

Introduction to Human Resources

Course Syllabus



COURSE SYLLABUS

2 Credits (30 hours)

What You Will Learn

Every company that employs people faces HR challenges—whether or not they have a formal HR department. This course introduces students to how organizations hire, develop, manage, and retain employees, and how HR professionals solve real business problems.

Course Length

This course can be completed during a relaxed 7 week period.

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Objectives

LEARN CONCEPT 1: People are a company's greatest asset—and its greatest risk. Every organization depends on its people to perform, collaborate, and grow. Human Resources exists to manage that reality effectively, ensuring employees are supported while protecting the organization from costly mistakes.

LEARN CONCEPT 2: HR is both operational and strategic. HR is not just paperwork and hiring—it shapes how organizations grow, retain talent, and perform. Strong HR systems reduce turnover, improve culture, and directly impact business success.

LEARN CONCEPT 3: Every workplace decision affects performance and culture. Hiring the wrong person, failing to train employees, or ignoring workplace conflict has real consequences. HR professionals design systems that influence how people work, interact, and succeed.

LEARN CONCEPT 4: You can start building an HR career now. You do not need prior HR experience to begin. Communication, organization, and initiative are transferable skills that can open the door to entry-level HR roles and long-term career growth.

Course Overview

Every company that employs people faces HR challenges—whether or not they have a formal HR department. This course introduces students to how organizations hire, develop, manage, and retain employees, and how HR professionals solve real business problems.

From Employee to Organizational Thinker

Most people experience work as employees. HR professionals see the system behind the work: how people are selected, trained, evaluated, and supported. This course helps students shift from simply participating in a workplace to understanding how it operates.

Students will explore real-world HR functions, including hiring, training, compensation, and workplace culture. By the end of the course, students will understand how HR decisions shape both employee experience and business outcomes.

The 5 Traits of Successful HR Professionals

- **Communication:** Clear, professional interaction across all levels of an organization
- **Judgment:** Making fair, informed decisions in complex situations
- **Organization:** Managing multiple processes, deadlines, and responsibilities
- **Confidentiality:** Handling sensitive employee information responsibly
- **Empathy:** Understanding employee perspectives while balancing business needs

Course Outline

Introduction: What Is Human Resources?

Chapter 1: What HR Actually Does

Chapter 2: Hiring and Talent Acquisition

Chapter 3: Training, Development, and Performance

Quiz 1 (Chapters 1–3)

Chapter 4: Compensation, Benefits, and Total Rewards

Chapter 5: Culture and Employee Relations

Chapter 6: How to Start a Career in HR

Quiz 2 (Chapters 4–6)

Final Exam (20 Questions)

Final Reflection

Description of Activities

- Read and analyze course content and real-world HR scenarios
- Watch career-focused videos on HR roles and responsibilities
- Complete quizzes to assess understanding of key concepts
- Participate in discussions on workplace situations and decision-making
- Reflect on personal experiences in work, school, or team environments
- Complete a final written reflection and optional presentation

Rubric for Final Assignment

Essay Prompt, Would You Consider a Career in HR?

After completing this course, respond to the following:

- Would you consider a career in HR — and why or why not? Be specific about what appeals to you or what gives you pause.
- Which chapter surprised you most or changed how you think about how workplaces function?
- Whether or not you pursue HR, what is one thing you learned in this course that will change how you approach your own career or job search?

Write in your own words. Reference specific content from the course.

Final Project: Would You Consider a Career in HR?

“Would I Work in HR?”

Write a complete response addressing ALL FOUR parts below:

Part 1: Career Interest & Perspective (150–200 words) Would you consider a career in Human Resources? Why or why not? What aspects of the field interest or concern you?

Part 2: Understanding HR Functions (150–200 words) Describe at least two HR functions (e.g., hiring, training, compensation, employee relations). Why are they important to an organization?

Part 3: Personal Skills & Experience (200–250 words) What skills or experiences do you already have that relate to HR (communication, leadership, teamwork, organization)? Provide specific examples.

Part 4: Your Action Plan (200–250 words) What steps could you take in the next 90 days to explore or begin a path toward HR? Include actions like networking, resume building, or applying for opportunities.

Grading Rubric

Criteria	Description	Points
Career Perspective	Clear and thoughtful reflection on interest in HR	20
Understanding HR	Accurate explanation of HR functions and importance	25
Personal Skills	Strong examples connecting experience to HR skills	25
Action Plan	Specific, realistic, and actionable next steps	20
Writing Quality	Organized, clear, and meets length requirements	10
TOTAL		100

Resources

- “Introduction to Human Resources”; Education4Equity Team.
- ChatGPT.org; Claude: <https://chat.ai-pro.org/>; <https://chat.ai-pro.org/>;
- Course Text: Introduction to Human Resources: People, Performance, and Workplace Strategy

- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (HR Career Data)
- LinkedIn (Professional Networking & Job Search)
- Harvard Business Review (HR and Workplace Strategy Articles)
- Online learning platforms (Coursera, edX, Khan Academy)

Instructor: Daniel Hage (Email: Daniel.ed4equity@gmail.com)

How much time does it take to finish this course: This course can be completed during a relaxed 7 week period.