

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**  
FINA 445-001  
**Spring 2002**  
TTh 11:00 a.m. Room 003  
dmsweb.moore.sc.edu/doerpinghaus

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**Instructor:** Dr. Helen Doerpinghaus

**Office address:** DMSB 475

**Office telephone:** 777-4926

**E-mail address:** doerp@moore.sc.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.  
If you are unable to meet during Office Hours, come by my office or make an appointment to come by at your convenience. I am available Monday through Friday and welcome students anytime.

**Textbook:** *Fundamentals of Employee Benefit Programs*, Employee Benefit Research Institute, Fifth Edition, 1997

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### **COURSE OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of the course is to provide a basic understanding of the nature and operation of employer-sponsored benefit plans. We will take a benefits manager approach to efficiently providing for the economic security of a demographically diverse work force. Emphasis will be on benefit plan design, administration, funding, and regulation. The course should be useful to human resource professionals, financial planners, or anyone interested in better understanding employee benefit plans.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENT**

Students should read the assigned textbook chapters before coming to class (reading assignments are provided on the syllabus). Class will provide an opportunity for both lecture and class discussion, and students are strongly encouraged to participate with ideas and questions of their own. Following class discussion, students should go to the website and review the questions provided to allow a “self test” of mastery of the material. Before each test, there will be an optional Review Session for interested students.

## **COURSE PROJECT**

Students will work in teams of two or three (self-assigned) to investigate benefits issues confronting organizations today. Each team will identify an employer, learn about the benefit plan, and then analyze a particular plan problem or challenge facing the organization. For example, a firm may have recently merged and the benefits manager must decide how to deal with two or more different benefit packages. A small employer may want to begin offering benefits to employees or expand what is already being offered. An employer may want to add to a 401(k) for employees but be unsure of what is involved in doing this. Teams will want to work closely with the benefit manager to collect information. Your paper will describe the plan, explain the specific issue you are investigating, and provide analysis reflective of what you have learned in the course. Papers should be 8 to 10 pages in length and should conform with the MLA or APA style guides. **The paper is due Tuesday, April 23.**

## **COURSE GRADE**

Three tests and one research paper are each worth one-fourth of your final grade. There will be no make-up exams without a written medical excuse. The standard University attendance policy applies. Students are urged to call the professor or come by the office at any time, but certainly whenever there is a situation which affects their course work.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

- I. Introduction to Employee Benefits
- II. Mandated Benefits
  - A. Social Security
  - B. Workers' Compensation
  - C. Unemployment Insurance
- III. ERISA
- IV. Group Insurance Benefits
  - A. Health Insurance
  - B. Life Insurance
  - C. Disability Insurance
  - D. "Family Friendly" Benefits
  - E. Other Group Insurance Benefits
- V. Retirement Plans
  - A. Plan Design
  - B. Defined Contribution and Defined Benefit Plans
  - C. Plan Integration, Administration, and Funding
  - D. Other Defined Contribution Plans
- VI. Public Policy Issues

## Assignment Schedule

### Part I: Introduction and Mandated Benefits

January 15	Introduction to Employee Benefits (Chapter 1)
January 17,22	Mandated Employee Benefits: Social Security (Chapter 2; Chapter 30, pp. 290-1; Chapter 33, pp. 321-4) <a href="http://www.ssa.gov">http://www.ssa.gov</a>
January 24	Other Mandated Employee Benefits: Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance (Chapter 30, pp. 292-3) <a href="http://www.state.sc.us/wcc">http://www.state.sc.us/wcc</a> ; <a href="http://www.sces.org/ui">http://www.sces.org/ui</a>
January 29	Employee Retirement Income Security Act (Chapter 3) and EGTRAA <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/asp/public/programs/handbook/erisa.htm">http://www.dol.gov/dol/asp/public/programs/handbook/erisa.htm</a> <a href="http://www.pbgc.gov">http://www.pbgc.gov</a> <a href="http://www.aspa.org/govpages/aspa.govt.htm">http://www.aspa.org/govpages/aspa.govt.htm</a>

### Part II: Group Insurance

January 31	Introduction to Group Insurance (Chapter 37)
February 5	Video: Benefits of Choice
<b>February 7</b>	<b>Test 1</b>
February 12	Group Funding and Financing Arrangements
February 14, 19	Health Insurance Alternatives: Traditional Fee-for-Service, HMOs, PPOs, and MSAs (Chapters 19, 23, 24, 47)
February 21	Health Care Portability and Cost Concerns (Chapters 25, 28, 46) <a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/public/health.htm">http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba/public/health.htm</a>
February 26	Other Health Plans: Dental Care, Prescription Drugs, Vision Care, Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and Retiree Health Insurance (Chapters 20, 21, 22, 26, 27)
February 28	Group Life Insurance Plans and Survivor Benefits (Chapter 32, 33)
March 5	Group Disability Insurance Plans (Chapter 30)
<b>March 7</b>	<b>Test 2</b>
<b>March 12,14</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
March 19	“Family Friendly” Benefits: Long-Term Care Insurance and Dependent Care (Chapters 31, 36) Other Group Benefits: EAPs, Educational Benefits, and Legal Services Plans (Chapters 29, 34, 35)

### Part III: Retirement Plans

March 21,26	Introduction to Pension Plans: Plan Design (Chapter 4, 12)
March 28	Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Plans (Chapter 5, 10 )
April 2, 4	Pension Plan Integration (Chapter 13)
April 9, 11	Pension Plan Administration and Funding
April 16	Profit-Sharing and Thrift Plans (Chapter 6, 7)
April 18	401(k) and 403 (b) Plans; Employee Stock Ownership Plans (Chapter 8, 9, 15) <a href="http://www.ici.org/retirement/401(k)_faqs.html">http://www.ici.org/retirement/401(k)_faqs.html</a>
April 23	SEPs, IRAs, Keoghs, and Multiemployer Plans (Chapter 11,14,16, and 17) Planning for Retirement (Chapter 18) <b>Papers due.</b>

### Part IV: Public Policy Issues

April 25	Public Policy Issues: Pension Tax Expenditures (Chapter 45)
April 30	Public Policy Issues: Tax Reform and Employee Benefits (Chapter 48)
<b>May 8</b>	<b>Test 3 2:00 p.m.</b>

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Student Information**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Major:</b>	<b>Expected Date of Graduation:</b>
<b>Hometown:</b>	
<b>Work Experience:</b>	
<b>Achievements or Honors:</b>	
<b>Special interests or experiences:</b>	