

Rutgers University  
School of Management and Labor Relations  
Spring 2026

## Equity Compensation & Employee Share Ownership

**This class is open to both undergraduates and graduate students.**

For undergraduates: 37:533:35301 Index 22393

For M.A. students: 38:533:618:01. index 21275

### **General Information:**

This will be a seminar with a lot of discussion and it is not a lecture class. There will be guest speakers in the last hour of every class. The discussions invite class participation, supplemented with brief 10 minute lectures by the professor. A live case study on Zoom from the CEO of a firm or another expert will take place almost every week in class.

Overview of Assignments: A one-page paper for each class, a book report for the mid-term, and a final paper.

**Course Time and Room: Wednesday, 2:00-5:00 pm, Janet Levin Building Room 106**

Professor Joseph Blasi, J. Robert Beyster Distinguished Professor, Human Resource Management (HRM) and Distinguished Professor, Labor Studies and Employment Relations (LSER)

Professor Email: [blasi@smlr.rutgers.edu](mailto:blasi@smlr.rutgers.edu)

Office Hours: Every week after class or by appointment.

### **Readings:**

*Shared Entrepreneurship: A Path to Engaged Employee Ownership*. Edited by Frank Shipper. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. (Buy the Kindle Edition Only)

*The Citizen's Share: Reducing Inequality in the 21st Century*. Joseph Blasi, Richard Freeman, and Douglas Kruse. (BFK) New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014. **(Complimentary PDF copies will be distributed to the class at no charge. Please do not purchase this book.)**

The professor will supplement the readings with research articles, statistical reports, and working papers by scholars and experts along with case studies and materials from the Curriculum Library on Employee Ownership (CLEO) at <http://www.cleo.rutgers.edu> based at the School of Management and Labor Relations, as well as contemporary magazine articles and videos for context.

### **Videos**

“Our Share: Employee Ownership as a Wealth Sharing Tool”

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/employee-ownership> (you will need to create a Coursera account in order to access these videos).

“We The Owners” full-length documentary film (secure link and password will be provided)

**Course Description:**

This survey course explores the variety of ways that businesses can compensate employees with shares of equity and profits, and the human resource management, employment relations, organizational and individual motivational issues that such practices raise. The goal is to provide HR and Labor Studies professionals with a working understanding that they can apply in real-world situations rather than the deep technical knowledge that lawyers and investment bankers require. All classes will include a presentation by an expert guest speaker, typically the manager of a company, followed by discussion. Explorations of research and other material related to understanding the topic of "equity compensation and employee ownership" will make up the remainder of the course. Students are expected to arrive to class having completed and reflected upon the readings.

**School of Management and Labor Relations (SMLR) Learning Objectives:**

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

I) Written & 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 high quality executive summaries
- Make an argument using contemporary and/or historical evidence
- Present ideas and arguments in a logical and effective way

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

- 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)

**Skills:**

Students will become conversant with the major types of equity sharing, profit sharing, and gain sharing plans in existence, and their history, development, incidence, mechanisms, advantages and disadvantages for the performance and welfare of firms and employees.

Students will learn the legal and financial and practical issues involved in using such plans in corporations.

Students will study the major social science questions raised about shares including their role in society and the important research questions and sources of evidence on these practices studied by scholars.

Students will become familiar with several corporations, their stories and issues, along with the principal institutions dealing with shares in the United States: regulatory bodies, stock exchanges, associations of corporations, non-profit research organizations, corporate social responsibility institutions, and the principal research centers on shares in the U.S.

Students will develop a general understanding of the differences between the approaches to employee shares of several nations and geographic areas worldwide.

Students will hear brief reports from fellow students on several research articles in the field.

Students will be presented with a number of possible careers paths in this area of study.

Students do not require an understanding of economics or finance in order to take this course and any concepts from these disciplines necessary to understanding the material of the class will be explained clearly during the lectures.

### **Required Course Work:**

Reaction Papers with Questions:

Most weeks, you will submit a short **one-page** "reaction to the readings" the evening before class. This one-page summary is due at 9 PM (Eastern Time) the evening before the class session. Below the reaction paper students will write two questions.

Reading Synopsis by Students:

At the beginning of class, two students will present a synopsis of the assigned readings to start the discussion.

