

MODULE: COMPARATIVE EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

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| Semester: | II (Spring) |
| Stage: | III |
| Number of Credits: | 4 semester credits/6 quarter units |
| Theme: | Human Resources |
| Assessment Weighting: | 40% Coursework 60% Examination |

INTRODUCTION

This module is specifically designed to build on the knowledge and understanding established by Employee and Industrial Relations by extending the discussion and focus to international level. This is done through a comparative analysis conducted on a thematic rather than country-by country basis. A programme of industrial relations topics and themes, each of which compares how national practices and policies are made and implemented. The module also encourages and develops an interest in employment management policies and practices in other countries, and to consider whether such practices could be transplanted into management in Ireland. The module is also designed to be more accessible to the growing numbers of overseas students of Business and to be open to their suggestions for further development.

AIMS

The aims of this module are to:

- Ensure students appreciate the effectiveness of industrial relations policies in an international and comparative context
- Enable students explore industrial relations from both a theoretical and practical perspective
- Enable students fully understand the constraints and opportunities associated with managing employees in different socio-economic, cultural and political contexts
- Assist students in designing appropriate industrial relations policies for an organisation given the specific national and industrial context in which it operates

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module students will be able to:-

- Identify and debate the nature of industrial relations systems in Europe, the USA and Asia.
- Evaluate how economic, social and political forces in different countries shape industrial relations and the policies of managers, trade unions and the state

Assess practical international case studies in terms of whether industrial relations has been radically transformed via human resource management or whether present conditions merely reflect a shift in labour - management relations.
Diagnose the causes of conflict within organisations and formulate appropriate solutions to industrial disputes
Critically assess the costs and advantages of globalisation and the power of the trans-national company.
Assess contemporary developments in industrial relations

SYLLABUS

VARIETIES OF CAPITALISM AND INDUSTRIAL RELATION SYSTEMS

Historical backdrop to industrial relations
The emergence of modern industrial relations
Comparative models of industrial relations in selected European countries

TRADE UNIONS

The changing role of trade unions in selected European countries
Trade union structures and change
Trade unions and political relations

THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

Managerial approaches to industrial relations
Management structures
Management procedures & practices

THE ROLE OF THE STATE

International industrial relations and political structures
Legal and contractual implications in selected European countries
Economic & social constraints from a global perspective

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Public sector industrial relations
Private sector industrial relations
Global comparisons

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Forms of collective bargaining around the world
Collective bargaining and economic policies

Wage negotiations and economic pressures
Unemployment and equal opportunities

MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

Advantages and disadvantages of the multinational company
Multinational corporate structures
Corporate governance and controls
The international employers and employees

INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

Identifying sources of conflict
Assessing conflict resolution

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The module will be presented through a series of participative style lectures. Small group tutorials will be used to discuss the material disseminated in the lectures in more detail and guest speakers will be used to provide an industry perspective from the industrial relations and human resource field. In addition videos and slide presentations will be used to highlight related topics and current issues.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Assessment will use both a continuous component and an end of semester examination. The course work will account for 40% of the marks allocated, with the remaining 60% of the marks being reserved for end of semester examination.

PRIMARY READING LIST

Bamber, G. and Lansbury, R. (eds.) (1998) *International and Comparative Employment Relations*, 3rd Edition. London: Routledge.

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

Hyman, R. (2001) *Understanding European Trade Unionism: Between Market, Class and Society* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage.
Katz, H & Kochan T; (2001), *An Introduction to Collective Bargaining & Industrial Relations*, 2nd edition, McGraw-Hill
Bean, R (1995), *Comparative Industrial Relations, An Introduction to Cross-National Perspectives*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge.

Ferner, A. and Hyman, R. (eds.) (1998) *Changing Industrial Relations in Europe*, Oxford: Blackwell

Marsden D. W. (1999) *A Theory of Employment Systems: Micro-foundations of Societal Diversity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.