

# Industrial Relations and Human Resources, M.S.

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## Degree Offered

- Master of Science in Industrial Relations and Human Resources (MSIRHR)

## Nature of the Program

The Department of Management offers the Master of Science in Industrial Relations and Human Resources (MSIRHR). This AACSB-accredited program of study prepares students for professional positions in human resource management and labor/employment relations.

Our twelve month program is one of the most celebrated programs in the country. The curriculum covers all HR practices such as recruiting & selection, training and development, analytics, compensation, labor relations, performance management, employment law, and strategic HRM.

An attractive niche this program fulfills is the regular interaction students have with high-level HR practitioners: HR VPs, Chief HR Officers, and HR Directors.

The Management Department, in conjunction with the John Chambers College of Business and Economics Center for Career Development, makes a concerted effort to place graduates in positions that fulfill students' career objectives. Graduates of the MSIRHR program can be recruited for generalist positions such as HR Business Partner, or specialized areas of HRM such as talent acquisition, compensation, employment / labor relations, training and development, and compensation/benefits.

Students accepted into the MSIRHR program will begin in the second summer session and complete their program of instruction at the end of the first summer session of the following summer. Students will be able to accept a paid internship beginning in mid-May after they complete the Spring Semester, as their final two courses will be offered virtually in order to accommodate their internship requirements. Well-paid HR Internship opportunities are common from the employers who hire our MSIRHR students for fulltime jobs upon graduation.

Many organizations recruit for HR professional positions from our MSIRHR graduates. One of the competitive advantages offered to students enrolled in the MSIRHR program is the frequent interaction with high-level HR professionals in large, Fortune 500 companies such as GE Aerospace, PepsiCo, Dick's Sporting Goods, Marathon Petroleum, and Synchrony, to name a few.

The MSIRHR program will expose students to the real world of HRM and labor relations through office visits to companies that recruit students for internships and fulltime job opportunities. The MSIRHR Advisory Council is comprised of high-level and C-Suite HR / labor relations professionals who are actively engaged in working with the faculty to ensure that the curriculum is current and in line with the needs of businesses in the private and non-profit sectors. Also, a committed group of MSIRHR alums in high-level HR positions are frequent visitors to campus to provide presentations and hands-on interactive learning exercises for the MSIRHR students. Throughout their program, students will engage in a variety of professional development activities such as resume review, mock interviews, and formal and informal networking opportunities.

The curriculum is aligned with the standards set forth by the Society for Human Resource Management.

## Tuition Loyalty Program

Students who complete an undergraduate degree at any West Virginia college or university are eligible for current, in-state (resident) tuition rates while enrolled in the MSIRHR program.

## Student Organizations

Students are encouraged to participate in academic-related extracurricular activities. Many are co-sponsored by the student chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Industrial Relations Student Association (IRSA).

## Academic Standards

In addition to the University's academic and professional standards (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/enrollmentandregistration/>), students enrolled in a John Chambers College of Business and Economics master's degree program must also abide by the following standards:

- Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to earn a degree from their graduate program, without exception.
  - A student who cannot mathematically meet the 3.0 GPA requirement to successfully complete the degree, within a reasonable period of time (as defined by the Program Coordinator or designee), will be dismissed from their academic program. Visit the Probation, Suspension, and Dismissal (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/enrollmentandregistration/#probationsuspensionanddismissal>) section of the University's Graduate Catalog for more information about this topic.
- Students must follow the professional standards established by the college, their degree program and/or department. A student who violates the established professional standards may be placed on probation or dismissed from their program.
- A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.75 will automatically be placed on academic probation.
  - A student will be dismissed from their program if their GPA is not raised to 2.75 by the end of their subsequent semester of enrollment.

- A student will be dismissed from their program if they earn a letter grade below C- in more than one required course.
- A student who earns a letter grade of D or F in any required course must repeat the course and earn a minimum letter grade of C-.
  - Any grade earned in a repeated course at the graduate level is included in the calculation of a student's overall and major GPA, along with the original grade earned in the course. Additionally, the original grade earned in the course will remain on the student's academic transcript/permanent record. Visit the Grades ([http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/advising\\_and\\_evaluation/#gradestext](http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/advising_and_evaluation/#gradestext)) section of the University Graduate Catalog for more information about this topic.

Any exceptions to the above standards must be approved in writing by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs **and** the Program Coordinator.