Mid-Term Exam:

For the mid-term, you will complete a ten-page book report on 250 pages of a book you select.

Final Paper:

The final paper will be an in-depth ten-page paper on a question of your choosing related to the course topic, which includes a clear articulation of the question, a literature review, your analysis, and your "answer" to the question. It must reference concepts or readings from the class and include citations. On the last day of class you will make a short presentation.

### **Participation in-Class:**

Arrive at class prepared to engage actively in class discussion, and in Q&A with the speaker, having completed and reflected upon assigned readings. There will occasionally be a required discussion forum. Student participation in the discussion forum will count toward their participation grade.

*Participation in class meetings is critical to the class both in terms of being present in class and fully participating.*

Attendance will be taken in class and those not in attendance will lose points on the participation score. Regular attendance is required. Active participation in class discussions is expected and required.

**Grading:**

Grades will consist of the following components of 100% of the grade:

Mid-term – 30%; Final paper – 30%; Reaction papers and accompanying presentations – 20%  
Active Participation in “Live” Class Discussion (regular attendance required) – 20%

Points can be deducted for not being present in order to participate in the class, and for egregious classroom conduct (as described below). Absences reduce the participation score.

The grade range is as follows: A = 90% and above.; B+ = 85%-89%; B = 80%-84%; C+ = 75%-79%; C = 70%-74%; D= 60%-69%;F = less than 59%.

**Academic Integrity:**

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 to the limit allowed by University policies. An academic integrity contract is attached to this syllabus. Students must submit a signed copy of the contract before the second class they attend. ASSIGNMENTS TURNED IN BEFORE THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CONTRACT IS HANDED IN WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF “0.”

**Classroom Conduct:**

It is important for a serious learning experience to have a quiet and respectful environment in the classroom.

The following will not be permitted in class: a. cell phones, pagers, and text messaging devices which should be turned off and put away and out of sight; b. engaging in social media during class time; c napping; d. studying for or doing homework for other courses; e. arriving at class late on a consistent basis; f. leaving class early on a consistent basis.; g. other behavior that disrupts the learning environment.

When you do any of these things it is hard to argue you are participating in class and points will be deducted from your participation score.

Participation points will automatically be deducted for these behaviors.

**Class Schedule:**

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic and Reading Assignments</u>                                         |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jan. 21     | Introduction: Varieties of Equity Shares<br>Speaker from The Okonite Company |

- Jan. 28      The Large Diversified ESOP Manufacturer  
Speaker: CEO of Amsted Industries  
Read:  
The Citizen's Share, Introduction and Ch. 1  
Watch Coursera Module 1 and "Roots: Historical Traditions" videos
- Feb. 4      The Employee Stock Purchase Plan as Equity Compensation  
Speaker from Fidelity Investments  
Read:  
"Money Left on the Table," Bebenko and Sen (2014)  
Watch the rest of Coursera Module 2
- Feb. 11      Stock Sharing and Financial Well-being  
Speaker: Representative from an equity comp company  
The Citizen's Share Ch. 2
- Feb. 18      Highly Participatory and Transparent Organizations  
SRC and WL Gore  
Read:  
Shipper, Ch. 5, 6, 7, 14  
Watch Videos (links in Canvas)  
Watch video: We the Owners
- Feb. 25      RSUs and Stock Options  
Read:  
"Thinking Strategically about Equity Compensation," Morgan Stanley Brief  
Watch Equity 101

March 4 Employee Buy Outs: Collective Bargaining

Speaker on Homeland Foods

Watch Coursera Module 3

No Reaction Paper Due.

March 11 Equity Compensation in a Multinational

Speaker from Unilever

Read:

Unilever <[www.shareinourfuture.com](http://www.shareinourfuture.com)> (including video)

“Do Broad-based Employee Ownership, Profit Sharing and Stock Options Help the Best Firms Do Even Better?” Blasi, Freeman, Kruse, 2015, British Journal of Industrial Relations

March 14-22 Spring Break

March 25 Discussion of your book reports

April 1 Employee Ownership for Internet Platform Companies

Read:

“An Internet of ownership: Democratic design for the online economy,” Nathan Schneider

<[www.UpandGo.coop](http://www.UpandGo.coop)> (Links to an external site.)

