

HRM 37:533:322:01

Employee Benefits

Fall 2016

Tuesday and Thursday

1:40 to 3:00 pm

Rutgers Cinema 226

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SMLR Learning Objectives: This course is designed to help students attain the following SMLR learning objectives:

(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. An understanding of how benefits actually work within an organization.
3. How organizations use benefit programs to further their business strategies.
4. The impact of governments, societal needs, tax, law and regulation on benefit practices.
5. The different types of benefit programs and how employers utilize to attain 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 purchased text for this class. Assigned readings are on the class schedule. Other 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.

Fundamentals of Employee Benefit Programs, 6th ed. (2009) Washington, DC: Employee Benefit Research Institute. (Assigned chapters on web at <http://www.ebri.org/publications/books/index.cfm?fa=fundamentals>)

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 pensions, 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 and likely to be enacted.

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 and investment elections) 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, psychology, management, organizational dynamics and economics.

Readings:

Articles from *Fundamentals of Employee Benefits*, produced by Employee Benefits Research Institute are online. Required readings are listed on the schedule at the end of the syllabus. Other reading materials will be assigned in class.

Attendance:

Attendance will be observed and noted. There will be exercises and PollEverywhere that take place in class and those not participating will lose points on their participation score.

We will also ask questions of students (chosen randomly) and those not there to answer will lose points on their participation score. Selection will be randomized so if a student is not in attendance, that individual may be called on more than once in any class period.

Examinations:

There will be three non-cumulative examinations as noted on the course schedule. Each exam will cover approximately one-third of the course material. Each examination will be worth 20% of the course grade.

An examination grade of “0” will be assigned to any student who is absent without a legitimate 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 will 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.

Exercises:

Six (6) exercises are to be done out of class (homework) and turned in via the Assignment Tab on Sakai (the dates are indicated on the class schedule). The exercises will be posted on Sakai. Each exercise is worth 5 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, missing Polleverywhere segments 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 three examinations will be adjusted to account for 20% of the course score when calculating the final score for the course.

Examination 1	20%
Examination 2	20%
Examination 3	20%
Exercise 1	5%
Exercise 2	5%
Exercise 3	5%
Exercise 4	5%
Exercise 5 & 6	10%
Participation	10%

Grading Scale:

A	= 90 -100
B+	= 88 -89
B	= 80- 87
C+	= 78-79
C	= 70-77
D	= 60-69
F	= 59 or below

Lecture Notes:

The PowerPoint slides for the lectures as well as other materials will be posted on the course's Sakai website.

Academic Honesty:

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

Classroom Conduct:

It is assumed that students will conduct themselves in a professional and socially responsible manner while in class. To ensure a good learning experience for all students, the following are not permitted in class:

- Cell phones, pagers, text messaging, laptop computers, tablets and smart phones except used for PollEverywhere
- Sleeping, talking, disruptive, studying or doing homework for other courses
- Arriving at class late or leaving class early on a consistent basis

When these behaviors are detected, it is hard to argue you are participating in the class. Points will be deducted from your Participation Score.

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

Date	Topic	Fundamentals of Employee Benefits Text Book Readings
9/6	Introduction, Benefits as part of rewards systems Benefit strategies	
9/8	The environment for benefits programs National and employee demographics	Chapter 1
9/13	Cost considerations Social and legislative considerations	Exercise 1 due
9/15	Retirement and Capital Accumulation Individual Savings/IRA's Social Security	Chapters 2, 5, 6, 16,19
9/20	Defined Benefit Pensions	Chapters 12, 14, 18
9/22	Defined Contribution Pensions Money Purchase Deferred Profit Sharing	Chapters 6, 7, 11, 17
9/27	Thriffs 401(k)/403(b)	Chapters 8, 13, 15
9/29	ESOPS Cash Balance Pensions	Chapters 9, 10 Exercise 2 due
10/4	Comparison DB vs. DC Accounting, Funding and Taxation Exam review	Chapters 6, 19
10/6	Examination 1	
10/11	Workers Compensation Disability Insurance	Chapters 3, 30, 33, 35,
10/13	Life insurance Unemployment Insurance	Chapters 32, 34
10/18	Healthcare, Health Act, Hospitalization, Physician, Drug charges	Chapters 4, 20, 24, 25, 27, 28,
10/20	Coverage Funding Cost Management	Chapter 29 Exercise 3 due
10/25	Indemnity, Managed Care, HMOs, PPOs, Dental, Drug, Vision, Hearing and Long Term Care	Chapters 21, 22, 23, 26
10/27	Retiree Health Exam review	Chapter 26
11/1	Examination 2	
11/3	Health Care Debate	Exercise 4 due
11/8	Paid Time Off	Chapters 30,31

Date	Topic	Readings F = Fundamentals of Employee Benefits
11/10	Paid time off	
11/15	Work Life Benefits: Dependent Care, Family Leave EAP's, Education Assistance	Chapters 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
11/17	Flextime, Housing, Business Travel, Miscellaneous	
11/22	Flexible Benefits Plan Design	
11/29	Outsourcing	
12/1	Vendor Management	Exercises 5/6 due
12/6	Employee Communication	
12/8	Integrating Compensation and Benefits	
12/13	Overview	
12/15	Exam Review and Last Class. Examination 3 to be scheduled	