Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

New Degree Proposal
MS in Human Resources Management

Table of Contents

Rationale

In early 2017, a design team mapped competencies within the HRM domain and developed a revised curriculum for both the graduate certificate and the concentrations – the curriculum is outlined below – which forms the basis for a robust core curriculum for a master's program.

Based on market research conducted by NU's Office of Strategic Research and Analysis, a Master's in Human Resource Management degree offers a strong market opportunity for the College of Professional Studies and would likely attract both domestic and international students. Current and projected employment for human resource occupations, specifically Human Resource Managers, is generally large with above average growth expected into 2027. Moreover, the HR field is experiencing dramatic changes, with greater emphasis on digital tools, people analytics, strategic focus on organizational performance, and global dimensions.

Student demand for HRM master's programs appears to be particularly robust among schools with online delivery formats. There are opportunities for CPS to differentiate against both national and regional competitors through experiential learning, concentration options, and its unique credit transfer agreement with the HR Certification Institute and the Society of Human Resource Management.

Mission of MS in Human Resources Management

In a global environment characterized by rapid change and high levels of uncertainty, the ability to mobilize talent is a major driver of organizational performance. The Human Resources Management Program in the College of Professional Studies prepares students to make the connection between an organization's strategy and its people and other key stakeholders. The program focuses on vital human resource competencies and analytical skills -- with an emphasis on experiential learning -- required for students to serve as strategic business partners in their organizations. Students also have the opportunity to tailor their studies to support their specific career objectives.

Program Student Learning Outcomes

Students in the MS in HRM program will demonstrate competence in five broad areas:

- Specialized Knowledge SLO1: Incorporate human resource theory, skill development, and best practices to assess the role of human resource management in supporting an organization's human capital and business strategy by influencing and the attitudes and behaviors of employees and other workforce stakeholders.
- Broad and Integrative Knowledge SLO2: Design human resource policies and initiatives at the individual, organizational, and societal levels by using an interdisciplinary focus and integrative strategic methodologies including leadership, analytics, and business acumen.
- Applied and Collaborative Learning SLO3: Integrate and apply human resource concepts, research, knowledge, and skills to address workforce challenges in a range of organizations.
- Civic and Global Learning SLO4: Develop human resource strategies and programs that can promote the building of intercultural and global networks within and outside organizations, based on high ethical standards and a deep global understanding.
- Experiential Learning SLO5: Synthesize and transfer learning to new, complex situations and contexts.

Profile of Target Student Population

The MS in HRM program is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of students: early career HR professionals, career changers, and recent graduates who are interested in a career in the field of HR. As with most College of Professional Studies graduate programs, applicants must submit an undergraduate transcript with a GPA of at least 2.7, a statement of purpose, and a professional resume. These requirements differentiate the CPS applicant pool from those of other Northeastern colleges.

We expect a portion of applicants who current enroll in the HRM concentration within the Corporate and Organizational Communication and Leadership master's programs to opt for a full-fledged MS in HRM – but overall, we expect a net enrollment gain of at least 80 students in the first full year of program implementation.

Unique Aspects of the Learning Experience

To address the needs of students who are currently in a human resources management role, as well as those who are new to the field, the curriculum incorporates a broad menu of course options and a pathway through the program based on a student's experience level, as well as concentrations that are aligned with student career objectives. The learning experience will be enhanced in the following ways:

Leading-edge Competencies
The market trend analysis highlighted the need to address 'emerging' competencies in Digital HR, Artificial Intelligence applications, Talent Acquisition, Employee Engagement, Strategic Workforce Planning, Organizational Design, and Global Talent Management– and these competency areas are reflected in both the core curriculum and the concentrations. The proposed curriculum leverages courses across domains.

Experiential Learning
All of the courses would leverage experiential learning opportunities, whether case studies, XN Sprint projects, or, in the case of the Global Talent Management concentration, the possibility of an international field study experience. The 12-week Projects for Professionals capstone course will enable students to synthesize their learnings and serve as internal or external consultants in the development of human resource programs.

Transfer Credit Opportunities
Applicants with HR Certification Institute and the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) certifications can receive transfer credit for up to 6QH which maps to specific HRM courses. These transfer credit opportunities reflect the value placed by Northeastern on professional competencies developed and demonstrated by earning professional association certifications.

Contributions to Northeastern 2025

These proposed program changes exemplify Northeastern University's longstanding reputation for curricular innovation and experiential education. The focus on emerging developments and next generation learning reflects the Lifelong Learning Network's mission to develop innovative educational models that are considered to be "best in class" and accessible for working adults, as well as students with little professional experience. The curriculum has been mapped in such a way that competency-based modules can be delivered in a variety of modalities to diverse audiences.

