This seminar will focus on the research and writing of an original scholarly paper on some aspect of American labor history. We will begin the semester with a brief examination of the development of labor history as a district historical sub-discipline, and a consideration of possible research agendas for the future of the field. Then we will be introduced to the rich printed and manuscript collections at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. (The Society's archival holdings in labor history are judged by many to be the finest in the world.) After these preliminary sessions, students will be expected to formulate their own research topics. Each student should feel free to select whatever topic and time period interests her/him. We will discuss possible ideas for papers in class, and each student must speak to the instructor about his/her project before committing anything to paper.

The latter portion of the seminar will be devoted to students presenting their research in three successive stages for the class as a whole to constructively critique. Each student will first write a brief (2-3 page) prospectus, with an accompanying bibliography, outlining the major issues to be addressed in the completed study.

Then, each student will write a draft of his/her paper to be reviewed by the entire class. And, based on the discussion of the draft, each student will then have the opportunity to revise the manuscript into its final form for a concluding evaluation. Details about the procedures and scheduling of these various presentations will be forthcoming as the semester proceeds.

Jan. 26 Introduction to the Seminar
Feb. 2 The History of American Labor History
readings: David Brody, "Workers and Work In America: The New Labor History"
Feb. 9  Research Agendas in American Labor History  

Feb. 16  Tour of printed sources at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin—with James Danky

Feb. 23  Tour of manuscript sources at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin—with Harry Miller

March 2  Individual appointments to discuss proposed paper topics

March 9  Prospectus and Bibliography—each student will make his/her prospectus and bibliography available for the entire seminar to review by Monday, 9 a.m., March 6 or 13, depending on which day the presentation is assigned; a ten minute oral presentation in class should accompany each written prospectus

March 16  Presentation of Drafts—each student will make his/her draft available for the entire seminar to review by Monday, 9 a.m., March 27, April 3, or April 10, depending on which day the draft is assigned; students may make a brief oral introduction to their paper (stressing the points they would like feedback on), if they wish, before it is discussed in class

April 6  Individual appointments to discuss final papers

April 13  Presentation of Final Papers—each student will make his/her final paper available for the entire seminar to review by Monday, 9 a.m., April 24, May 1 or May 8, depending on which day the final paper is assigned; again, students may make a few brief introductory remarks to their final study, if they wish, before it is critiqued by the seminar