

Desirée LeClercq

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Professional Experience

Assistant Professor, 2024-present

University of Georgia, School of Law

Assistant Professor, 2020-2024

Cornell University, School of Industrial Labor Relations (ILR)

Cornell University, Law School – Associate Faculty

- 2020 MacIntyre Award for Exemplary Teaching & Advising
- 2021-2022 Einaudi Center Global Public Voices Fellow
- 2022 Leading Ladies Award, Cornell Women's Leadership Initiative

Director for Labor Affairs, 2016-2020

Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President

Legal Officer, 2010-2016

The International Labor Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland

Staff Counsel for the Chairman, 2006–2010

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), Washington, DC

- 2007-2009, Shop Steward, NLRB Professional Association

Teaching Interests

I teach first year contracts, public international law, international labor law, trade and worker rights, and an international economic law colloquium.

Research Interests

My research explores top-down governance and areas of bottom-up dissent, particularly at the intersection of international trade and labor rights.

Article Publications (* Indicates Peer Review)

Empowerment as U.S. Trade Policy, 64 COLUMBIA JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL LAW (forthcoming 2026).

Resisting Federal Preemption, 77 ALA. L. REV. 209 (2025).

Labor Strife and Peace, 15 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA IRVINE LAW REVIEW 216 (2024)

- Reviewed in JOTWELL

Gender Based Violence at Sea, 57 CORNELL JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW 101 (2024)

**Integrating Non-Binding Labor Standards in Binding Trade Agreements: The ILO's Feedback Loop*, 26 JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW (2023).

A Worker-Centered Trade Policy, COLUMBIA JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL LAW (2023).

Rights-Based Sanctions Procedures, 74 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW REVIEW (2023).

**The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity: Promise or Peril for Labor Governance through Trade Instruments?*, 40 CHINESE (TAIWAN) YEARBOOK OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND AFFAIRS (2023).

**Labor Provisions in Trade Agreements: Recasting the Protectionist Debate*, Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization (2023).

Judicial Review of Emergency Administration, 72 AMERICAN UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW (2022).

Why Conflict Between Economic Development and International Social Rights Governance is Inevitable, 40 BERKELEY JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW (2022).

Outsourcing Enforcement, 62 VIRGINIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW 1 (2022).

**Invisible Workers*, 117 AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW UNBOUND (2022).

The Disparate Treatment of Rights in U.S. Trade, 90 FORDHAM LAW REVIEW 1 (2021).

A Rules-Based Approach to Jam's Restrictive Immunity: Implications for International Organizations, 58 HOUSTON LAW REVIEW 55 (2020).

Strengthening the Southern African Development Community: A Critique of the International Labor Organization's Development Assistance in Swaziland and Zimbabwe, 27 MICHIGAN STATE LAW REVIEW (2018) (pre-academia publication).

Sea Change: New Rulemaking Procedures at the International Labour Organization, 22 ILSA JOURNAL INTERNATIONAL & COMPARATIVE LAW (2015) (pre-academia publication).

**ILO Labor Standards and Trade Agreements: A Case for Consistency*, 36 COMPARATIVE LABOR LAW & POLICY JOURNAL 347 (2015) (with Jordi Agustí-Panareda and Franz Christian Ebert) (pre-academia publication).

Other Publications

Decent Work in the Platform Economy (commissioned labor brief, Korean Labor Institute, December 2025).

How Trade Agreements Promote Forced Labor Prohibitions, to be including in TEN QUICK WINS FOR TRADE, a WTO Policy Brief (Sept. 2025).

A Pragmatic Approach to U.S.-China Labor Tensions, in *GETTING CHINA RIGHT AT HOME: ADDRESSING THE DOMESTIC CHALLENGES OF INTENSIFYING COMPETITION* (Jessica Chen Weiss, ed. 2025).

Enforcement of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) Rapid Response Mechanism: Views from Mexican Auto Sector Workers, CORNELL CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH ON WORK (2024)

Tonia Novitz, Trade, Labour, and Sustainable Development: Leaving No One in the World of Work Behind Edward Elgar Publishing, 2024 – *Kevin J. Middlebrook, The International Defense of Workers: Labor Rights, US Trade Agreements, and State Sovereignty* Columbia University Press, 2024”, WORLD TRADE REVIEW (2024).