Market Demand

The proposed Master's in Human Resource Management degree offers a strong market opportunity for CPS, and would likely attract a domestic student base rather than international. Current and projected employment for human resource occupations, specifically Human Resource Managers, is generally large with above average growth expected into 2027. Student demand for HRM master's programs appears to be particularly robust among schools with online delivery formats. There are opportunities for CPS to differentiate against both national and regional competitors through experiential learning, concentration options, and its unique credit transfer agreement with SHRM.

Trends in the Marketplace

Total employment in human resource occupations is projected to increase by 9% from 2017 to 2027, from 1.15 million to 1.25 million, according to Emsi Analyst's database. Employment of Human Resource Managers, a key target audience for CPS' proposed master's in human resource management, is expected to grow by 12% from 2017 to 2027, from ~136,000 to ~152,000, which is faster than the average growth rate of 10% projected for all occupations over this period.

Although job opportunities for Human Resource Managers are expected to vary based on the staffing needs of individual companies, strong competition can be expected for most positions. Candidates with a professional certification or a master's

degree, particularly those with a concentration in human resources management, should have the best job prospects. About 22% of Human Resource Managers have attained a master's degree.

All of Northeastern's regional campus metros are among the top 25 human resource employment locations and have above average hiring concentrations as measured by the location quotient. The master's in HRM would likely offer a viable market opportunity at each one of Northeastern's U.S. campuses.

While employment prospects appear generally strong for HR professionals, it is notable that the proportion of HR job postings as a percentage of total job postings has decreased slightly in recent years. In Feb. 2015-Jan. 2016, HR master's job postings comprised 2.56% of all master's postings, the proportion dipped to 2.23% over the last year.

Employers increasingly seek HR job candidates with skills such as Onboarding, Talent Acquisition, Employee Engagement, and Recruiting, which reflects the need for employers to find and retain talent in a tight labor market. Digital and analytics related skills such as Tableau, SQL, Data Collection, and Key Performance Indicators are also increasingly important to hiring employers.

There are a number of global forces and trends reshaping the human resources field according to industry experts including: the emergence of people analytics, increasing adoption of technology, growing competition for talent, shifting demographics, and evolving practices for approaching organizational design. CPS should ensure it is incorporating these highly demanded skills and competencies into the HRM curriculum.

Student Demand

The number of master's conferrals in Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration, General (CIP Code 52.1001) have grown by 53% over the last 5 years; from 2,981 in 2012 to 4,555 in 2016. This is much faster than the average growth of 9% across all master's degree fields during this time period.

Providers with online program options have experienced much faster growth from 2012 to 2016 compared to the providers without an online program option, 106% vs. -16%. Given the structure of IPEDS data, it is difficult to determine how many conferrals can be attributed to an online or on-ground program, but it appears that providers with online programs have generally experienced more success than providers with only on-ground offerings.

Competitive Landscape

The number of national providers with master's in Human Resources Management/Personnel Administration degrees has increased by 44% from 2012 and 2016 (from 108 to 155 providers), according to the NCES' IPEDS database. The HR master's market has become increasingly competitive online with ~58% of programs offered in a distance learning format in 2016. Even as the number of providers has grown over this 5-year period, the ratio of conferrals per provider has remained stable, suggesting the market has yet to reach saturation.

The University of Phoenix is the leading provider of HR master's conferrals nationally, followed by Central Michigan University and Rutgers University. A number of the top 10 providers have both a full master's in human resources and an MBA with an HR concentration option. An HRM master's degree would not only compete for prospective students seeking full master's in human resources, it would also compete with other program options such as MBAs or Master's in Communication programs with human resource related concentrations.

Boston is the most competitive region for HRM master's programming out of all Northeastern's regional campus sites. Boston University's MS in Human Resource Management, Emmanuel College's MS in Human Resource Management, and Framingham State's Master of Human Resources are the only full master's programs in the Boston region. BU's program has narrow applicant standards, and Northeastern has a brand advantage over Emmanuel and Framingham State, which provides CPS with the opportunity to become the leading HRM master's provider in the Boston region.

There is very limited competition from reputable institutions in Charlotte, Seattle, and the Bay Area suggesting CPS' proposed program would be strongly positioned at all of Northeastern's regional campus sites.

