Programs in Human Resources, Labor, and Employment Relations
Penn State realizes that professionals working in or looking to enter the demanding field of human resources, labor, and employment relations require maximum flexibility when pursuing their education. Our programs are offered in a convenient online course format that is available when you are so you can continue to meet personal and professional commitments as you gain knowledge that you can immediately apply to your current job.

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**Penn State’s fully online undergraduate and graduate degree programs in human resources, labor, and employment relations provide a unique opportunity for working adults to earn a degree in a growing field from a top program at a world class university. The online B.A. and B.S. programs in labor and employment relations prepare students who want to work with people and maximize employee potential for entry level professional positions in corporate, nonprofit, or government sectors. The online MPS program enables HRER professionals to earn a relevant master’s degree that prepares them for advanced positions in their field.**

*Paul Clark, Director of the School of Labor and Employment Relations*
Programs in Human Resources, Labor, and Employment Relations

- Undergraduate Certificate in Labor Studies and Employment Relations
- Associate in Science in Labor and Employment Relations
- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Labor and Employment Relations
- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership
- Graduate Certificate in International Human Resources and Employment Relations
- Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations

Penn State’s online human resources, labor, and employment relations programs are centered on the growing challenges of business leadership, hiring and retaining talented employees, managing complex benefit plans, and staying up-to-date with labor laws and employment relations trends. The online format allows human resources practitioners and other working professionals to stay employed while preparing for career advancement or transition into a management role. The programs approach the human resources, labor, and employment relations field from both the employer and employee viewpoint in private corporations, unions, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Upon completion of any of these programs you can be equipped to work as a business professional in organizational leadership or human resources roles—as a generalist or specialist in compensation, benefits, diversity, labor relations, safety and health, and training and recruitment. These online programs can also prepare you for careers in government, unions, or dispute resolution.
Undergraduate Certificate in Labor Studies and Employment Relations

Penn State’s 12-credit online Undergraduate Certificate in Labor Studies and Employment Relations examines the evolution of the relationship between employers and employees and current policies, practices, and processes in human resources. As a student in this program you can gain an understanding of employment relationships in the workplace, as well as how to recognize and resolve employment issues to avoid legal problems for your organization.

This program can be used as an important first step in your education or as a recognized stand-alone credential. The credits you earn can often be applied to a bachelor’s degree program, such as the bachelor’s degrees in labor and employment relations also offered by Penn State World Campus. If you already have a bachelor’s degree, this certificate is an excellent complement to any degree, by providing you with the human resource fundamentals valued in virtually any industry.

Course topics include:
- Employment Relations
- Employment Relationship: Law and Policy
- Seminar, Criminal Justice Agency Administration
- Race, Gender, and Employment
- Collective Bargaining and Contract Administration
- Labor Relations in the Public Sector
- Leadership in Work Settings
By acquiring the 60-credit online Associate in Science in LER degree, you could qualify for a rewarding career in the labor, employment relations, and human resources fields in business, government, or labor organizations. You can also use this degree to step up to the B.A. or B.S. in Labor and Employment Relations, or another social science or a bachelor's degree in business, if you choose to apply and are accepted into the program.

The courses in the program are taught by leading Penn State School of Labor and Employment Relations faculty, who have extensive experience teaching in online educational environments.

**Course topics include:**

- Human Resources Ethics
- Employment Relations
- Comparative Employment Relations Systems
- Industrial-Organizational Psychology
- Law and Policy
- Introductory Microeconomic Analysis and Policy

Learn more: [worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms](http://worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms)
LER Bachelor’s Degree Programs

➤ Bachelor of Arts in Labor and Employment Relations
➤ Bachelor of Science in Labor and Employment Relations

The 123-credit online bachelor’s degree programs in labor and employment relations offered through Penn State World Campus can give you the comprehensive knowledge you need to prepare for various careers in human resources. As a student in one of the United States’ largest undergraduate programs for labor and employment relations, you can learn how to recruit and hire a productive workforce; how globalization is impacting work and the workforce; what laws protect employees in the workplace; how to resolve conflicts in the workplace; and what other strategies, practices, and technologies are used by human resources professionals today.

The core curriculums for both the B.S. and B.A. programs cover all aspects of work and the employment relationship.