Enforcing International Sustainability Standards on International and National Platforms, in *THE SUSTAINABILITY REVOLUTION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS* (Kathleen Claussen & Geraldo Vidigal, eds., Oxford University Press, 2024).

A Tale of Tripartism, A Tribunal, and Trade (in *SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE WORLD OF WORK: POSSIBLE GLOBAL FUTURES* (Anne Trebilcock & Brian Languille, eds., Hart/Bloomsbury Publishing 2023).

Occupational safety and health as a new fundamental labour right: Opportunities and challenges (commissioned labor brief, Korean Labor Institute, October 2022).

Nestlé United States, Inc. v. Doe, 141 S. Ct. 1931, 115 AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW (case comment, 2021).

Strengthening Labor Rights in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement: A Lost Opportunity?, in *THE COMPREHENSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP: ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY* (Jorge A. Hurta-Goldman & David A. Gantz, CUP 2021).

Working Papers (drafts completed)

The Untold Story of International Economic Law and Labor Rights, forthcoming in *INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS* (Holger Hestermeyer & Clara Lopez Rodriguez, eds., Edward Elgar Series 2026).

Private Monitoring and Reporting in Public International Law, forthcoming in a special issue *The Law of Global Value Chains*, in *THEORETICAL INQUIRIES IN LAW* (2026)

Leveraging Labor in Trade, forthcoming in a special issue on the USMCA in *COMPARATIVE LABOUR LAW AND POLICY JOURNAL* (2026)

News and Media

Financial Times, *Trump stiffens farmers, China stiffens Trump*, by Alan Beattie (discussing LeClercq's empirical work on the United States-Mexico-Canada Rapid Response Mechanism) (Dec. 15, 2025).

Bloomberg Law, Employers, Workers Brace for Fallout Over Nationwide Injunctions, Austin R. Ramsey et al. (June 27, 2025) (interview concerning the implications of *Casa v. Trump* for workers and companies).

The USMCA Rapid Response Mechanism: What Do Workers Expect?, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (May 19, 2025).

Inside U.S. Trade. “Under Trump, hope — and recommendations — for the stronger use of RRM” by Margaret Spiegelman (Dec. 16, 2024) (describing LeClercq’s empirical work on the United States-Mexico-Canada Rapid Response Mechanism and blog post on the political implications of the Mechanism).

Financial Times, *How the Democrats Worker-Centred Trade Policy Failed*, by Alan Beattie (featuring LeClercq’s empirical work on the United States-Mexico-Canada Rapid Response Mechanism) (Nov. 11, 2024).

Whither the Worker-Centered Trade Policy?, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Nov. 10, 2024)

Let Them Eat Cake? Reflections on the Labor Provisions in the New India-EFTA Agreement, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (March 2024)

Trump and Biden may be ignoring America’s 130 million nonunion workers—but these voters will be seeking a champion to elect in November, Fortune (Feb. 28, 2024), at <https://fortune.com/2024/02/28/trump-biden-america-130-million-nonunion-workers-voters-election-2024/>.

The U.S. “Worker-Centered Trade Policy is helping some workers in Mexico but not in America, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Sept. 2023)

Stericycle, Inc. Should Have Been Better, OnLabor (Aug. 17, 2023)

WRFI Community Radio, “Desiree LeClercq on the Battle for Workplace Democracy at Starbucks,” (Aug. 22, 2023), at <https://www.wrfi.org/the-scene-2/desiree-leclercq-on-the-battle-for-workplace-democracy-at-starbucks/>.

How to Not Impose Sanctions, Fortune (Feb. 25, 2022), at <https://fortune.com/2022/02/25/how-not-to-impose-sanctions-biden-russia-ukraine-europe-war-economy-putin-world-politics-desiree-leclercq/>.

Biden’s ‘worker-centered’ trade policy fails U.S. workers, Fortune (Jan. 14, 2022), at <https://fortune.com/2022/01/14/bidens-worker-centered-trade-policy-fails-u-s-workers-labor-rights-foreign-policy-international/>.

Inside U.S. Trade, “Outside voices: IPEF and labor, promise and peril,” (Dec. 22, 2022) (describing my article on the Indo Pacific Economic Framework Agreement and its implications; at <https://insidetrade.com/share/175828>).