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## ADMINISTRATION

### ASSOCIATE CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

- Olga Bruyaka Collignon - Ph.D.  
(Jean Moulin University Lyon 3, EM Lyon)

### PROGRAM COORDINATOR

- James Field - Ph.D.  
(Virginia Commonwealth University)

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## FACULTY

### PROFESSOR

- Jeff Houghton - Ph.D. (Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University)  
Workgroup Dynamics & Leadership

### ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- James Field - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)  
HR Data Analytics
- Kayla Follmer - Ph.D. (Penn State University)  
Diversity Management, Performance Management

### TEACHING ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

- Thomas A. Zeni - Ph.D. (University of Oklahoma)  
Talent Acquisition; Organizational Change

### TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Brant Hammer - M.S. (West Virginia University)
- Rebecca Thacker - Ph.D. (Texas A&M University)  
Performance Management, Strategy for HR

### PROFESSORS EMERITI

- Neil Bucklew - Ph.D.
- Randy Elkins - Ph.D.

## Admissions for 2026-2027

The admission decision process is managed by the Program Coordinator with assistance from the MSIRHR Admissions Committee. Completed applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, and students admitted to the program may begin the program the following summer (the MSIRHR program begins in second summer session). The priority deadline for MSIRHR applications is March 1st, although applications may continue to be reviewed and accepted beyond that date based on available space. Admission to the program is highly competitive and total enrollment is limited. Only completed applications will be considered. All completed applications are reviewed independently and evaluated based on merit. The admission decision process is managed by the Program Coordinator with assistance from the MSIRHR Admissions Committee. Completed applications are reviewed on a rolling basis (the MSIRHR program begins in second summer session). The priority deadline for MSIRHR applications is March 1st, although applications may continue to be reviewed and accepted beyond that date based on available space. Admission to the program is highly competitive and total enrollment is limited.

## Application Requirements

A completed electronic application will consist of:

- Undergraduate Degree: To gain admission into the MSIRHR program, an applicant must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Although students can have an undergraduate degree in any field, coursework in business disciplines is helpful and may become a deciding factor in an admission decision.
- Official copy of undergraduate transcripts. Applicants must have had a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 2.75 to be considered for admission.
- Up-to-date resume including all prior professional experiences and affiliations.
- One letter of recommendation from an individual who is not a friend or family member and can speak to the applicant's fit and ability to complete the MSIRHR program.
- Statement of Purpose (not to exceed one single-spaced page): The statement of purpose should describe the reasons for why the applicant is interested in the MSIRHR program at WVU; an explanation for how, upon graduation, the applicant intends to add value to an organization's strategic bottom line through effective HR management practices; and, a description of why the applicant is interested in an HR career as well as a statement of the applicant's HR career aspirations.
- International Students (only) are required to submit TOEFL or IELTS scores. Applicants must have a TOEFL-ibt score of 79. If you have taken the IELTS instead of the TOEFL, the minimum score must be 6.5. English language exam scores should be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions and Recruitment, West Virginia University, PO Box 6009, Morgantown, WV 26506-6009. More information for prospective international students can be found here (<https://business.wvu.edu/academics/management-department/ms-industrial-relations/msirhr-international-admissions/>).

## Application Deadline

Please visit the MSIRHR program's webpage (<https://business.wvu.edu/academics/management-department/ms-industrial-relations/>) for specific application deadlines and other important information. Students may also contact the John Chambers College of Business and Economics Graduate Programs Office for assistance at (304) 293-5505.

**WVU cannot accept scans, uploads, faxes, or unverified photocopies of transcripts as official.**

Graduate degree-seeking applicants must send their official transcript from the undergraduate institution that granted the bachelor's degree. It is preferred that official transcripts be sent via an online, secure service such as [eScrip-Safe](https://escrrip-safe.com/signup/) (<https://escrrip-safe.com/signup/>), [National Student Clearinghouse](https://studentclearinghouse.org/) (<https://studentclearinghouse.org/>), or [Parchment](https://www.parchment.com/) (<https://www.parchment.com/>) to [graduateadmissions@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:graduateadmissions@mail.wvu.edu). Alternatively, sealed, untampered, physical official transcripts can be sent to:

**WVU Hub  
P.O. Box 6004  
Morgantown, WV 26506**

### International Applicants and Express Mail

International applicants and applicants using express mail, use the address below:

**WVU Hub  
62 Morrill Way - Suite 220  
Morgantown, WV 26506**

Major Code: 2168

All graduate programs in the John Chambers College of Business and Economics require that enrolled students maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in coursework applied toward their degree program, as outlined in the specific academic program of study. Students must also have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 to earn a graduate degree from their respective program.

