

Human Resources Decision Making: Financial Decisions

38:533:540:90 Spring 2026

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Office Hours: Office hours for Professor Rokkos are typically between 2:00-4:00PM Wednesdays (although please email to confirm as this time changes) and otherwise by appointment. I strongly encourage students to schedule some time for office hours, either in an office or at various areas across campuses, so please reach out.

Class Mode: Fully Online, Asynchronous

Course Description: This course is an introduction to corporate financial decision making. We will examine the relationships between corporate finance and human resource management and labor relations. In addition, you will learn how to use financial decision-making techniques for assessing and developing HR practices and programs.

Course Structure Overview: This course will be presented over 14 weeks with a focus on providing weekly ongoing interaction and material development and requiring student participation in each particular segment. My goal is to present the materials in a manner that maximizes interactions weekly with students, the topics covered and current events. This balance will require your help so your weekly participation in lectures, discussion forums and other forms in a timely manner is greatly appreciated. My strong desire is for all of you to be active and contributing over the course of the semester.

The course is structured by weekly modules. A week typically runs from Monday to Sunday (subject to holidays and breaks). Each week is comprised of one or more of the following components:

Video Lecture for Week X

Readings (PDFs, links to website articles, other)

Multimedia (lectures, interviews, podcasts, or other)

Discussion Assignment (typically due Sundays)

Participation Assignment (typically due Sundays)

Homework Assignment (typically due every 2 weeks on Sundays)

Course Delivery Format: The course delivery mode is fully online and asynchronous; meaning that the learning activities take place online only at your own time frame subject to the deadlines and deliverables noted below.

We will be utilizing the Canvas learning management system to access learning materials, post announcements, submit Assignments, post to Discussion forums, communicate via the Inbox feature and take exams. Be sure to check this site frequently as there will be announcements and instructions.

Method of Instruction

This course is delivered **entirely** online through the Learning Management System, Canvas. There will be no Face-to-Face classroom sessions. The course is delivered in **asynchronous** mode. This means the learning activities and communication take place outside of real-time. You do not have to log in at any specific scheduled time; you log in at your convenience. However, there may be times, if you're working in groups on an assignment, you would need to set up a live session via the Canvas conference, Zoom or email features. There may also be times when the instructor conducts a live chat session or a virtual office hour to address questions. In that case, you will be notified in advance so you can schedule the time.

Note: this is **not a self paced course**. you are expected to adhere to all due date of assignments, forums, exams and/or other activities with due dates.

Canvas: The course will be using Canvas extensively; the course site for Canvas may be accessed through the following link:

<https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/393836>

If you are new to Canvas, be sure to complete the Canvas Tutorials under Course Tools Tutorials section of the Modules.

SMLR Learning Objectives

School of Management and Labor Relations Learning Goals Met by This Course

II) Quantitative, Qualitative and Analytical Skills – Apply appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods for research workplace issues.

- o Formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information
- o Apply quantitative methods to analyze data for HR decision making including cost-benefit analyses, ROI, etc. (HRM)
- o Apply qualitative methods appropriately, alone and in combination with quantitative methods

VI) Application – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance

- o Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work
- o Understand the legal, regulatory and ethical issues related to their field
- o Develop human resource management functional capabilities used to select, motivate, and develop workers (HRM)
- o Understand the internal and external alignment and measurement of human resource practices (HRM)

VII) Professional Development – Demonstrate an ability to interact with and influence others in a professional manner, and to effectively present ideas and recommendations

- o Develop effective presentation skills appropriate for different settings and audiences
- o Develop career management skills to navigate one's career

- o Develop capabilities to work and lead in a multicultural and diverse environment
- o Work productively in teams, in social networks, and on an individual basis
- o Develop cultural agility competencies
- o Demonstrate lifelong personal and professional development skills

Text: *Financial Analysis for HR Managers: Tools for Linking HR Strategy to Business Strategy by Steven Director, published by FT Press, 2013 (ISBN-13: 978-0-13-299674-7)*

Additional materials as indicated below will be made available on Canvas.

Required Software: Adobe Acrobat Reader and Microsoft Word, Zoom, Excel, and PowerPoint or other software with similar functionality by Google, Apple and others.

Prerequisites: An active e-mail account, netid, access to Canvas and basic knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, Zoom, Arithmetic, and Algebra (ratios, percentages, and word problems) are required.

Recommended: The reading of business publications such as the Wall Street Journal, New York Times or the Harvard Business Review is highly encouraged. Many business publications are available through the University Library – a service for which you have already paid. Additional web sites offering business insights in general and specific articles will be discussed in class and linked through Canvas.

Class Approach: There will be a lecture each week and then a discussion of a series of examples relating to the materials. Power Point presentations used during the lecture will be posted shortly prior to class on Canvas so that you can use them as a basis for taking notes or to follow along.

Required Work

There will be ~bi-weekly Homework Assignments involving problem sets which will be discussed in class and assigned on Canvas. Students will be expected to participate through Canvas in reviewing these assignments as part of their overall final grade.

Students will take one Canvas based midterm exam and one final exam during exam week.

Students will be required to post a Discussion Assignment post each week after watching the lecture for the week as well as complete a Participation Assignment for the following week. These two items comprise the Participation portion of final grades.

Students will also develop a Cost Benefit Analysis/Presentation project during the last two weeks of the semester.

Team Project/Presentation

You will be assigned to a team during the course to prepare and present a cost/benefit analysis for an HR-related initiative or investment. Additional details will be discussed in class and posted on Canvas.

