

## Labour Relations – BMGT 261-808 Course Introduction

### Land Acknowledgment: Honouring the Land

Humber College is located within the traditional and treaty lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit. Known as Adoobiigok, the “Place of the Black Alders” in Michi Saagiig language, the region is uniquely situated along Humber River Watershed, which historically provided an integral connection for Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat peoples between the Ontario Lakeshore and Lake Simcoe/Georgian Bay regions. Now home to people of numerous nations, Adoobiigok continues to provide a vital source of inter-connection for all. For more information, visit the Aboriginal Resource Centre (LRC2137) North Campus, (WEL301) Lakeshore Campus or [www.humber.ca/aboriginal/](http://www.humber.ca/aboriginal/)

### Equity Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Humber College and the University of Guelph-Humber (Humber) are leaders in providing a learning, working and living environment that recognizes and values equity, diversity and inclusion in all its programs and services. Humber commits to reflect the diversity and intersectionality of the communities the College serves. Students, faculty, support and administrative staff feel a sense of belonging and have opportunities to be their authentic selves.

### About This Course

Welcome to the Labour Relations – BMGT 261-808 course at Humber College and through Ontario Learn. This course provides students with a working knowledge of the institutions and processes which govern employee-management relations in a unionized work environment. The course focuses on the strategic and legal considerations which influence decision-making for employers and employees facing the option of unionization or the impact of unionization.

Major topics include:

- historical development of the Canadian trade union movement,
- statutory certification procedures,
- unfair labour practices,
- the process of collective bargaining,
- the nature and contents of collective agreements,
- standard grievance procedures, conciliation and arbitration processes and the impact of strikes and lockouts.

This first page is a course introductory page. It will only appear as the first page of the first module.

Please ensure to include updated Land Acknowledgment and EDI Statement

Create a brief introduction to the course explaining who it is intended for and what the course will cover

For anything related to info that is on the course outline and is just a matter of copy and pasting - The learner should be directed to their course outline, ie copy the course rationale & learning outcomes that is in your course outline

### Course Rationale

This course serves to provide the Business student with a basic understanding of the Labour Relations function. The importance of a strong employer and employee relationship can be the key to the ultimate success of an organization, and this course provides a framework to achieve such results.

A brief description of "The Why" for the learner

### Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the impact of major pieces of legislation affecting the Canadian Industrial Relations System on current and future events.
2. Appraise the historical foundations of the Canadian Labour Movement to interpret its historical and on-going impact on human resource management and business environments.
3. Formulate legal and professional responses as human resource professionals to unionization and subsequent union activities.
4. Create a collective agreement by conducting a collective bargaining simulation from preparation to outcome.
5. Resolve union-management disputes through selection of an appropriate third party resolution method.
6. Judge the strengths and weaknesses of testimony in an arbitration hearing to reach a conclusion and determine an appropriate award.
7. Assess the impact of changing demographics and work arrangements on the future of the Canadian Industrial Relations System.

Include all learning outcomes, the Los will be used and highlighted in each module

**Page Break / Spacing**

**Module 1 Introduction to Labour Relations**

Title of the Module

In this section offer a brief (two to three sentences) introduction to the Module.

**Description/Overview**

In this module we will discuss the importance of labour relations in contemporary work settings, we will examine the definition of labour relations. In addition, we will examine some of the reasons for employee unionization and the characteristics of unionized workplaces. Finally, we will discuss the people and factors that influence labour relations.

**Rationale**

The purpose of this module is to introduce you to the concept of labour relations and indicate its importance in contemporary workplace settings.

Having a thorough understanding of these concepts will allow you to have a strong fundamental knowledge of the impact of labour relations in the Canadian workplace.

2-3 sentences explaining to the learner why the information is valuable to them and the course. State the relevance and importance of the content in this module to the students.

**Module Learning Outcomes**

Identify which Los are included in this Module (refer to the Critical Path)

Explain the terms "labour relations" and "industrial relations"

Discuss reasons why individuals decide to unionize

Analyze the various parties that influence labour relations

Outline various HR activities/responsibilities that are affected by unions

Explain key aspects of the systems and political-economic framework for labour relations

**Topics**

Personal Introduction

What is Labour Relations?