Forced Labor in International Economic Law: U.S. and Chinese Initiatives, and the Persistent Silence of the Exploited, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Aug. 2022)

Biden's Worker-Centered Trade Policy: Whose Workers?, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Nov. 2021)

Fir For Whose Purpose?: How Panelists Interpret Labor Rights in Trade, and What That Tells Us about the Trade/Labor Relationship, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Jan. 2022)

The Panel Report under the EU-Korea Trade Agreement Concerning Labor Practices: What are the Purposes of Trade Agreements as they Relate to the ILO's Fundamental Labor Rights?, International Economic Law and Policy Blog (Feb. 2021)

A.P. News, *U.S. paves way for resumption of Mexico avocado exports*, (Feb. 2022) (interviewed and quoted)

Biden's "worker-centered" trade policy fails U.S. workers, Fortune (Jan. 2022)

Financial Times, *New NAFTA celebrates first birthday amid controversy* (Nov. 5, 2021) (quoted)

PlanetLabor, *GM-Silao Labor Case* (Aug. 2021) (quoted)

Latin American Advisor, *Do New Labor Suits Mean Changes for Mexico Employers?* (June 2, 2021) (interviewed and quoted)

Law360 Newswire, *USMCA Labor Complaints* (May 2021) (quoted)

Financial Times Trade Secrets, *Efforts to combat forced labour are riddled with complexity* (April 2021) (quoted)

Presentations and Speaking Engagements

Conference Organizer and Moderator, The US-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement and the RRM: Current Dynamics and Perspectives for the Future (Flasco University, Mexico City, July 29, 2025).

Invited Speaker, Trade and Labor (Remaking Trade Project Research Community Workshop, Geneva, June 18, 2025).

Invited Speaker, Trade and Labour (Trade and Public Policy Network Annual Conference, Oxford, June 13, 2025).

Panel Participant, presenting *Private Monitoring and Enforcement in Public International Law* (ComplianceNet, May 29, 2025).

Panel Participant, presenting *Empowerment in International Economic Law* (ASIL International Economic Law Interest Group Biennial Conference, May 17, 2025)

Invited Speaker, International Labor Policy (University of Toronto, May 12, 2025)

Panel Participant, presenting *Empowerment in International Economic Law* (University of Michigan School of Law, International Law colloquium, April 8, 2025).

- Abstract selected via peer review

Panel Participant, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption* (2025 National Conference of Constitutional Law Scholars, March 29, 2025).

Moderator, Pathways to Opportunity: Careers in International Trade & Law (Washington International Trade Association series, March 17, 2025)

Invited Speaker, presenting *A Worker-Centered Trade Policy and the False Assumptions of Worker Empowerment* (Queen's Law, Visiting Speaker series, March 3, 2025)

Panel Participant, presenting *Private Monitoring and Enforcement in Public International Law* (Law and Global Value Chains Workshop (Feb. 27, 2025)

Invited Speaker, presenting *the USMCA Rapid Response Mechanism* for the ChainGE Lab (Tel Aviv University and the European Research Council, Feb. 13, 2025)

Panel Participant, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption* (American Association of Law Schools, Constitutional Law Section, New Voices, Jan. 8, 2025)

- Abstract selected via peer review, one of three papers

Panel Participant, presenting *Empowerment in International Economic Law* (American Society of International Law Research Forum, University of Chicago School of Law) (Nov. 14, 2024)

- Abstract selected via peer review

Invited Speaker, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption* (Power in the Administrative State Workshop, Nov. 22, 2024)

Panel Participant, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption* (ABA Administrative Law Conference, Nov. 8, 2024).

Invited Speaker, testifying before the International Trade Commission, Washington, DC, concerning the effects of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement on U.S. workers in the auto sector (Oct. 9, 2024)

Panel Participant, Getting China Right at Home (Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Oct. 8, 2024)

Panel Participant, World Trade Organization Public Forum, Geneva, Switzerland (Sept. 11, 2024)

Faculty Workshop Participant, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption* (Cornell Law School, April 20, 2024)

Conference Co-Organizer, Conference on Transnational Labor Rights in a Globalized Economy (Cornell University, April 12-13, 2024)

Invited Speaker, presenting *Global Trade as Worker Power*, Supply Chain Capitalism Series, Harvard Law School (March 20, 2024).