**Course topics include:**

Labor Economics

The Law of Labor-Management Relations

Employment Compensation

Employee Benefits

Staffing and Training Strategies in Organizations

History of Work in America

Human Resources Ethics

Introduction to Industrial-Organizational Psychology

For a full list of required courses for these degree programs, as well as course descriptions, please visit our program website at [worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms](http://worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms).
Bachelor of Arts in Labor and Employment Relations

The Bachelor of Arts in Labor and Employment Relations focuses on the social sciences, humanities, foreign language, and cultural studies as a supplement to the prescribed labor and employment relations courses. This degree program can prepare you to explore human resources from the perspectives of sociology, rhetoric, and literature.

Bachelor of Science in Labor and Employment Relations

In addition to the basic studies in labor and employment relations, the bachelor of science degree includes supplemental courses that focus on the quantitative and economic aspects of the employment relationship. To help give you more of a business perspective on a career in the field of labor relations, the bachelor of science program allows you to choose elective courses from the related areas of management, psychology, sociology, and communication.

Multiple Career Paths

Because both online bachelor’s degree programs in human resources cover all aspects of work and the employment relationship, there are several career paths available to you as a graduate of either of these programs.

Most of our graduates pursue careers in human resources, working with private companies, health care facilities, educational institutions, or other nonprofit organizations. Others choose to work with government agencies, such as the Department of Labor or the National Labor Relations Board, to administer and enforce labor and employment laws. Still others use the skills that they have developed in dispute resolution to pursue careers as arbitrators or mediators or in labor unions as representatives of the interests of employees in the workplace.

Both degree programs are excellent pre-law majors and can also prepare you to pursue a graduate degree in human resources management, industrial and labor relations, social sciences, and public administration. Penn State World Campus offers an online Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations, if you choose to apply so you can continue your studies in that area.
OLEAD Bachelor’s Degree Programs

- Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership
- Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership

The 123-credit online bachelor’s degree programs in organizational leadership, offered by Penn State’s highly regarded School of Labor and Employment Relations, can help you gain practical, transferable skills to prepare you for leadership positions in a broad range of sectors.

As a student, you can gain an understanding of the roles and major functions of leadership in contemporary organizations, as well as the challenges and tools needed to navigate the many challenges. Course work will incorporate current events, policy shifts, and practical applications for today’s business climate. The online course format gives you the flexibility and convenience to study around your schedule.

You can choose the organizational leadership degree that best fits your background experience and professional goals—*the bachelor of arts or the bachelor of science*.

**Course topics include:**

- Leadership Development
- Collective Decision Making
- Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
- Organizational Communication
- Leadership and Motivation
- Human Resources Ethics
- Ethical Leadership

Learn more:
[worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms](http://worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms)
Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership

The curriculum of the Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership is immersed in the social sciences, humanities, and language, in addition to the prescribed organizational leadership courses. It explores the role of leadership in business and other organizations from a more relational perspective.

Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership

The Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership includes courses in psychology, sociology, economics, communication, and labor and employment relations. Additional courses explore leadership and organizational dynamics in business and other organizations from a more operational perspective.

No matter which degree you choose, you can feel confident that putting a Penn State degree on your résumé is a great way to broaden your career options and prove to current and potential employers that you are a well-educated professional.

I was a bit skeptical about online learning in the beginning. After the first semester and the second semester, it just became automatic for me, and it was one of those things where the balancing got much easier as it went on and it just became part of my life.

My cheerleaders were definitely my family. I couldn’t have accomplished anything without their support. There were a lot of evenings with a toddler in my lap while doing the readings for the next day. But that was the whole inspiration to show her that when you set your mind to something you can get it done."

Jonathan Lentini, Graduate
Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership
I had a lot of great professors who have not only been in academia but have also been in real corporate positions leading HR departments. They were able to provide some great real world examples, which really help to take the knowledge that we’re learning and see how we’ll be able to apply it.

Kristin Barrette, Graduate, MPS in Human Resources and Employment Relations
Graduate Certificate in International Human Resources and Employment Relations

If you are interested in a career in human resources on a global scale, this online 12-credit graduate certificate was designed for you. Many corporations, both domestic and international, are establishing a presence throughout the world, creating a stronger demand for professionals with an understanding of international human resources and employment relations (IHRER).

The curriculum in the IHRER graduate certificate is designed to provide HR practitioners—and those with an interest in global HR business practices—with a comprehensive understanding of law, policy, and best practices necessary for effective management of global human resources, employment relations, and labor relations responsibilities. You can gain an understanding of the differences in culture, expectations, and perspectives in multinational organizations.