Why do employees become unionized?

Characteristics of unionized workplaces

People and Factors Influencing Labour Relations

It is important to chunk all the information into topics. The key to online learning is to allow time for the learner to have time to reflect and process the information. All topics covered should be listed to help prepare the learner and guide them as they work through this module. Consider each topic as a page or two of information in a textbook chapter. After each page or two, the student will need an opportunity to "interact" with the topic. The opportunity to "interact" can be replying to a discussion post, taking a short quiz, etc. Consider best ways to chunk the information in topics so that students are able to process and retain information before they move on to the next topic.

If a student went through this module and then logged off, what key concepts or terms would you want them to keep in mind as they reflected on the module? You will make this list after you've completed writing this module.

### Key Concepts and Words:

- Labour Relations
- Collective bargaining
- Complaints and Grievances
- HR Functions

This is where you list what concepts the learners should have a strong understanding of going into this module. This example is the first module of a course, so there aren't any concepts that have been introduced as of yet. An example that may be in the second module of this course would be: *Before beginning this module, participants should have a strong understanding of the nature of employment relationships between the employee and the employer as well as the development of unions in Canada.* This allows modules to be used in other courses and shared.

### Before you Begin (Prerequisite Knowledge)

None

List all the resources in this section, but prior to migrating to the online portal, copy the resources into the Resources Tab in the BB toolbar - this way, you can upload new relevant reading materials as you update the course.

### Resources

Please refer to the Resources tab.

List all the resources in this section, but prior to migrating to the online portal, copy the resources into the Resources Tab in the BB toolbar - this way, you can upload new relevant reading materials as you update the course

List all the interactive components of this module. Examples include:  
Discussion Assignments  
Article Jigsaws  
Course Wiki  
Reflection Journals  
Assignments

### Activities/Assessments/Assignments

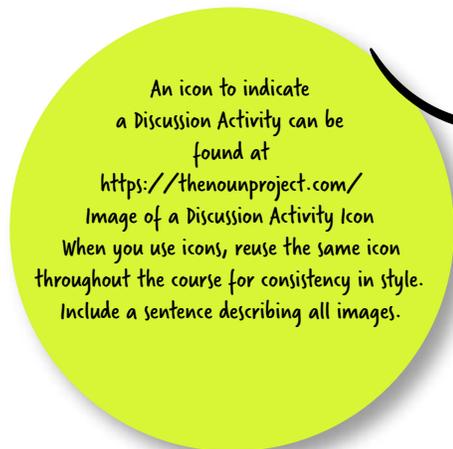
Discussion Assignment

This list should be updated at the end of the module creation.

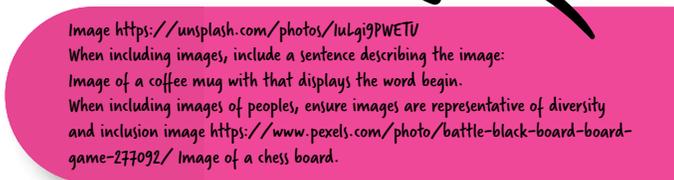
## Page Break / Spacing

### Personal Introduction

Welcome to Introduction to Labour Relations. In our Discussion Board (link on the left menu) in the area entitled Personal Introduction, please create a short post that includes information about your professional and/or academic background, reasons for taking the course and any previous experiences related to labour relations that you have had. Get to know the other members in this online learning community by reading and responding a minimum of two other candidates' introductions.



### What is Labour Relations?



When you hear the term labour union, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

Labour Relations refers to the relations between employers and unionized employees and specifically relates to the presence of labour unions in the workplace.

As such labour relations is the term used to describe the interaction that takes place between the union representing the employees and the employer. This interaction is affected by a number of factors such as: labour organizations, collective bargaining, labour market, the structure of the economy, labour law and technological.

Labour Relations is a specific term that means the presence of a labour union in the workplace, as opposed to non-union workplaces, where the term employee relations is used. Overall, industrial relations is the study of employment in both union and non-union organizations.

This is the first topic mentioned in the opening page. The content will vary pending on the course topic. Note when asking participants to post in the Discussion Board, be specific where the learner is to post and the expectations.

