity of research students carried out, and most students found it a much more meaningful and exciting research experience than the traditional research paper. Several of the students found meaningful internships, research, or service work as a result of participation in the class. One has been placed in one of the “prestige internships” developed by the Center through the Tools grant (see Appendix 1). A second is now working as the undergraduate assistant to the Ford Foundation project on Labor-Management Cooperation and is preparing the survey she undertook in 409 for presentation at a professional meeting. A third took a student job with the Carlson Center.

With the added resources provided by the grant, the labor studies program is expanding this year’s research seminar offerings, in two ways. First, the Political Science/Economics seminar (described above), which has been offered in the past on a one quarter basis, will be offered as a two quarter series, for students and their supervisors whose research projects are sufficiently complex, exciting, or long-term in nature that one quarter is insufficient. In addition, the presence of the graduate student staff assistant means that support for student projects will no longer be limited by the time available of the professor and the (frequently harried) labor organizers involved. Unions participating in this year’s seminar series include: the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech-CWA), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU local 6), the Hotel and Restaurant Employees (HERE), and the United Auto Workers, among others. The two non-organizing projects are: 1) Research on the events surrounding the WTO as part of the History Project that the Center for Labor Studies is directing in collaboration with the UW Libraries and with some support from the Dean of Arts and Sciences; 2) A review of the living wage campaigns around the country as part of a project being contemplated by Professors Levi, David Olson, Shelly Lundberg, and Elaina Rose.

The second expansion of our seminar offerings is a new course being offered through the History department. Many of the labor organizations contacted since last spring spoke of interest in having student help with researching their own histories, and we soon realized

that it might be more productive to approach these requests through a course, rather than through individual internships. Writing “usable” history for a labor audience presents distinct challenges of audience, approach, and research location. We approached the chairman of the History department about offering a course emphasizing these themes as a senior seminar (HIST 498) The department, with the generous assistance from the Center for The Study of the Pacific Northwest, agreed to fund such a course (HIST 498f) for Spring quarter, to be taught this year by a graduate student with long involvement in the Labor Studies program and in subsequent years by a faculty member associated with Labor Studies. In addition, the Allen Library’s “Digital Initiatives” program will work with us and the seminar faculty, to provide support for the addition of digitized images to student-written histories, in print, cd-rom, and web-based formats. This dimension should vastly increase the access of union members to their own histories, and enhance the skills of the participating student labor historians. The list of participating labor organizations is still being developed, but will include the Hotel and Restaurant Employees, the Asian and Pacific American Labor Alliance, the Western Pulp and Paper Workers, and the Snohomish County Labor Council.

A possible innovation for next year’s research seminars, perhaps on more than one campus, would involve the participation of a well-known labor and community activist-scholar from the Los Angeles area, Anthony Thigpenn. Thigpenn’s “power-mapping” training sessions have the potential to better structure the research of separate student research teams, and integrate them into a larger research agenda. The graduate student assistant spent some time over the summer exploring the possibility of Thigpenn’s participation in the Tacoma research course, but scheduling conflicts ultimately prevented this from occurring. Thigpenn has expressed interest, however, in being involved in next year’s program.

INTERNSHIPS

High-Status (paid) Internships

Another central focus of the summer's activities was the development of high-status, paid internships to serve as capstone experiences for advanced students in Labor Studies. By the first week of October, the Center had established three such internships for Fall quarter. The first was a research internship with the Washington State Governor's office on policy implications of the changing nature of employment. A student who had done outstanding work in the previous year's labor research seminar filled this position. A second internship was created to facilitate meetings and carry out research (and other and tasks as needed) for the working group on Port competitiveness composed of the Port of Seattle, the Longshore union (ILWU) and port terminal operators. A graduate student in Political Science, who has long been associated with the Labor Studies program, filled this internship, and the material she gathers will be the basis of her dissertation research. Finally, an internship with a new Seattle-area foundation, The Center for a Changing Workforce, which does research and advocacy around issues affecting temporary or "contingent" workers, was established, but has so far failed to attract student applicants.

