
Organization
M.184.4140 Employment Systems
Winter term 2026/27
(10 ECTS)



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1. Registration and procedure

To participate in the module, please register in PAUL for the module and for the courses (two registrations!). This way, you will be automatically enrolled in the PANDA course, where you find all relevant materials. Moreover, communication between participants and the teaching team will take place on this platform.

Throughout the semester, we will upload material to the PANDA course, structured by chapters. The first chapters should be prepared by 05.10.2026 at the latest. However, you can also start as soon as material is uploaded. For each chapter, we provide you with guiding questions and in-depth material using various medial approaches. Please work on the material independently in order to prepare yourself for the exams. In the first six weeks, we will discuss the content of each chapter every Wednesday & Thursday. You will have two classes per week!

In the second half of the semester, you will read and analyze one academic each week. The paper will be available on Panda, so please make sure to read it before class. On Wednesday, we will provide you with background information and give you the opportunity to ask questions about the text. On Thursday, we will discuss guiding questions with reference to the text. Note that we will not provide any slides on the Thursday sessions.

There will also be a public forum where you can ask questions 03.02.2027 before the exam. We will have the final exams (in presence, no online option!); each will contribute 100% to your final grade.

2. Schedule

- From 14.10.2026 until 03.02.2027, we will prepare 12 chapters for you. All material will be provided two weeks in advance (latest). We will also upload a guide with questions for each academic paper. We will meet once a week and discuss the guiding questions with you.
- The final exam will be in the examination phase and will be announced later.
- **You need to register for the module, the lecture, the exercise and the exam via Paul (all three registrations!).** Please adhere to the University Paderborn regulations concerning registration and deregistration.
- Please find a detailed schedule below:

Topic	Dates (Wed 9-11 in H3, Thur 9-11 in H3)
Chapter 1: Employment relations	14.10. & 15.10.2026
Chapter 2: Explicit and implicit contracts	21.10. & 22.10.2026
Chapter 3: Employment systems	28.10. & 29.10.2026
Chapter 4: Internal and external labor markets	04.11. & 05.11.2026
Chapter 5: Human capital	11.11. & 12.11.2026
Chapter 6: Inequality	18.11. & 19.11.2026
Academic Paper Discussion	25.11. & 26.11.2026
Academic Paper Discussion	02.12. & 03.12.2026
Academic Paper Discussion	09.12. & 10.12.2026
Academic Paper Discussion	16.12. & 17.12.2026
Academic Paper Discussion	13.01. & 14.01.2027
Academic Paper Discussion	20.01. & 21.01.2027
Your questions	03.02.2027
Final exam (one hour)	TBD

3. Content

An important aspect of managing employment relations is the systemic or holistic aspect: the fact that certain HR and employment practices are often combined in particular ways. Such combinations are often termed employment systems or HR systems, and a whole range of typologies have been suggested. In this module, these typologies are introduced in order to enhance students' understanding of employment systems, their building blocks, their logics, their dependence on institutions such as labour law and social security, their efficiency in different situations, and their fairness for particular groups of employees.

In the first element of the module, basic building blocks are introduced, from seminal contributions to more recent developments. In the second element of the module, students are asked to apply the concepts by reflecting on recent research papers. The concepts discussed arise from economics, sociology, and human resource management. The interdisciplinary aspect will allow students two insights: there are important links between companies' HR practices and broader institutions, and employment systems may foster profit and worker welfare in various ways.

In the second part of the module, cases and applications of the concepts are discussed, based on selected academic articles. The articles focus on topics that are of recent general interest such as widespread discrimination on the labour market, effects of digitalization.