

Syllabus

for course at advanced level

Managing Human Resources

Ledning av mänskliga resurser

7.5 Higher Education

Credits

7.5 ECTS credits

Course code:	FE5236
Valid from:	Autumn 2012
Date of approval:	2012-01-10
Department	Stockholm Business School
Main field:	Företagsekonomi
Specialisation:	A1N - Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Decision

The syllabus was decided on by the Educational Committee of the School of Business as the education plan for the Master's programme in Management Studies was revised 2012-01-10.

Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

Degree of Bachelor worth at least 180 credits, or admission to Business Studies IV, Extended Course or Business Studies IV, Magister's Course, Master's programme, or equivalent.

Course structure

Examination code	Name	Higher Education Credits
5236	Managing Human Resources	7.5

Course content

An important condition for the industrialization of western societies in the 18th and 19th century was the institutional changes that made it possible to buy and sell humans as resources, i.e. as human resources, via a labor market. Whereas the pre-industrial human laborer was predominately a self-employed and self-governed farmer or craftsman, the industrial laborer was predominately a governed employee in a factory or office. On the one hand, this transformation implied that human laborers could be categorized as production resources amongst other production resources that could be bought and sold on the market. On the other hand, it implied that human laborers differed from other production resources precisely at point of their humanity, i.e. their capabilities to think, feel, communicate and perhaps above all, at the point of having a will of their own on the basis of which they work hard or not so hard, obey or disobey. These capabilities and characteristics make human resources more valuable than other production resources. But they also make them more difficult to organize and control.

In this connection, Human Resource Management (HRM) stands for programs and activities that employers undertake in order to develop and manage its employees in their double nature as production resources and as humans – as human resources. Examples of HRM programs and activities are then recruitment procedures, yearly development talks, mentorship programs, career coaching, health and lifestyle promotion programs, etc., which all share the ambition of developing the value of the human resources, on the one hand in the sense of objective competencies such as abilities to communicate, to program computers, to cope physically with work procedures, and so on and, on the other hand, in the sense of subjective characteristics such as motivation to perform, attitude to colleagues and willingness to pursue the values and goals of the organization.

Contemporary service- and knowledge intense working life requires more from employees' in terms of their abilities to cooperate, communicate, to flexibly adapt and above all to self-organize their work. This has in part transformed HRM practices. Whereas the human dimension of employees, i.e. their abilities to think, feel and find their own ways, was previously a problem to be controlled by HRM practices, it is now increasingly seen as a core resource that HRM practices should cultivate and render useful to the organization.

Against this background the course has three overarching objectives: To give students a general understanding for contemporary HRM practices; how and to what purposes they are used. To give students a specific understanding for how contemporary service and knowledge intense working life has changed and how this change has affected HRM practices. Finally, to give students an ability to maintain a critical distance towards HRM and the ethical dilemmas that it implies.

Learning outcomes

The course consists of three different parts. During part one the student work with state of the art journal articles within HRM research. Through these articles the students should gain an understanding for the main operative problems that HRM seeks to deal with in organizations, how HRM practices deal with these problems and what effects these practices have or are meant to have on employees' conduct. During part two students work with state of the art journal articles within critical HRM research. Through these articles we students should gain an understanding for the ethical dilemmas that HRM implies. During part three, finally, students make use of the theoretical approaches they have worked with during part one and part two to analyse a case that concern real life HRM practices.

Upon successful completion of the course, the student should have acquired a level of understanding and knowledge about Human Resource Management that allows him/her to be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- Understand how and what effects different forms of HRM have on people and the perception of people in work.

Competence and Skill

- Apply theories and concepts on the empirical phenomenon of Human Resource Management and to identify problems with and solutions to different ways of managing and using individual at work.

Judgement and Approach

- Analyse and identify critical elements within the management of human resources.

Education

Principal methods of instruction are lectures, seminar and case work and a home exam. When appropriate, guest speakers will be invited to describe important conceptual and practical dimensions of HRM. During the literature seminars the content of the literature will be critically assessed. Case seminar work is prepared by students in groups; supported by the literature each group analyse the case study followed by a joint discussion where different analysis are compared.

The students are expected to read the assigned material and participate actively in seminar discussions. Participation in seminars and group work may be compulsory.

The language of instruction for all teaching and learning activities is English.

Forms of examination

Examination

The examination of this course will be based upon case seminars (assessment of group assignments for seminars and activity during seminars) and successful completion of a home exam as assigned. The examination, therefore, consists of:

- On an individual level: home exam and active participation in seminars
- On a group level: group work related to seminars

The individual level amounts to 60 % of the grade and group work to 40 %.

Grading

Grades are given in accordance with a criterion-based scale where A, B, C, D and E are passing grades and Fx and F are failing grades and where the grade Fx is possible to supplement in order to obtain grade E. Receiving a final grade for the course requires the grade E in all individual parts of the examination.

Grading criteria and area of assessment

Grading criteria and assessment areas will be communicated in writing at course start.

Miscellaneous

Students having received the grade E or higher in the final examination are not allowed to retake the examination.

Students who receive a grade of Fail is entitled to take at least four additional examinations as long as the course is given in order to achieve a passing grade.

Absence from mandatory parts is compensated by additional tasks as stated in the course instructions.

Interim

In the event of major changes to the content or the required readings of the course, or suspension of the course altogether, students are entitled to an opportunity to retake the examination according to the present syllabus once each semester during the subsequent three semesters after the change has taken effect.

Limitations

The course cannot be included as part of a degree in conjunction with other similar courses accomplished at other universities in Sweden or abroad.

Misc

The course can make part of various master's degree programmes offered by the School of Business.

Required reading

Required and supplementary readings are determined by the Education Committee and will be announced at the beginning of each semester the course runs.