Assessment Policy

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

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Cost Benefit Analysis/Presentation	15%
Homework Assignments (~7 bi-weekly)	30%
Participation	15%

Letter Grade	Scores Based on Course Components
A	90-100
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D	60-69
F	< 60

Note: Rounding up or down for ‘in between grades’ will be based on multiple factors including participation and attendance; but will only be considered for 1% point. For example, an 84.6% may round up to an 85% for a B+ if attendance and participation are exceptional; an 84.4% will in all but exceptional instances not round up; and an 83.9% will not be considered for rounding up to a B+. The thresholds for final letter grades will be re-scaled if a conventional standard seems unreasonable.

Late Submission Penalty: Immediate 10% for each grade component submitted late with penalties increasing daily after that. Please note that assignment due dates are tentative until confirmed in class.

Readings and Deadlines: All readings should be completed prior to the date noted on the syllabus. Due dates and deadlines are firm. Unless you can get prior approval, each day late will result in increasing penalties. You must download your assignments and upload your completed written assignments in the Assignments folder on Canvas.

Assigned Readings: Note that the assigned readings indicated below will be revised over the course of the semester; please pay attention during class and on Canvas for specific assignments and due dates.

Schedule

Week	Module Opens on	Topic	Text*	Deliverable
1	1/20	Business Strategy, Financial Strategy and HR Strategy	Chapter 1	
2	1/26	The Income Statement	Chapter 2	Excel Essential Training on Canvas Due ~2/1
3	2/2	The Balance Sheet	Chapter 3	HW Assignment 1 Due ~2/8

Human Resources Management and Finance

4	2/9	Cash Flows and Timing	Chapter 4	
5	2/16	Financial Statements as Windows into Business Strategy	Chapter 5	HW Assignment 2 Due ~2/22
6	2/23	Stocks, Bonds and Weighted Average Cost of Capital	Chapter 6	
7	3/2	Catch Up and Review; Online Midterm Exam		HW Assignment 3 Due ~3/8 Take Online Midterm Exam ~3/2-3/8
8	3/9	Capital Budgeting; Discounted Cash Flow	Chapter 7	
RUTGERS SPRING BREAK				
9	3/23	Financial Analysis of HR Initiatives	Chapter 8	HW Assignment 4 Due ~3/29
10	3/30	Financial Analysis of Strategic Initiatives	Chapter 9	
11	4/6	Equity-based Compensation	Chapter 10	HW Assignment 5 Due ~4/12
12	4/13	Pension and Retirement Programs	Chapter 11	
13	4/20	Creating Value and Rewarding Value Creation	Chapter 12	HW Assignment 6 Due ~4/26
14	4/27	Course Wrap Up; Cost Benefit Presentations		Presentations Due ~5/2

*Chapter references are to the Financial Analysis text; additional readings assigned in class will be posted on Canvas.

Final Exam will be on Canvas during the week of 5/4.

Academic Integrity: All students are responsible for locating, reading, and abiding by the University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students. The policy is available on-line at <http://cat.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>.

The rights of students will be protected to ensure 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.

Some additional thoughts on assignments, exams and academic integrity:

- All homework assignments and the take home final exam are to be handed in via Canvas, using the Assignments tab.
- Submissions must be complete; no partial assignments can be submitted; they will not be accepted.

- Cheating or copying from another student's answers will result in a ZERO for both involved.
- Working or studying together does not constitute as cheating as long as all work is original and not duplicated.
- Uploading or downloading course answers/materials/etc. or someone else's work from previous semesters is plagiarism and considered cheating resulting in a ZERO grade.
- Open book and open note exams are given to allow for a more realistic work environment that grants students access to all resources they could apply to a problem. Using these resources to search for relevant information on the Internet is allowed however a Google search of a multiple-choice question to see if the answer key exists on the Internet is not.

Recommendations: Requests for recommendations must be made in writing after completion of the course.

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Special Needs: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

University Resources

1. Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): (848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy, and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.
2. Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA): (848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff, and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.
3. Students may find appropriate resources if they are in need of help in the areas of (a) mental health, (b) academic coaching, and (c) financial assistance at: <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/about-smlr/spring-2023-information-smlr-students>

4. Students may find information on SMLR's scholarship offerings at: <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/academic-programs/scholarships>

Student Code of Conduct

You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional, responsible, courteous, and respectful manner at all times during the course. Offensive language, harassment, posting videos or other media that is not related to the course, and/or any other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated; and will result in dire consequences, including dismissal from the course. Your responses to discussion posts, or any other communication with your classmates and/or your instructor must be of the highest professional and respectable standard.

TurnItIn Statement

Students (You) agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (via Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

Chat GPT Statement

I encourage the use of ChatGPT, Grok, Gemini and similar artificial intelligence tools for research for my class. AI is an incredibly useful tool. Any use of ChatGPT and other tools that plagiarize or use the output from these tools directly into your work must be cited in accordance with our class citation policies. Use of this output directly in your answers is a violation of the Rutgers Academic Integrity policy with respect to plagiarism.

In other words, if you need to provide a description of employees forming unions, and look it up on Wikipedia, then copy and paste what it says into an answer, Turnitin and other software will identify this as plagiarism. If you similarly ask ChatGPT to write a 100 word description of employees forming unions, copy that and paste what it says into your answer, it will be detected by software as cheating. However if you ask ChatGPT to help you research the topic, for example, ask it to describe employees forming unions in relation to (INSERT SOME TOPIC AND DETAILS FROM CLASS like) Walmart or Amazon discouraging unionization efforts...you get a much richer reply that you can then write your answer from as a resource...(but if you copy and paste, software can track that...). Does that help?