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| **HRM & Benefits 37:533:318:02** |  |
| **Fall 2020**  **Tuesday and Thursday**  **1:40 to 3:00 pm**  Professor - Vince Sweeney |  |
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**SMLR Learning Objectives:** This course is designed to help students attain the following SMLR learning objectives:

**(I) Written and Oral Communication – Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry level professional.**

* Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English
* Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights
* Produce quality research papers with proper convention of attribution/citation
* Produce high quality executive summaries
* Make an argument using contemporary and/or historical evidence
* Present ideas and arguments in a logical and effective way

**(II) Quantitative Skills – Apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods for research workplace issues.**

* Formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information
* Apply quantitative methods to analyze data for HR decision making including cost-benefit analyses, ROI, etc. (HRM)
* Apply qualitative methods appropriately, alone and in combination with quantitative methods

**(V) Understanding Context** - **Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions**

* Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experience of, and perspectives on work.
* Analyze a contemporary global issue in their field from a multi-disciplinary perspective.
* Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems.
* Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (LSER).
* Analyze issues related to the selection, motivation, and development of talent in a global context (HRM).

**(VI) Application – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance**

* Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work.
* Understand the legal, regulatory and ethical issues related to their field.
* Develop human resource management functional capabilities used to select, motivate, and develop workers (HRM).
* Understand the internal and external alignment and measurement of human resource practices (HRM).

**Course-Specific Learning Goals:** Upon completion of this course students should understand:

1. The role of benefits from the employee and employer perspective.
2. How benefits actually work and are utilized within an organization.
3. How organizations use benefit programs to further their business strategies.
4. The impact of government, society, tax, law and regulation on benefit practices.
5. The different types of benefit programs and how employers utilize to reach their HR objectives.
6. The underlying costs and value of benefit programs.
7. The ways organizations select, deliver, administer and communicate benefits to employees.
8. The interaction and integration of public, government funded programs with employer provided private programs.
9. How organizations operate regarding funding, governance and grievance resolution of benefit programs.
10. The role of employee benefits in a total rewards program.

**Texts:**

There is no text book for this class. The course material is composed of the Lectures, Canvas questions and answers and Assignments/Exercises. Readings will be assigned from time to time. Students will be accountable for such materials both in terms of questions during class and the examinations.

**Course Description**:

Employee benefits are complex, expensive, very personal and many times misunderstood. The first goal of this class is to have you understand how benefits actually work. If, for example, an organization decides to provide retirement income to its employees, what are its choices? What are the positives and negatives of each choice for the organization and for the employees? Understanding benefits strategy, legal requirements covering benefits, and workforce demographics provides a context for the organization’s employee benefits decisions.

We will also examine many public policy issues such as the role of the employer, government and employees themselves in providing retirement, healthcare and other employee benefits. As you may be aware, much of the national policy discourse over the last several years has focused on benefits issues and this course will provide the background so you may judge, for yourself, which proposals are reasonable.

Additionally, an understanding of the ways organizations integrate mandated programs (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, and State Disability) with their own benefit programs is important. Similarly, an understanding of options in administration of programs is necessary, as is the nature of employee communication programs useful in enabling employees to help make sure their benefits choices and benefits-related behaviors (e.g., medical plan choices, savings elections and investment decisions) meet their needs. Recent trends in benefits management, including cost controls, cost shifting, and other strategies as well as the outsourcing of benefits administration will be covered. Lastly, the course relies on a base of employment law, tax law, management, organizational dynamics and economics.

**Course Delivery Format:**

The course delivery mode is remote synchronous; meaning that the learning activities take place online (virtually) but there will be **live/synchronous** sessions each class.

We will be utilizing this Canvas learning management system to access learning materials, post lectures, make announcements, post discussion items, communicate via the Inbox feature, and provide and submit take home exams and your project presentation. Be sure to check this site frequently as there will be announcements and instructions.

Our class meets (live remote) on Tuesday’s and Thursday’s from 1:40 pm to 3:00 pm

(Eastern Standard Time) via ZOOM

**Attendance**:

There is no formal attendance policy for this class. However, attendance will be observed and noted. There will be Canvas question and answer sessions that take place during class and those not participating will lose points on their 10-point participation score. We will also ask questions of students (chosen randomly) and those not present to answer will lose points on their participation score. Should issues prevent attendance (illness, personal or connectivity), please be sure to contact me.

**Examinations**:

There will be two (2) non-cumulative examinations as noted on the course schedule. Each exam will cover approximately one-half of the course material. Each examination will be worth 30% of the course grade. The exams will be posted and completed on line.

An examination grade of “0” will be assigned to any student who does not take the examination without a legitimate absence excuse on the date of a regularly scheduled test. Legitimate excuses include illness (verified by a note from a doctor), inclement weather only when the Rutgers Information Service (848-932-INFO) indicates that Rutgers is closed, religious holidays, when the instructor emails the class announcing class is suspended or other dire family or personal circumstances.