Consider this personal introduction as an opportunity for you to get to know your students and for the students to get to know one another. Is there information about their prior learning or employment histories that you would like them to share? What is their motivation for taking this course? Consider learning more about the student's overall and familiarity with learning in the online environment by asking about their prior experiences in taking an online course. This is also an opportunity for you to begin creating a community with the learners and having them respond to one another's discussion posts.

Activating prior knowledge can done many ways including using a quick question, an image, infographic, reflecting on a quote, having the learners respond to questions in a short discussion post, creating a discussion post highlighting 2-3 things the learner knows about the topic and one thing they want to learn about, etc

## **Page Break / Spacing**

### **Why do employees become unionized?**

The following video briefly explains what a labour union is and how unions further employee rights and interests. This information will lay the foundation for a better understanding on why unions exist.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9YbK8rjh6s>

Unions are central to labour relations – union members work together to bargain for better working conditions for its members. They provide constant checks and balances on employers to ensure employers desire to raise profits is not at the expense of the employees having a suitable work life balance.

Reasons for employee unionization includes:

Collective voice

Power in numbers

Improved working conditions or relationship with employer example, poor working conditions, employer abuse of power, unfair treatment, discrimination etc.

Promises of economic security made by union example, more money, job security

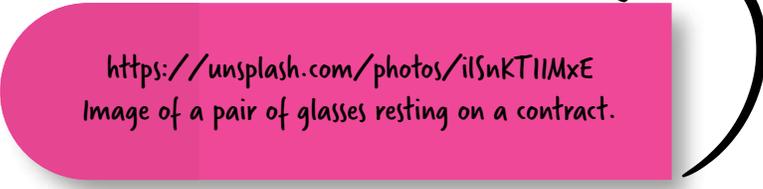
Enjoyment of being part of a group membership

Condition of employment in a company that is already unionized

Using videos, infographics, podcasts and interactive websites are great ways to present content in multiple ways and reach various needs. It is important to introduce the resources and explain why it is being used for the course. The following pages are the rest of the content for this module.

## Page Break / Spacing

### Characteristics of unionized workplaces



<https://unsplash.com/photos/ilSnKT1IMxE>  
Image of a pair of glasses resting on a contract.

Reflect on an experience you had working for an organization that had multiple employees.

What was each person's function within the workspace?

Were there open discussions about roles and responsibilities, pay, vacation and employment contracts?

What course of action was taken if a person felt they were being mistreated or were working in an unsafe environment?

A key characteristic of unionized environments is the focus on the collective. Members must accept the fact that there is little or no room for individuality, particularly with respect to pay and working conditions. The employees of the bargaining unit are governed by the terms and conditions of the collective agreement/contract.

#### *Organizational Structure and Union membership:*

Even if an organization is considered unionized, the organization will likely never become fully unionized because supervisors and managers are ineligible to become a part of the bargaining unit primarily because they are acting on behalf on the employer.

Supervisors, managers as well as directors carry out their roles and responsibilities in a management capacity and must exercise autonomy and independent judgement in performing their job duties which also includes directing employees, hiring, terminations or other disciplinary actions.

Employees who are responsible for managing confidential information and has access to compensation data and personnel files or performs support roles for management decision making are also ineligible to become a part of the bargaining unit.

#### *Wages and Salaries:*

The wages and salaries for of union employees' are established through negotiation between union representatives and the organization's negotiation team.

Union leaders and the organization's representatives conduct a series of proposals and counter proposals to determine issues such as hourly rates, wage increase schedules and overtime rates. As such, when a unionized employee is hired wages are not negotiated independently because their wage rate is predetermined by the collective bargaining agreement.

## **Page Break / Spacing**

### **Characteristics of Unionized Workplaces Continued**

#### *Benefits and Working Conditions:*

For unionized workers, benefits and working conditions are negotiated as part of the collective bargaining process. Through proposals and counter proposals the union and organization usually agrees on a percentage of employees' cost for health insurance coverage. Other benefits such as health and welfare, vacation and sick leave benefits, pension plan contributions, working conditions, and how seniority factors into requests for vacation leave and overtime work are also negotiated in the collective agreement.