A second set of high-status, paid labor internships was created for Winter quarter. The Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) took on an intern for its work with the 2000 session of the state legislature, in Olympia. As befit its unusually high stipend and the challenging and rewarding nature of the work involved, the selection process for this internship was quite competitive, with expressions of interest from all three campuses. In the end, the undergraduate program assistant for the Tools initiative on the Bothell campus was chosen by the WSLC for the internship, and is presently serving in Olympia. This internship will be available for next year's legislative session as well, and with more advance planning, and better coordination of academic schedules, the WSLC's timeline, and the work of related programs (such as the Washington State Legislative Internships program) an even greater degree of competition and selectivity can be anticipated. A second paid internship that will likely be ongoing was created with Seattle Union Now, a project of the King county Labor Council that provides support for union organizing

efforts. This internship attracted several applicants from the Seattle campus, and a student who had done outstanding service-learning work in the Introduction to Labor Studies course was chosen for the position. Finally, the internship with the Center for a Changing Workforce remained available, but again failed to attract applicants. The graduate program coordinator is currently working on development of additional paid internship positions for Spring quarter, and for next year, but no further internships are confirmed at this time.

Entry-level (unpaid) Internships

As our program develops contacts with labor organizations, they frequently tell us of needs and opportunities for student involvement that do not fit within the service learning or research seminar formats. At the same time, as word of our program has circulated among undergraduates, the graduate program coordinator is increasingly approached by students who are either unprepared or unable due to schedule conflicts to apply for the more demanding prestige internships, but who nonetheless would like to work with labor on an internship basis. We have welcomed both kinds of contacts as opportunities to expand the reach of our program.

Fall quarter two such internships came together, with two separate locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. In the first, a student who had done outstanding service learning work in the previous year's introductory labor studies course helped prepare the union's legislative lobbying efforts for the 2000 legislative session. In the second, a student in the History of Ideas program with an interest in public history helped the union prepare a publication celebrating its centennial, a project which could not wait until the spring labor history seminar.

For winter quarter, the graduate program coordinator developed four unpaid internships to meet the needs of various students and labor organizations. Two students from the Seattle campus (including one who had been a student in the previous quarter's introductory course) were placed in unpaid internships. One is now working with the Snohomish County Labor Council, researching non-union businesses in the vicinity of

Paine Field in Everett. The second is working with Seattle Union Now, conducting interviews of contingent workers for an upcoming King County Labor Council public opinion campaign in support of organizing in contingent workforces. In addition, a student from the Tacoma campus was placed in an internship with the Washington State Labor Council, helping mobilize union members in support of the recently issued regulations on ergonomic safety, and a student from the Bothell campus is working with the Service Employees International Union, Local 6, doing research in support of its “Justice for Janitors” campaign.

Several of these internships show the benefits, not only of the three campus approach, but also of the multi-leveled nature of the CLS’ experiential learning opportunities. Not only have we begun recruiting students from other levels of our program offerings, and placing interns from one campus in positions developed on other campuses, but interns on all three campuses can benefit, where appropriate, from the training and resources mobilized for the research seminars. This quarter, for instance, the student from Bothell, and both interns with Seattle Union Now, will attend research skills training sessions and work on some projects in common with students enrolled in the Political Science/Economics labor research seminar. These synergies can be expected to grow as the program faculty, staff, and labor movement partners develop experience working together.

Student Recruiting

While the Center has had a great deal of success in developing opportunities for student involvement with labor on every level (see appendix for list of labor organizations that have agreed to sponsor UW student experiential learning opportunities since the inception of the Tools grant), our ability to inform undergraduates of these opportunities, and motivate them to apply for them, has not kept pace.

Steve Marquardt has regularly met and communicated by campus mail and e-mail with undergraduate advisors in the social sciences and humanities, encouraging them to talk to students in their programs about the CLS’ internship opportunities. In addition, he has

spoken to a number of classes about labor internships, and talked informally with faculty who teach labor-related courses, asking them to refer promising students to the CLS' program. So far the results of these efforts have been disappointing, with fewer student inquiries than might have been expected, given such extensive recruiting efforts. Another year's operation of the grapevine on student, faculty and staff levels, should ensure that knowledge of the CLS' offerings will become more widespread and the pool of students participating grow. In addition, with clearer knowledge of the timelines of labor organizations and those of other programs on campus (a factor of experience) we should be able to publicize the most attractive opportunities (such as the WSLC legislative internship) in a more timely and well-targeted manner.

