



ECON 541

Human Resources and Labor Economics

Module 1, 2019

Course Information

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Office Hours: TBA

Teaching Assistant: TBA

TA office hours will be announced regularly on the course website.

Classes:

Lectures: Monday & Thursday, 13:30-15:20

Venue: TBA

Course Website:

cms.phbs.pku.edu.cn

1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Course overview:

Can it be advantageous to make a risky hire? When should firms pay for employee training and development? How can we leverage psychological and economics benefits in job design? What is the optimal way in which to reward performance? These questions have one thing in common: they can be answered using the tools of personnel economics.

This course is an introductory survey of personnel economics. Personnel economics takes an economic approach to the two key problems of human resource management (HRM): employee selection and employee motivation. Such problems include recruitment, screening and hiring strategies, compensation and benefits, training, turnover and the theory of human capital, incentive schemes and promotions, layoffs, downsizing and buyouts, teamwork, and internal labor markets. Our approach will combine elements of microeconomic theory, behavioral economics, and evidence from lab, field, and natural experiments.

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

There is no required textbook. I will use the following textbook as the main reference.

Kuhn, Peter *Personnel Economics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

Learning Goals	Objectives	Assessment
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1. Our graduates will be effective communicators.	1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents.	Y
	1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument.	Y
2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership.	2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation.	Y
	2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills.	Y
3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics.	3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it.	
	3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program.	
4. Our graduates will have a global perspective.	4.1. Students will have an international exposure.	
5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking.	5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields.	Y
	5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions.	Y
	5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking.	Y

2.2 Course specific objectives

The students are expected to ANALYZE personnel problems and their proposed solutions using economic theory and quantitative tools; ASSESS the impact of environmental factors (information, resources, constraints, decisions and incentives) on personnel outcomes; EVALUATE – and appropriately balance – the benefits and costs associated with personnel decisions.

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

The course grade will be determined by a midterm (X), a final (Y), and a research proposal (Z). The course grade will be determined by: $0.3*X+0.3*Y+0.4*Z$.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to PHBS Student Handbook.

3. Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

I. THE PRINCIPAL-AGENT MODEL
PE, Chapters 1-5

II. EVIDENCE ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION
PE, Chapters 8-10

III. EMPLOYEE SELECTION AND TRAINING
PE, Chapters 13-19

IV. COMPETITION IN THE WORKPLACE: TOURNAMENTS AND PROMOTIONS
PE, Chapters 20-22

V. COOPERATION IN THE WORKPLACE: TEAMS
PE, Chapters 24-25