Nationally, there are a number of key CPS competitors that offer HR master's degrees in an online and/or part-time format tailored to working professionals, which were profiled in this report. Competitors include Georgetown's Master of Professional Studies in Human Resource Management, Penn State World Campus' Master of Professional Studies in Human Resources and Employment Relations and NYU's MS in Human Resource Management and Development. American has the most unique title and focus area of the profiled programs with its Master's in Human Resource Analytics and Management.

American University, SNHU, and USC appear to have launched programs in the last few years, while this means intensifying competition, it also suggests more and more competitors are recognizing the potential ROI of this market opportunity.

CPS could be the only HRM provider in Boston to offer concentration options, which would offer a differentiation opportunity. A concentration in Analytics could be unique both at a regional and national level.

None of the profiled providers appear to offer SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP certification holders the opportunity to earn credits towards their degree, which makes CPS' current partnership with SHRM unique.

Generally, profiled competitors do not have robust experiential learning opportunities for students. Five of the 8 profiled competitors offer an experiential capstone or research project. CPS' XN/short-term consulting projects with employers as well as its career coaching opportunities would be differentiated.

Curriculum Map

To earn the MS in Human Resources Management, students must complete 45-47QH of courses in three categories: Core courses, concentration courses, and elective courses.

Core courses (22-25 QH) -- Note: all of these courses currently exist in the revised HRM graduate certificate curriculum

Rationale:

- Required courses:
  - CMN 6015 is an on-ramp course for students with no experience in the HR field
  - CMN 6025 is included because the competency mapping team determined that knowledge of workforce analytics was a vital skill for all HRM graduate students
  - CMN 6042 ins included because Strategic Workforce Planning provides a conceptual framework for the more functionally-oriented courses
- Select 4 from the following courses: Since HR professionals will enter the program with different competencies and skill sets, this enables them to select courses that will best meet their career objectives.
- The 12-week experiential capstone enables students to develop on-the-job projects or to act as consultants to XN sponsoring organizations.

Required (10-13)

HRM 6015 Introduction to HRM (3 QH) (waived for students with HR experience)

HRM 6025 Workforce Analytics (3QH)

HRM 6042 Strategic Workforce Planning (3QH)

HRM 6940 Projects for Professionals **Capstone** (4QH)

Select 4 of the following: (12 QH)

HRM 6005 High Performance Organizations (3QH)

HRM 6010 Compensation and Benefits (3QH)

HRM 6020 Talent Acquisition (3QH)

HRM 6030 Employment Contract (3QH)

HRM 6047 Employee Life Cycle (3QH)

HRM 6050 Employee Engagement (3QH)

HRM 6060 Organizational Design (3QH)

HRM 6070 Global HRM (3QH)

CMN 6090 Organizational Culture and Communication (3QH)

Concentrations 15-16 QH

Rationale: Every CPS master's program has a menu of concentrations, which are career-focused areas of specialization.

Artificial Intelligence for Human Resources (select 5)

Required:

EAI 6070 - Human Resources Information Processing (3QH)

EAI 6080 - Advanced Analytical Utilization (3QH)

EAI 6120 - AI Communication and Visualization (3QH)

Electives (Select 2)

ALY 6010 - Probability Theory and Introductory Statistics (3QH) (Pre-req for more advanced ALY courses)

ALY 6040 - Data Mining Applications (3QH)

ALY 6040 - Data Mining Applications (3QH)

ALY 6060 - Decision Support and Business Intelligence (3QH)

ALY 6100 - Data-Driven Decision Making (3QH)

ALY 6110 - Data Management and Big Data (3QH)

Digital HR (select 5)

Required:

NEW Digital HR Platforms

ITC 6340 - Mobile and Wireless Networks and Applications (3QH)

CMN 6045 – Designing Social Media Channels (3QH)

Electives (Select 2)

CMN 6065 - Implementation and Management of Social Media Channels and Online Communities (3QH)

ALY 6010 – Probability Theory and Introductory Statistics (3QH) (Pre-req for more advanced ALY courses)

ALY 6060 - Decision Support and Business Intelligence (3QH)

ALY 6100 - Data-Driven Decision Making (3QH)

ALY 6110 - Data Management and Big Data (3QH)

Global Talent Management (select 5)

Required:

NEW Global & Comparative Employment/Employee Relations (3QH)

NEW Global Talent Acquisition & Mobility (3QH)

NEW International Compensation (3QH)

Electives (Select 2):

LDR 6145 - Global Leadership (3QH)

CMN 6085 - Strategies for Cross-Cultural Facilitation and Negotiation (3QH)

CMN 6095 - Foundations of Developing Cultural Awareness (3QH)