Just Health: Case Studies of Worker Cooperatives in Health (excerpt)

April 8           The Worker Cooperative Conglomerate  
Speaker from Mondragon University

Read:

“The Mondragon Cooperative Experience: Notes on History, Scope and Structure”

Whyte, Ch. 1 and Ch. 21

Shipper et al on Mondragon

April 15          Equity and Profit Shares in Private Equity  
Case to be Announced

April 22          The ESOP-B Corporation  
The Citizen’s Share, Ch. 4  
Mission-Led Employee-Owned Firms: The Best of the Best  
No Reaction Paper Due

April 29          Verbal Presentation of Final Paper Projects  
Note: You have an additional week to finish your paper and hand it in.

Please see the Academic Integrity Contract on the page following which must be signed and turned in at the second class by email. It is required to take this class and receive grades.

Academic Integrity Contract:

All members of the Rutgers University community are expected to behave in an ethical and moral fashion, respecting the human dignity of all members of the community and resisting behavior that may cause danger or harm to others through violence, theft, or bigotry. All members of the Rutgers University community are expected to adhere to the civil and criminal laws of the local community, state, and nation, and to regulations promulgated by the University. All members of the Rutgers University community are expected to observe established standards of scholarship and academic freedom by respecting the intellectual property of others and by honoring the right of all students to

pursue their education in an environment free from harassment and intimidation. Please see <http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section10/10.2.11-current.pdf> for details regarding the Student Code of Conduct. Please see [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\\_Policy\\_9\\_01\\_2011.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf) for details regarding the Academic Integrity Policy. Similarly, all students and faculty members of the academic community at the School of Management and Labor Relations should uphold high standards for personal conduct, ethical behavior, and professional integrity. In the area of academic integrity, students are expected to refrain from cheating, fabricating information, plagiarizing, inappropriately denying others access to material, and facilitating others in academic dishonesty. Please see <http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section10/10.2.11-current.pdf> (pp. 24-28) for detailed descriptions of each type of action. Any of the following acts, when committed by a student, is an act of academic dishonesty and decreases the genuine achievements of other students and scholars. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

#### Plagiarism/False Representation of Work

- Quoting directly or paraphrasing portions of someone else's work without acknowledging the source.
- Submitting the same work, or major portions thereof, including presentations, to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor.
- Using data or interpretative material for a report or presentation without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators.
- Failing to acknowledge assistance from others, such as help with research, statistical analysis, or field data collection, in a paper, examination, or project report.
- Submitting purchased materials such as a term paper as your own work.
- Copying or presenting material verbatim from any source without using quotation marks.
- Copying from any source and altering a few words to avoid exact quotation, without the appropriate documentation or by using improper documentation of the source.
- Rewording the major concept found in a source but then omitting documentation or improperly citing the source.
- Submitting as one's own any work created by someone else (e.g., paper, project, speech, video, exercise, etc.) without crediting them. Large duplication of someone else's work should be avoided unless you obtain express permission from both the instructor and originator of the work.
- Fabricating or misrepresenting data or information
- Forging signatures

#### Cheating

- Copying work on examinations.

- Acting to facilitate copying during an exam.
- Sharing answers through technology or in written or verbal form when such interactions are prohibited
- Using prohibited materials, such as books, notes, phones, or calculators during an examination.
- Working with another student on an assignment when such collaboration is prohibited.
- Stealing or having in one's possession without permission any materials, or property belonging to or having been generated by faculty, staff, or another student for the course.
- Willfully offering to do another student's work so they may represent it as their own
- Assisting another student in cheating or plagiarizing
- Doing another student's work, excluding collaborative learning assignments or joint assignments approved by the instructor.

Engaging in any of the above behaviors can result in an F on the examination or project, an F in the course, denial of access to internships, suspension for one or more semesters, or permanent expulsion from the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand the Policies on Academic Integrity and the Student Code of Conduct at Rutgers University and the School of Management and Labor Relations. Furthermore, I understand the consequences of unethical behavior. We all share a responsibility in creating an ethical environment. I resolve to uphold and support high standards for ethics and integrity at Rutgers University. If I see, hear, or observe violations of ethics and integrity I will report them to my instructor, Department Chair, or Dean.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Rutgers University ID: \_\_\_\_\_

END