Course topics include:
- Comparative Employment Relations Systems
- International Human Resource Studies
- Comparative and International Employment and Labor Law
- Human Resources in Multinational Enterprises

Poise yourself for career growth with a respected degree from Penn State

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts increasing demand for human resource managers, as the number of positions in that occupation continues to grow at a higher rate (9%) than the average growth rate (7%) for all occupations (from 2014 to 2024).
Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations

Penn State’s 33-credit online master’s degree program in human resources and employment relations can help prepare you for whatever HR career path you pursue. This degree program, which is aligned with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates, balances advanced theory with practical knowledge. In addition to basic human resource management, the curriculum covers advanced labor and employment law, international and comparative employment relations, managerial behaviors, economic and institutional perspectives, diversity in the workplace, and contract administration.

**Course topics include:**

- Labor and Employment Law
- Seminar in Employment Relations
- Seminar in Human Resources
- International and Comparative Employment Relations
- Organizations in the Workplace
- Labor Market Analysis
- Strategic Business Tools for HRER Professionals
- Diversity in the Workplace
- Research Project

**Optional Intensive Courses**

Each summer, the Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations offers two of the core courses as one-week intensive courses at Penn State’s University Park campus in State College, Pennsylvania. This unique blended course experience allows you to fulfill a 3-credit course requirement while experiencing campus life at Penn State. While this is not a required aspect of the master’s degree program, you are encouraged to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to interact and network with your peers and the faculty and staff for the program.

*For more information about the courses being offered in this alternative intensive format, please see our program website.*

Learn more:

[worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms](http://worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms)
Areas of Concentration

To complete the master’s degree program in human resources and employment relations, you will be required to complete 9 additional credits; 6 of those credits you will choose from one of the following seven areas of concentration:

- Benefits and Compensation
- Labor and Collective Bargaining
- Employment and Labor Law
- Staffing, Training, and Development
- Ethics and Leadership
- International Human Resources and Employment Relations
- Labor Unions: Organization and Strategy

This focused course work is designed to help you develop expertise in a specific area and ensure that the degree is relevant to your interests and career goals. Your research project will also center on a topic that is related to your chosen area of concentration.

There are a lot of options out there, but none compared to Penn State—a great reputation, distinguished faculty, and the convenience of learning on my time and at my convenience. I truly believe the education I obtained at Penn State enables me to stand apart from my peers. Proudly.

Colleen Savarese, Graduate Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations
Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Penn State the best choice for me?

Flexibility and convenience: Penn State knows that as an adult student, you need flexible and convenient learning options in order to continue meeting your professional and personal commitments. You can take courses when and where you please, earning your degree at your own pace.

Academic reputation: Penn State is universally regarded as one of the finest educational institutions in the United States. Putting a Penn State degree or certificate on your résumé is a great way to broaden your career options and prove to current and potential employers that you are a well-educated professional.

Accreditation: Penn State is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and has an outstanding reputation as a research and teaching university. Our courses are also accepted by most other colleges and universities in fulfillment of their requirements.

Is this the real Penn State?

Yes. Penn State values online education as highly as it does resident instruction. No distinction will be made on your official Penn State transcript or diploma that your courses were completed at a distance. The credits you receive are exactly the same as those awarded to on-campus students.

Can I obtain financial aid to pay for my courses?

Penn State realizes that one of the biggest challenges of returning to school is the cost. That’s why our advisers have been trained to help you make the most of the financial aid options and opportunities available to you.

What types of student support are available?

As a distance education pioneer, Penn State has developed a nationally recognized support system for students who are geographically removed from campus. With our amazing team of academic advisers, technical support experts, customer service representatives, and Penn State instructors, we’ll help you get where you want to go—successfully—through distance education.

Learn more: worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms
Begin Your Application Today

Beginning your application for any of our online human resources, labor, and employment relations programs is easy.

Visit worldcampus.psu.edu/hrprograms.

1. Select your program of interest to be directed to that specific program page.
2. Click on the “How to Apply” link to get your specific application instructions.
Contact Us
pennstateonline@psu.edu
worldcampus.psu.edu
800-252-3592 (toll free within the United States)
814-865-5403 (local and international)
814-865-3290 Fax

Admissions Counseling Hours
8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. ET    Monday–Thursday
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET    Friday
Closed    Saturday and Sunday

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