Speaker, presenting *Resisting Federal Preemption*, Junior Faculty Workshop, Northeast University School of Law (March 2, 2024)

Panel Participant, presenting *Participatory Pluralism and the Vestiges of Neoliberalism*, Neoliberalism and Capitalism as Keywords in Contemporary History Conference, Yale University (Feb. 23, 2024)

- Paper selected through competitive process

Invited Speaker, Teaching Sustainable Development in an Interdependent Economic World: The Behavioral Turn, American Society of International Law Teaching International Law Interest Group (Aug. 30, 2023).

Panel Participant, presenting on *A Worker-Centered Trade Policy* (American Society of International Law Research Forum, Nov. 2022)

- Abstract selected via peer review

Panel Participant, *Faculty Panel on writing op-eds*, Cornell University (Oct. 2022)

- Participation requested by Cornell's Office of Faculty Development and Diversity

Workshop Presenter, presenting on *Administering Sanctions* (American Society of International Law International Economic Law Interest Group Biennial Meeting, Sept. 2022)

ILR Advisory Council meeting (Sept. 2022)

Panel Participant, "What do Sustainable Supply Chains look like?" (Cornell's New Conversations Project, June 2022).

Faculty Workshop Presenter, presenting on *Administering Sanctions*, Cornell Law School (June 2022)

Panel Participant, "Innovations in Teaching International Law during Turbulent Times" (American Bar Association Spring Conference, Apr. 2022)

- Invited participant

Panel Participant, "Gender & Trade," (Washington International Trade Association, Apr. 2022)

- Invited participant

Panel Participant, "Trade and Distribution Roundtable" (Cornell Law School's Jurisprudence of Distribution (JOD) network and the Center for the Advancement of the Rule of Law in the Americas (CAROLA – Georgetown Law School), Apr. 2022)

- Invited participant

Workshop Presenter, presenting on *Social Sanctions* (ILR school LR/ICL Workshop Series, Apr. 2022)

Podcast Participant, "Law and Governance" (University of Pennsylvania Law School, March 2022)

- Invited participant

Moderator, 1st European Civil Society Forum on Trade and Sustainable Development (European Economic and Society Committee, March 2022)

Guest Lecturer, “International Economic Law,” presenting on *The Disparate Treatment of Rights in Trade* (London School of Economics, March 2022)

Workshop Participant, presenting on *Outsourcing Review of Sustainable Development Obligations to International Organizations* (the Consortium for Arizona-Mexico Arid Environments and the American Society of International Law International Economic Law Interest Group, March 2022)

- Invited participant

Panel Participant, “The Future of the Global Trading System: Trade and Labor Markets” (The Center for Commerce and Diplomacy (CCD) at the University of California San Diego (UCSD), Feb. 2022)

Roundtable Moderator, “High-level conference on trade and sustainable development” (French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Jan 2022)

- Invited by the French ministry

Workshop Presenter, presenting on *Outsourcing Enforcement* (Global Law & Politics Workshop, Jan. 2022).

Lecturer, *Rethinking Gender Provisions in Trade Agreements: Should we Rethink the Current Approach?* (World Trade Organization, Nov. 2021)

- Invited lecture for developing countries as part of the WTO’s Chairs program

Seminar Presenter, “The Disparate Treatment of Rights in Trade” (USITC Economics Seminars, U.S. International Trade Commission, July 2021).

Lecturer, “Trade, Labor and Gender: Comparative Approaches,” and “Trade and Labor” (American University Washington College of Law Trade Seminar, May 2021).

Faculty Workshop Presenter, “Outsourcing Enforcement” (ILR/ICL Workshop Series, May 2021)

Panel Participant, “Empowering Women through International Trade Agreements” (International Trade and Investment Law Society, March 2021).

Workshop Participant, presenting on *Outsourcing Enforcement: The Crisis at Sea and of Governance* (ASIL IOIG Works-in-Progress conference, Feb. 2021).

- Abstract selected through peer review

Workshop Participant, presenting on *Administrating Emergency* (ClassCrits Online Junior-Scholar Workshop, Jan. 2021).