## Industrial Relations and Human Resources Master of Science Degree Program Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required in all courses *		
A grade of C or higher must be earned in all required courses		
HRMG 505	Labor and Employment Law	3
HRMG 506	Performance Management	3
HRMG 508	Organizational Change and Renewal	3
HRMG 509	Talent Acquisition	3
HRMG 525	HR Analytics	3
HRMG 530	Compensation and Benefits	3
HRMG 534	Work Group Dynamics and Leadership	3

HRMG 548	Strategic Management for Human Resources	3
HRMG 562	Labor Relations	3
HRMG 585	Internship	3
Total Hours		30

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**Grade Point Average:** The program requires that the student maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 on all work taken as a graduate student while enrolled in the John Chambers College of Business and Economics. In addition, the student must maintain a 3.0 average in all work counting toward the graduate degree. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.75 will be placed on probation. If the student's average is not brought up to 2.75 by the end of the following semester, the student will be suspended from the program. A grade below C in more than one course taken while enrolled as a graduate student will result in suspension from the program.

## SUGGESTED PLAN OF STUDY

First Semester	Hours
HRMG 509	3
HRMG 534	3
	6
Second Semester	Hours
HRMG 506	3
HRMG 525	3
HRMG 562	3
	9
Third Semester	Hours
HRMG 508	3
HRMG 530	3
HRMG 548	3
	9
Fourth Semester	Hours
HRMG 505	3
HRMG 585	3
	6

Total credit hours: 30

## Major Learning Outcomes

### INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES

#### STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

##### Goal 1: The HR Functional Environment

Graduates acquire knowledge and skills in basic HR functional areas that prepare them for their future careers in human resources management and industrial relations and related fields

1.1 Selection, Performance Management, and Training and Development. Graduates are able to participate and lead in the selection processes in their organizations as well as in the measurement of performance of the human asset and the identification of training and development activities either to enhance performance or correct deficiencies in the output of human assets.

1.2 Compensation and Benefits. Graduates are able to establish and maintain equitable compensation programs and associated benefits and insurance in their organizations. Graduates are familiar with and able to impact organizational economics through the development, modification, and implementation of compensation systems and benefit plan design and administration.

##### Goal 2: The Current Global Environment

Graduates have capabilities and knowledge relating to current HR/IR trends, both domestically and internationally, that prepare them for their future careers in human resources management and related fields.

2.1 International HR/IR and Understanding Cultural Differences. Graduates are able to apply human resource and industrial relations functional tools in an international context based on a detailed comprehension of the economic, social and moral ramifications of globalization and cultural differences.

2.2 Management of Change, Current Trends, and Technologies. Graduates are able to participate in managing change processes within their organizations and to apply knowledge of current events, trends and developments in the human resources profession and in the overall business environment, including contemporary information systems and associated technologies, in order to solve problems and perform functions commonly encountered in human resource management.

### **Goal 3: The Employee and Labor Relations Environment**

Graduates acquire knowledge and skills in employee and labor relations that prepare them for their careers in human resources management and industrial relations and related fields.

3.1 Management of Conflict. Graduates are able to use foundational knowledge of individual behavior and interpersonal relations in order to successfully manage and resolve conflict through processes such as mediation and facilitation.

3.2 Negotiation. Graduates are able to demonstrate effective negotiating capacities and competencies in win-win and position bargaining in general and specifically in labor relations. Students are effective advocates in labor relations, mediation, alternate dispute resolution, employee/management concerns and disputes.

### **Goal 4: The Legal and Ethical Environment**

Graduates develop comprehensive knowledge and skill in the areas of employment law and ethical decision making.

4.1 Legal and Ethical Decision Making. Graduates are able to successfully implement the procedural and substantive aspects of labor and employment law in making ethical decisions and taking ethical actions that reflect a standard of professional behavior and values within their organizations. Employment law principles are embedded in each of the major course offerings to insure a solid fact-based application of legal practices, precedents, and contemporary interpretations.

### **Goal 5: The Strategic Environment**

Graduates develop knowledge and skills in strategic decision making, leadership, teamwork and communications

5.1 Strategic Decision Making. Graduates are able to participate in and support strategic decision-making in human resources, industrial relations and beyond. Students are knowledgeable in the use and application of strategic planning tools and techniques and are aware of the economic and social impact of strategic business decisions.

5.2 Leadership, Teamwork and Communication. Graduates possess leadership and teamwork skills and abilities and are able to effectively communicate recommendations to management and other constituencies, orally and in writing.