Another avenue that shows promise in recruiting more students into the program, is communicating directly with student activist organizations. Letters sent by Marquardt to the student organizations mobilized around the WTO conference, after the conference, drew a large number of responses, though, unfortunately, almost all were too late to take advantage of internship opportunities for Winter quarter. In the future, this kind of contact with student interest groups may be the best way to draw students into the CLS programs supported by the Tools initiative

BOTHELL

Background

We began to develop projects in Spring of 1999. Although we already had one student working with the Snohomish Labor Council, we began to develop the infrastructure to create, place and monitor applied research activities. Our Spring quarter research seminar on Labor Problems provided an initial starting point. Although the seminar generated worthwhile research papers on a number of projects, it became clear that to reap full benefits from the projects we are developing a logical sequence of classes is necessary. This is improved this year and will be better again in the year following. Despite this limitation we have made substantial progress in the six months that we have operated with funding. Several fruitful conversations with Snohomish labor organizations have begun and are beginning to bear fruit as significant applied research opportunities.

During Spring we discussed placements with the Snohomish Labor Council (SLC), the Washington Federation of Teachers (WFT), the Amalgamated Transit Workers, the Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Laborer's International and the Service Employees Industrial Union. Since that time we have been able to place students on projects with several of these unions and have formalized opportunities with others. The number of projects presently exceeds our capacity to ensure quality experiences for all concerned and so we are moving ahead in a very deliberate manner.

WFT Project

This quarter we had no regularly scheduled labor course so we developed a special two credit course entitled Introduction to Labor Studies. This provided a logical entry point for students interested in pursuing applied research. The class gave students an overview of labor issues while they also worked on the project we developed with the Washington Federation of Teachers. This project is a systematic investigation of part-time instructors in Washington's community colleges. Two elements of this investigation were

completed in this quarter. First, a review of existing surveys and the surrounding literature was performed. Second, a preliminary one page survey was administered by the WFT to part-timers in all of the community colleges in the state. Next quarter students will be involved in two additional aspects of this project. First, they will participate in the analysis of the preliminary survey, and second they will develop and administer a more complete survey which addresses key problems in the literature. We expect this project to last into the Spring Quarter when we analyze survey results. Students involved in the project have benefited from visits by Susan Levy, President of the WFT, and Keith Hoeller, principal organizer of the Part-time Association. In addition, the WFT has given students access to meetings of its part-time caucus. This project is providing exactly the type of experiences we hope to make available on a wider basis.

Washtech/CWA Project

Discussions with Andrea de Majewski and Mike Blaine of WASHTECH, a union representing technical workers employed through temporary agencies, has resulted in an agreement that Bothell students could be used to investigate the feasibility of creating or partnering with an "employment center" to contract on behalf of its members WASHTECH. The project would involve an investigation of the relevant market, the law regarding unions and hiring halls, opportunities for in-house training, and the economics of temporary agencies. We expect to enroll students in directed studies for this project in the Winter or Spring, depending upon student availability. Presently, one Spring Seminar student is following up her research on contingent labor by examining the legal aspects of hiring halls.

Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers

Our talks with the AWPPW led to the involvement of a Seattle student in its training program, Challenge to Organize through Membership Education Training (COMET). This program uses labor and employment data that is particular to the pulp and paper industry, that is national and sector wide, and that is international in scope. The national and international data in this program needs to be updated to currently available

statistics. The data particular to the pulp and paper sector, and data particular to the Pacific Coast regions needs to be both updated and expanded.

Presently students from Seattle are also interviewing for an internship with the Snohomish Labor Council. This is an organizing internship that developed out of prior conversations with Darrell Chapman of the IBEW.

Other Internships:

WSLC

Katie Thompson has just been offered a winter quarter WSLC legislative internship .

WFT

The WFT has just approached us to ask that we find them a legislative intern for the Winter Quarter.

SCLC

A Seattle student in now interviewing for an internship with the Snohomish County Labor Council that developed out of our conversations with IBEW Secretary, Darrell Chapman.

Service Learning

In winter 2000 the course Global Labor Markets will provide service learning options for students with organizations such as Global Trade Watch or the Steelworkers. Participating students will work with organizations monitoring sweatshops or corporate codes of conducts.

PROPOSED PROJECTS:

Snohomish County Labor Council

Mike Sells from the Snohomish County Labor Council wants students to work on the history of the council. As the 100th Anniversary of the Labor Council occurs in 2001,

they want to produce a history by the end of 2000. We expect to recruit students either from Dan Jacoby' Winter 2000 History of US Labor Institutions class or by collaborating with the UWS History department which has agreed to arrange a special public history class taught by Ken Lang.

Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers

Students are invited to participate in an investigation and documentation of the history of the AWPPW. This project documents the history of the Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers. Very little of the organization's history is recorded on paper or in an easily accessible format. The scope of this project is flexible. A number of resources are available for use on this project. The purpose of this project is to document the history of the AWPPW. In addition to the normal value of this end product as historical documentation, it is important to the Association in other ways. In particular, this documentation can be used to "re-organize" current membership, to build value among members for the union, and to develop a sense of belonging, a sense of community, and pride among members. It may also help future leaders develop a path forward if they have a greater understanding of where the union has been.

Laborers International Union of America

Bob Monzie at the Local 292 is looking for someone to research the history of the Local. The purpose would be to look at where they have been and where they might be heading. He is willing to work with one or more students and has time and space available for them.

Future Plans:

Our plan is to take on additional applied research projects as directed studies until the Spring of 2001, at which point we expect to formalize these projects in an Applied Labor Research Seminar. The sequence of courses will increase interest and awareness of these projects at the same time that we develop the infrastructure to accommodate them.

Courses:

Fall '99	Introduction to Labor Studies
Winter '00	Global Labor Markets
Winter '00	History of U.S. Labor Institutions
Spring '00	Education Policy and the Economy
Fall '00	IAS CORE (subject will be Work)
Winter '01	History of U.S. Labor Institutions
Spring '01	Applied Labor Research Seminar

We have begun mapping out governmental agencies in Snohomish County and will shortly begin discussions to develop applied labor research opportunities here as well.

Our success in generating internships affects our proposed masters of public policy degree. It is likely that some projects will be attractive in the Masters and may well facilitate a labor track within the Masters.

TACOMA

The first product of our grant in Tacoma so far has been our fall course, Labor, Race, Gender and Poverty: Explorations in the Local Labor Market. This was accepted as a temporary course in the Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences curriculum and could become permanent depending on our future needs. The second product is our winter course, also accepted as a temporary course, Labor Research Practicum.

The fall course was listed as a seminar, with the intention of teaching a small research course. Fourteen students took the course. Each of them developed a research prospectus (some working in teams) relating to a focus on the local economy. Students investigated the following topics: a statistical portrait of the Pierce County labor market; work programs in the Purdy women's prison; the Kaiser Aluminum strike (taking place in Tacoma and elsewhere, which has been going on over a year, involving both labor and environmental issues); teacher's unions; workers in the contingent economy, focusing on the international but Tacoma-based firm Labor Ready; the results of the welfare to work program in Pierce County, part of the national welfare "reform"; home health care workers, who receive sub-minimal wages and benefits, in Pierce County; the labor market experience of Southeast Asian refugees (Lao, Cambodian, Hmong and Vietnamese); a comparative study of union democracy in the Machinists, Teamsters, and Service Employees International unions; and the developing economy of the Port of Tacoma.

Each of these projects breaks almost completely new ground. One of the interesting aspects of this course has been to examine local sources and to discover how little research has been done on any of the above topics in Pierce County. In fact,, this is the reason we chose to begin with this course, rather than a company by company investigation. Our hope is that out of this research experiment, we will at least begin to establish a profile of the county and some sense of what research can be done here. Most of the students doing the projects above have had to resort to oral interviews in order to even get a foothold on their topics. Hence, a Vietnamese woman, herself a refugee and

now a case worker for the Department of Health and Human Services, is using her unique position to interview a variety of other case workers and a few recipients in the Indochinese community. In another project, a team of students have gone into the Purdy Prison, speaking to inmates and interviewing the director of the Corrections Department. Others are interviewing labor organizers and workers in various industries. There is so little information available, that this appears to be our quickest way into the topic. As an experienced practitioner of oral history, Professor Honey has been able to facilitate this in a unique way.

Not only is the research in this class path breaking, but we have used the class to access others in the area who have expertise in related areas. Hence, Professor Bruce Mann, economic adviser to the *Tacoma News-Tribune*, spent an evening with us, as did an economist from Evergreen State College, and various leaders of unions and other organizations. In short, we have used a research course as a way to open up avenues of research and also collaborative work with people in labor-related fields in this area. Potentially, this is the beginning of a very interesting and active continuing project. In anticipation of this course, several students formed a Student Labor Organization last year, and that group has sponsored speakers and hosted tea and coffee for the public and students once a week, as part of our speaker series.