Students with learning disabilities should present a statement to that effect with appropriate documentation as early in the semester as possible, but certainly prior to the first examination.

A makeup exam maybe be held at a time convenient to the instructor when all students needing to take the makeup can be present. An examination cancelled by the instructor will be held at the next regularly scheduled class period.

**Assignments/Exercises:**

Five (5) assignments/exercises are to be done out of class (homework) and turned in via Canvas (the tentative dates are indicated on the class schedule). The exercises will be posted on Canvas. The first four (4) exercises are worth 5 points each. The fifth (5) exercise is worth 10 points. Exercises not turned in on the due date without a valid excuse (note Examinations section above) will receive reduced or no points.

**Participation**:

Everyone starts the class with 10 points for participation. Points will be lost for not being present for the live remote classes, missing Canvas question and answer sessions or when called on in class and for unacceptable classroom conduct (as described below).

**Grading**:

Grades will consist of the following components. Note that each examination will earn a grade of 0 to 100. Grades on the two examinations will be adjusted to account for 30% of the course score when calculating the final score for the course. Do the work required and you will get the grade. Do not do the work, and you will be held accountable.

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| Mid Term Examination | 30% |
| Final Examination | 30% |
| Exercise 1 | 5% |
| Exercise 2 | 5% |
| Exercise 3 | 5% |
| Exercise 4 | 5% |
| Exercise 5 | 10% |
| Participation | 10% |
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**Grading Scale:**

A = 90 -100

B+ = 85 -89

B = 80- 84

C+ = 75-79

C = 70-74

D = 60-69

F = 59 or below

**Lecture Notes**:

The PowerPoint slides for the lectures as well as the Canvas questions and answers will be posted on the course’s Canvas website.

**Academic Honesty**:

The rights of students will be protected to ensure that test scores are related to competence in the subject matter. Therefore, all examinations will be carefully monitored. If cheating is detected, it will be prosecuted under University policies.

**Classroom Conduct**:

It is assumed that students will conduct themselves in a professional, personal and socially responsible manner while attending class.

If you do the required work, attend and participate in live remote class and respond to the Canvas question and answer sessions when conducted, you will receive a good grade. If you do not do the required work, do not attend or participate in class or respond to the Canvas question and answer sessions when conducted, you will be held accountable and your grade will suffer.

**Please note, the syllabus is preliminary and subject to change based on the circumstances dictated by the current pandemic.**

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**Fall 2020**

**Anticipated Schedule and Dates are subject to change based on course progress.**

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Important Milestones** |
| 9/1 | Introduction of course  Benefits as part of rewards systems  Benefit strategies |  |
| 9/3 | The environment for benefits programs  Employee and workforce demographics |  |
| 9/10 | Cost considerations  Social and legislative considerations |  |
| 9/15 | Retirement  Individual Savings and Social Security | **Exercise 1 due** |
| 9/17 | Defined Benefit Pensions programs,  Pension Funding and Accounting |  |
| 9/22 | Defined Contribution Retirement plans  Investment concepts |  |
| 9/24 | Profit Sharing and 401(k)’s | **Exercise 2 due** |
| 9/29 | ESOP’S and Cash Balance plans |  |
| 10/1 | Comparison DB vs. DC |  |
| 10/6 | Workers Compensation  Unemployment Insurance | **Exercise 3 due** |
| 10/8 | Disability Benefits  Life insurance |  |
| 10/13 | **Mid Term Exam Review** |  |
| 10/15 | **Mid Term Examination** | **Mid Term Examination** |
| 10/20 | Medical and other health benefits  Challenges and terminology |  |
| 10/22 | Cost considerations and cost management |  |
| 10/27 | Flexible Benefits, Indemnity, Managed Care, HMOs, PPOs and HDHP |  |
| 10/29 | Drug and Wellness |  |
| 11/3 | Dental, Vision and Long-Term Care |  |
| 11/5 | Health Care Trends |  |
| 11/10 | Paid Time Off | **Exercise 4 due** |
| 11/12 | Work Life Benefits  Dependent Care |  |
| 11/17 | Family Leave, Adoption Assistance, EAP Educational Assistance |  |
| 11/19 | Flextime, Housing, Business Travel and other benefits |  |
| 11/24 | Outsourcing and vendor management |  |
| 11/26 | **Thanksgiving – No Class** | **No Class** |
| 12/1 | Benefit Communications and Measuring Effectiveness |  |
| 12/3 | What to expect at the next level |  |
| 12/8 | **Exam Review** | **Exercise 5 due** |
| 12/10 | **Final Examination/Last Class** |  |