Panel Participant, “How do we fix trade policy to help workers?” (Cornell New Conversations Project, Jan. 2021).

Workshop Participant, presenting on *Administrating Emergency* (AALS 2021, New Voices in Administrative Law and Legislation, Jan. 2021).

Workshop Participant, presenting on *The Disparate Treatment of Rights in Trade* (2020 Roundtable on International Business Law, Brooklyn Law School, Nov. 2020).

Panel Participant, presenting on *The Disparate Treatment of Rights in Trade* (ASIL Midyear Meeting, Oct. 2020).

Panel Participant, “Labor Rights in the Era of Covid 19,” (Cornell ILR Transatlantic Social Dialogue Webinar Series 2020, Oct. 2020).

Panel Participant, “The USMCA (the new NAFTA): Moving to Effective Enforcement of Labor Rights” (ISLSSL and LERA, Sept. 2020).

Moderator, “Global Governance During the Pandemic: Implications of Force Majeure and National Emergency for Worker Rights Protections” (LERA, May 2020).

Panel Participant in “Designing International Economic Law: Challenges and Opportunities” presenting on *A Rules-Based Approach to Jam’s Restrictive Immunity: Implications for International Organizations* (ASIL Int'l Econ. L. I.G. Biennial, Feb. 2020).

Panel Participant and Co-Organizer of Symposium on International Trade, Worker Rights, and Development: New Partnerships for the Future of Work, hosted by American University Washington College of Law and the Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Service (Nov. 2019).

Panel Participant in “Labor and the U.S. Constitution: Past, Present and Future” – International Panel. Cornell ILR School (Sept. 2019).

University-Related Service

Co-Director, Dean Rusk Center for International Law, Spring 2024-present

Committee Member, Dean Rusk Center for International Law, Spring 2024-present

Faculty Advisor, Journal of International and Comparative Law, Fall 2024-present

Pre-Law Faculty Advisor, Cornell 3+3 Program, Spring 2021- 2024

Committee Member, Faculty Search Committee, ILR School, Fall 2021-Spring 2022

Committee Member, International Programs, ILR School, Fall 2020-2024

Committee Member, Labor-Side Masters Curriculum Committee, Fall 2021-2024

Advisory Committee Member, University of Texas School of Law Rapoport Center Alumni Committee Fall 2020-present

Participant, Cornell University New Faculty Teaching Seminar, Fall 2021

Participant, Cornell University Big Red Teaching Days (international labor law class, Fall 2022; Fall 2023)

Professional Service

Executive Committee, Association of American Law Schools, Labor and Employment Law Section (2024-present)

Executive Committee, Association of American Law Schools, International Human Rights Law Section (2024-present)

Co-Chair, American Society of International Law, International Organizations Interest Group (2021-present)

- Elected position

Committee, American Society of International Law, Research Forum (2023)

Designated Candidate, Chairperson for E.U. Trade and Sustainable Expert Panel Proceedings (2022-present)

Reviewer, Oceans Yearbook (2021-present)

Reviewer, Asia Pacific Law Review (May 2022)

Reviewer, Brill Nijhoff Publishing (2021-present)

Reviewer, Global Labour Journal (2020-present)

Reviewer, LERA Competitive Paper Reader (2021-present)

Advisor, University of Arizona's international trade law practicum (Spring 2022)

Advisor, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Collaborative Accelerator for Lawful Maritime Conditions in Seafood (Spring 2022-present)

Professional Memberships

New York State Bar

American Society of International Law (ASIL)

American Bar Association (ABA)

Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA)

International Society for Labor and Social Security Law (ISLSSL)

International Studies Association (ISA)

Law and Society Association (LSA)

Association for the Promotion of Political Economy and the Law (APPEAL)

International Lawyers Assisting Workers Network (ILAW)

Education

The University of Texas School of Law, J.D., *with high honors*, 2006

Texas International Law Journal, Articles and Notes Editor

Judicial intern at the Third Court of Appeals

Capital Punishment Clinic, Equal Justice Clinic

Bar Admission: NY

Indiana University, B.A. in International Relations, *with high honors*, 2002

Honor's thesis: Assessing inherent incompatibilities between provisions of the ICESCR and the ICCPR

Teaching Assistant: Introduction to International Relations

Student Executive Committee, Dean's List, Phi Beta Kappa