This course has required extraordinary preparations. By hiring Jennifer Vernon, a graduate of an International Studies masters program at the University of Oregon, at 20 hours a week, we have been able to facilitate the organization of the course. Jen has also worked with unions to develop internships for the winter quarter, and met with all students in the course on a regular basis to facilitate their research. As undergraduates who have not even had a basic research methods course, most of the students would be lost without this kind of extra support. Margaret Robinson, a student, has also been hired on a very part time basis to help develop class projects. Steve Marquardt has facilitated the course in fundamental ways, meeting with people in the area and explaining research methodology and sources. And Professor Honey has used release time to work with unionists and others to develop this project, Without these extra resources provided by

the Tools grant, it would be extremely difficult to develop such an innovative course.

Some of the materials produced in the research seminar may be useful enough to make available to the public through our library system. Additionally, the work done in this course has helped to set up the practicum for the winter. We met with unionists as early as September 2 to begin the process of developing internships for the winter, and a number of them have come to class sessions and spoken with students. Our next challenge is to recruit enough students to meet the numerous internships we have created. We have perhaps created more than we can fill. It is difficult to find students who can invest the time that an internship requires, but with the added input of our assistants, we hope that the next phase of the work will go smoothly.

We did not begin the new classes until the fall. However, significant preparation occurred in the spring quarter of last year, in which Dr. Honey recruited assistants, wrote up course descriptions and got them accepted into the curriculum, and contacted union leadership in the area.

In addition, although he has not taken any release time to prepare this course, Michael Forman initiated his course on Comparative Labor in the winter quarter of last year, and has gotten it adopted as part of our permanent curriculum. He will teach it again this winter quarter as part of our Tools project. He contributed mightily to the project in other ways in the fall quarter, helping to initiate and Coordinate a one-day seminar at the UW for all three campuses on labor rights in the global economy, in preparation for the World Trade Organization events in Seattle at the end of November. He also worked with the ILWU, one of the unions involved in our Tools project, by participating as a leader in a Saturday training and discussion session on union outreach and organizing with members of the union. These efforts have been significantly connected with our course offerings in research based learning as ways of developing working relationships with unions and people in the community.

Through these and other efforts, Professors Honey and Forman, with the assistance of

Steve Marquardt and Jen Vernon, have significantly developed labor studies on the UWT campus. We hope that such work leads the IAS program to place increased emphasis on labor perspectives by hiring another faculty member who would augment the expertise already existing on labor studies at our campus. We are also considering ways to increase our course offerings as they relate to non-matriculated students who may have a special interest in the field of labor studies.

APPENDIX 1

Labor-related organizations and institutions that have agreed to sponsor service learning, research-based learning, and internships for UW students since the inception of the Tools initiative:

- Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 1576 (ATU)
- American Federation of Musicians (AFM)
- Asian and Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)
- Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers (AWPPW)
- Casa Latina
- Center for a Changing Workforce
- Classified Staff Association-Service Employees International Union (CSA-SEIU 925)
- Graduate Student Employee Action Coalition-United Auto Workers (GSEAC-UAW)
- Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE)
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 174 (IBT)
- International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 23 (ILWU)
- International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 32 (ILWU)
- International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 286 (IUOPE)
- Jobs with Justice
- Leggett and Kram, attorneys at law
- Northwest Labor and Law Employment Office (LELO)
- People for Fair Trade
- Pierce County Central Labor Council
- Pierce County Department of Corrections
- Police Association International Union, Local 6 (PAIU)
- Port of Seattle
- Seattle Union Now-King County Labor Council (SUN-KCLC)
- Service Employees International Union, Local 1199 (SEIU)
- Service Employees International Union, Local 6 (SEIU)
- Snohomish County Central Labor Council
- United Farm Workers of America (UFW)
- United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 81 (UFCW)
- United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 1105 (UFCW)
- United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers, Local 153 (UURWAW)
- Washington Alliance of Technology Workers–Communication Workers of America (WashTech-CWA)
- Washington State Federation of Teachers (WFT)
- Washington State Governor’s Office
- Washington State Labor Council (WSLC)