GST 6101 - Global Literacy, Culture, and Community (4QH)

Project Management (select 5)

Required:

PJM 5900 - Foundations of Project Management (4QH)) – waived for students with project management experience

PJM 6000 - Project Management Practices (3QH)

PJM 6215 - Leading Remote Project Teams (3QH)

 Select (Select 2 or 3 if PJM 5900 is waived)

PJM 6005 - Project Scope Management (3QH)

PJM 6175 - Project Resource Management (3QH)

PJM 6180 - Project Stakeholder Management (3QH)

PJM 6210 - Communication Skills for Project Managers (3QH)

Leadership (select 5)

Required:

LDR 6100 - Developing Your Leadership Capability (3QH)

LDR 6120 - Developing Organizational Leadership (3QH)

Electives (Select 3):

LDR 6140 - Strategy Development and Implementation (3QH)

LDR 6145 - Global Leadership (3QH)

LDR 6150 - Innovation and Organizational Transformation (3QH)

LDR 6115 - Leadership Communication (3QH)

LDR 6135 - Ethical Leadership (3QH)

Organizational Communication (select 5)

Required:

CMN 6020 - Ethical Issues in Organizational Communication (3QH)

CMN 6080 - Intercultural Communication (3QH)

CMN 6100 - Communication Networks and Managing Information (3QH)

Electives (Select 2):

CMN 6910 - Organizational Communication Assessment (3QH)

CMN 6110 - Group Dynamics and Interpersonal Conflict: Meeting Management (3QH)

CMN 6060 - Negotiation, Mediation, and Facilitation (3QH)

CMN 6025 - Digital Era Skills: Platforms, Tools, and Techniques (3QH)

CMN 6050 - Crisis Communication (3QH)

Electives 5-10 QH

CMN 6110 - Group Dynamics and Interpersonal Conflict: Meeting Management (3QH)

CMN 6060 - Negotiation, Mediation, and Facilitation (3QH)

CMN 6025 - Digital Era Skills: Platforms, Tools, and Techniques (3QH)

ALY 6010 - Probability Theory and Introductory Statistics (3QH)

ALY 6070 - Communication and Visualization for Data Analytics (3QH)

TCC 6620 - Collecting User Data (2QH)

TCC 6610 – Prototyping (2QH)

COP 6940 - Personal and Career Development (3-4QH)

Course Descriptions of New Courses

Global & Comparative Employment/Employee Relations (3QH)
Focuses on institutional, organizational, and managerial perspectives of employment processes, relationships, and outcomes in a globalized economy. Cross-national variation in employment relations and labor law are examined through the lens of convergent-divergent HRM theory. Other topics include global and national labor standards and rights, mechanisms through which labor is governed, ways in which workers are organized, as well as cultural and social factors which impact international employment.

Global Talent Acquisition & Mobility (3QH)

Focuses on organizational staffing issues that are not present in a domestic environment, or that increase in complexity in an international context. Ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric, and geocentric approaches to managing and staffing international subsidiaries are examined. Other topics include the varied types of international assignments; selection criteria and procedures for the same; the roles of expatriates, non-expatriates, and inpatriates; as well as management, motivation, development, and repatriation of workers on international assignments.

International Compensation (3QH)

Focuses on the complexities that arise when firms move from compensation at the domestic level to compensation in an international context. The two main approaches to international compensation as well as the key components of designing an international compensation program are examined. Special problem areas of taxation, cost of living, and managing compensation of expatriates, non-expatriates, and inpatriates are introduced, along with potential host country and regional influences on compensation design.

Digital HR Platforms (3QH)

Digital HR requires a paradigm shift in the way HR professionals embrace and deliver technology within organizations. As cloud-based technologies become the norm for businesses, HR design needs to shift from rigid transactional processes to employee focused, analytics driven, integrative HR platforms that deliver policy, systems, process and operations in real time and include mobile applications. By embracing a digital approach to human resources, HR professionals and organizational leaders are better able to manage and communicate with employees throughout the employee life cycle.

Resource Requirements

Virtually all of the courses in the proposed MS in HRM program already exist within CPS. Currently, an Academic Consultant oversees the HRM graduate certificate and concentration programs. It is expected that a full-time Lead Faculty will be recruited to manage the growth and development of a master's program. No additional resources are required.

AACSB Accreditation

The MS Human Resources Management program will fall under AACSB accreditation, and as such, will adhere to the guidelines and requirements necessary to maintain good standing. This responsibility of adherence will fall upon the program, which will work in coordination with the D'Amore McKim School of Business to ensure collaboration around reporting requirements.