

Business Finance 4312

Employee Benefits

Spring Semester 2026

MW, 3:55-5:15 PM

210 Gerlach Hall

Instructor: Vanessa Kinney

E-Mail: Kinney.292@osu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Employee Benefits have changed vastly over the years, sometimes driven by legislation, other times driven by the need to recruit talent and here most recently, by a global pandemic which caused all employers to think and act differently. Beyond just paycheck, designing an employee benefits program which assists in creating an organization's desired culture and talent pool is no small undertaking, especially considering the multitude of compliance areas one must navigate and the fact this has traditionally been an organization's second largest spend. The educational format will be designed to provide foundational content for anyone who would find themselves in a position where they would be making decisions about the Employee Benefit package offered to their employees or executing upon those decisions.

We examine employee benefits programs in terms of three fundamental roles:

1. Protection programs which provide family benefits, promote health and guard against income loss due to catastrophic factors such as unemployment, disability and serious illness.
2. Paid time-off policies which compensate employees when they are not performing their primary work duties, for example during vacations and holidays.
3. Non-traditional offerings designed around lifestyle and financial need. Most people work for a living either currently have or will likely have access to at least one employee benefit. This course will help you to understand both the employees' perspective on employee benefits as well as the employer's rationale for offering them.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Calculator

You will need a calculator for this course capable of performing basic time-value-of-money (TVM) calculations. Financial calculators enable you to perform these calculations using preprogrammed functions and are preferred.

Classroom – Lecture, Class Discussion and Guest Speakers - Materials

Most class sessions will combine lectures with class discussion, organized around key topics covered in the reading assignments. At times, our discussion may focus on key questions and problems raised by the material, or involve us in practical exercises, and small-case situations.

Lectures may be accompanied by PowerPoint slides. When used, the PowerPoint slides will be posted to the course website after the lecture. Problem assignments will also be posted to the website.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Define and explain the meaning of employee benefits. Explain the three fundamental roles played by employee benefits. Distinguish between legally required benefits and discretionary benefits. Describe how employee benefits fit into the total compensation system.
2. Explain the employee relationship as an exchange relationship. Describe the psychology regarding why firms provide employee benefits. Explain how employee perceptions of justice influence employee benefit practices. Describe the economic rationale for why companies offer employee benefits, and the tradeoff made by employees to pay for benefits.
3. Explain the need for government regulation of employment. Describe the major government statutes that impact the design of employee benefit plans, noting in particular the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) and the Employment Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).
4. Walk through the different funding mechanisms for health plans.
5. Provide an overview of federal and state laws influencing employer-sponsored health care plans. Distinguish among the major health plan alternatives. Describe common features of employer-sponsored health care plans and benefits provided.
6. Describe the need for disability insurance and workers compensation. Explain the three types of benefits that provide financial support for disabled workers or deceased workers' families: employer-sponsored disability plans; employer-sponsored life insurance plans; state-compulsory workers compensation laws.
7. Work through common claim scenarios and understand how benefits are applied to pay claims.
8. Understand the impact of Global Employee Benefits on the organizations

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The weighting of the components will be as follows:

In Class Practical or Quiz 20% (100 points x 2)

Lecture Exam 15% (150 points x 1)

Comprehensive Final 20% (200 points x 1)

Assignments 25% (250 Points)

Class Participation 20% (200 Points)

Homework Assignments

Each assignment is to be completed on an individual basis, unless otherwise instructed

Quizzes & Exams

Quizzes and Examination will be given during the course. The final exam will be cumulative. Exams will evaluate the student's understanding of key concepts, and the ability to apply material learned. Questions will relate to source material provided and information reviewed during the lecture. Test(s) format may include multiple-choice and short answer, conceptual questions. In the event you miss or are going to miss a quiz or exam, please coordinate with me as soon as possible to see what alternatives are available for make-up.

Class Attendance

You are strongly encouraged to attend all classes.

- However, students will be allowed to miss 2 (two) classes at their discretion.
- Should your absences exceed 2, each additional absence will negatively affect your class participation grade.
- The participation grade will take into account (a) Attendance at class (b) Responses to instructor questions (c) Participation in full class discussions, (d) Participation in any breakout discussions.

Class Participation

Class participation is a fundamental requirement of the course. I start with the assumption that you will have read any assigned material prior to class. I expect you will arrive to class ready to apply your knowledge and your ability to add value to whatever topics that may arise in class discussion. As mentioned above, the participation grade will take into account (a) Attendance in class (b) Responses to instructor questions (c) Participation in full class discussions. Class participation will be graded at the end of the semester.

Credit Hours and Work Expectations

This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to [Ohio State policy](#), students should expect to spend approximately 3 hours per week in direct instruction, plus 6 hours of study and homework outside of the classroom. It is expected that students will complete readings assignments prior to the class in which they are scheduled to be discussed.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in

teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct (<https://trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/code>) and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct (<https://oaa.osu.edu/academic-integrity-and-misconduct>).

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Grading Scale

If you achieve an overall percentage in the ranges below, you will receive the letter grade associated with that range.

<i>Letter</i>	<u>Percentage</u>
A	93-100
A-	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
C-	70-72.9
D+	67-69.9
D	60-66.9
E	0-59

Health

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options.

To establish reasonable accommodation, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodation(s) so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or at slds.osu.edu

COURSE TECHNOLOGY

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** ocio.osu.edu/help
- **Phone:** 614-688-4357(HELP)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Baseline technical skills

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen: for questions about specific functionality, see the Canvas Student Guide.

Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) or landline to use for BuckeyePass authentication

Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are eligible for free Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus through Microsoft's Student Advantage program. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help.

Carmen access

- You will need to use BuckeyePass multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:
- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass - Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions.
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click Enter a Passcode and then click the Text me new codes button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service.

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357 (HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

DISENROLLMENT

The Fisher College of Business aggressively enforces University attendance rules.

Pursuant to University Rule 3335-8-33, a student may be "disenrolled" from a course for failure to attend by the first Friday of the term, by the third instructional day of the term, or by the second class meeting, **whichever occurs first**.

POLICY ON EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit will be provided at the instructor's discretion. If a student wishes to improve his or her grade at the end of the course, extra credit will not be available for this purpose.