#### *Employee Complaints and Grievances*

Unionized employees usually communicate any allegation of violation of the collective agreement through a grievance procedure. The grievance procedure is a series of steps that is handled in a systematic process that allows the union and the employer representatives to engage in an informal review of the dispute that progressively moves to subsequent steps that involves management review, written responses and appeals if the grievance is cannot be resolved.

If the grievance cannot be resolved at the company level, arbitration may be introduced as the final step. Examples of issues usually range dissatisfaction with a work assignment to alleged unfair employer treatment.

image

<https://www.pexels.com/photo/man-holding-clipboard-inside-room-1543924/>

Image of a supervisor looking over a document.

## Page Break / Spacing

### People and Factors Influencing Labour Relations

Read and reflect on the following quote:

*At the core, labor unions are working men and women, unified as one force. Despite any personal differences that may exist between us, we have banded together to protect and improve the lives of workers. We rise up together for the greater good. We defend one another like family.*



Sue Carney, "We're Not a Fee-for-Service Organization", *The American Postal Worker*, March/April, 2014

What type of emotions does this quote evoke? In your opinion, does this quote create a sense of unity? Who are the people uniting against? Who are they uniting with? Who are people making the decisions for the 'greater good'? When groups are working together, what are some of the adversities they may face?

There are many people, individuals, and factors that influence labour relations.

Government, employer, unions and employees all play an interdependent role in influencing labour relations.

Unions - labour unions resist the exploitation of employees by employers through equal bargaining power, and represent workers' interests in the employment relationship.

Government - the relationships between employees and employers, are influenced by the government and its agencies through the government's creation, passing and implementation of relevant labour relations law, policies, regulations etc.

Employer - engages collective bargaining with the union who represents all unionized employees with the organization. The employer has the opportunity to hear only one clear and concise argument presented by the union on behalf of the employees instead of having to manage concerns from hundreds of employees with similar issues.

Employee - by becoming unionized, employees are able to communicate more effectively with the employer in a collective voice rather than voicing their concerns in an individual capacity.

Using quotes, images and guiding question can activate prior learning.

## Page Break / Spacing

When creating discussion questions, try to use questions that have will create various answers.

Discussion Activities could also be an option of choosing one from a series of topic related questions .

An icon to indicate a Discussion Activity can be found at <https://thenounproject.com/Image of a Discussion Activity Icon>.

## Module Discussion

Reflecting on the themes of this module, create a discussion post that outlines how five HR functions (from the list below) are affected by the presence of a union. In your post, consider any other additional HR functions that you can identify.

Some HR functions:

*Labour Relations*

*HR Planning*

*Compensation*

*Benefits*

*Recruitment*

*Training and Development*

*Health and safety*

*Performance Management*

*Succession Planning*

Post your writeup in the Discussion Board in the area entitled HR Functions. Please take some time to read and comment on a minimum of two posts created by other members of the course. In your replies you may reflect on the ideas posed by others and pose questions related to the post. Please refer to the course syllabus for the Discussion Post rubric and expectations.

Also consider using prompts to guide students in sharing their views and analyses on the topic.

To help students get the most out of discussions, articulate your expectations for their participation. Providing students with discussion forum expectations in the form of a rubric (graded or ungraded) helps them understand, and therefore better meet, your expectations for thoughtful discussion forum participation.

Expectations and direct instructions

## Page Break / Spacing

### Summary

In this module we discussed importance of labour relations to today's workplace and the factors that influences employees to become unionized. Through your readings and discussion forum participation you were able learn how unionization impacts the field of human resources management.

You were also able to learn about the development of unions and labour relations in Canada.



### Let's Revisit the Module 1 Key Concepts and Words:

image <https://www.pexels.com/photo/light-bulb-and-keys-on-table-347226/>  
Image of a light bulb and keys.  
Keep for consistency

Here are the concepts that were discussed in this lesson. Review each word and, in your own words, explain what it means. If you struggle to explain it, please review the parts of the lesson that explain these concepts.

Labour Relations

Collective bargaining

Complaints and Grievances

HR Functions

Each module should conclude with a brief summary that highlights the main points of the module and revisiting the key words introduced on the first page.

<https://unsplash.com/photos/CKlHKtCJZKk>

Image of a pen in a journal.  
Note - because the summary appears in every module, keeping the same image helps with consistency.