



HRM 464, Spring 2008
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SENIOR SEMINAR
(Certification Seminar)

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OFFICE HOURS: 9:00-11:15, 12:30-1:45 MW or by appointment
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BACKGROUND

This course is designed to help students integrate diverse areas of knowledge of human resource management acquired from previous courses in HRM. Students learn how effective management and integration of recruitment, staffing, compensation, performance management, and other human resource functions impact organizational performance. The purpose of the course is to provide an integrative experience that will enable students to solve human resource management problems using multiple perspectives on issues. This course is the culminating experience for senior students in the Human Resource Management major.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

HRM 386, HRM 385, senior standing, and a major in Human Resource Management, or permission of the instructor. Students without adequate academic background should not remain in this course. Those who chose not to drop the course will not be allowed to withdraw because of inadequate academic preparation. Inadequate preparation often leads to poor performance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

1. Integrate knowledge of strategic HRM, recruitment, staffing, compensation, performance management, and other areas, and explore how HR practices impact organizational effectiveness.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the context within which human resource management problems arise and the ability to solve Human Resource Management problems within an organizational context using multiple perspectives on issues.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of HR roles, competencies, and professional expectations needed in today's competitive business environment.
4. Explore current issues facing HR professionals.

TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Annual Editions, *Human Resources 08/09* (17th Ed.). Guilford, Ct.: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2008.

Ulrich, D. *HR Champions*. Boston, Ma: Harvard Business Press, 1997.

Becker, B.E., Huselid, M.A., and Ulrich, D. *The HR Scorecard: Linking People, Strategy and Performance*. Boston, Ma: Harvard Business School Press, 2001.

Gittell, J.H. and O'Reilly (2001). *JetBlue Airways: Starting from Scratch*. Harvard Business School Business Case 9-801-354.

Schramm, J. (2006). SHRM Workplace Forecast. Retrieved December 17, 2006 from www.shrm.org/trends/061606WorkplaceForecast.asp - 2006-06-16.

Additional readings may be placed on reserve at the library reserve desk or provided to students and will be made available well prior to their assigned date.

ADD/DROP PROCESS; COURSE WITHDRAWAL:

It is the responsibility of students to be informed of the college policies on add, drop and withdrawal.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 50% Group Human Resources Consulting Project
- 15% Individual HR Topic Presentation and Paper 1 (Due 3/3)
- 15% Individual HR Topic Presentation and Paper 2 (Due 4/14)
- 10% Class and Group Participation
- 10% Online Participation

The ***Group HR Consulting Project*** requires that you conduct a HR Consulting Project for a local company. The SUNY Oswego Center for Business and Community Development has agreed to recruit companies. You are a consulting group required to prepare a presentation and written report about the organization studied (same groups as with the presentation and paper). In the Consulting Project, each group will:

1. Analyze a company and its industry to understand how the company competes. What are the specific ways in which the firm creates value?
2. Describe the company's human resource strategy and policies/practices (human resource planning, staffing, performance appraisal, training and development, compensation, labor relations, legal compliance, etc.).
3. Provide a critical analysis of the connection among HR policies and between HR policies and business strategy.
4. Make recommendations to better align HR practices with company objectives.

The final deliverable is a presentation and associated report to the local company's management. This is a semester-long project, which requires planning and time management. The presentation and accompanying report should be professional in appearance, neatly typed, and grammatically correct. *Dr. Friedman must approve the Consulting Project and subsequent report prior to the Consulting Project and presentation at the company.*

Your HR Consulting paper should have an:

1. **Executive Summary** containing an overview of sections below, with emphasis on recommendations.
2. **Introduction** in which you describe the organization (identify products/services, size, location(s), number of years in operation, etc.), its strategy and objectives and the larger environment in which it operates and state what you plan to do in the paper.
3. **Methodology and Analysis** explaining what was done, with whom you spoke, and how you obtained and analyzed your information.
4. **Conclusion and Recommendations** that logically flow from the information analyzed.

If you quote anyone directly, you should footnote the quotes. If you use outside references, you should have a bibliography arranged in a standard format (e.g., APA). Pages must be numbered.

Additional points to consider in Your HR Consulting Project are found in Angel. You will likely need to interview people and observe the organization for yourselves in order to check on the accuracy of data you collect. *It is very important to be specific in your answers and to offer evidence to substantiate your assertions. Cite specific examples of events and behaviors within the organization.* You should do a little work on the Consulting Project each week. Applying yourself to this assignment can provide you with two benefits: allowing you to develop proficiencies in systemic organizational analysis by collecting and evaluating data, and allowing you to develop insights about organizations (a valuable skill).

Individual HR Topic Presentations and Papers require that you review two current trends in a major area of Human Resources selected from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) 2006 Workplace Forecast. Presentations and papers will contain the following, and must be numbered as such in the paper:

1. Provide a brief overview of the trend selected.
2. Review current HR trends in that area. This includes additional articles and at least *two* newspaper/web current events/news articles. Current means within the last 6 months.
3. Describe the implications of the trend for other HR areas (e.g., the implications of “preparing for the next wave of retirement and labor shortage” trend on staffing, training, compensation, and other HR areas).
4. Detail how a HR Consulting Project of the area selected is conducted. Detail should include methodologies and tools (interview, questionnaires).
5. Create a quiz on your topic and administer to the class on the presentation day using a fun methodology (e.g., jeopardy game with competition). The quiz can cover the material presented or anything relevant to the area selected. You may team up with another student that selected the same topic for his/her paper to conduct the quiz. The paper and presentation; however, is an individual effort, paper and presentation.

The presentation, question and answers, and class quiz is expected to take 15 minutes. Papers should be approximately five pages (excluding cover page).

Participation is determined by evaluating your:

- 1) Ability to respond to questions;
- 2) Contribution to discussions and exercises in class;
- 3) The quality of the questions you ask.

“A”s in participation are awarded to students who develop the reputation as a person who is always prepared, willing and able to contribute whether it is to answer or ask questions, or to participate in any of a variety of class and small group activities. This course requires that you complete the assigned readings *before* class. Class discussion is expected as we examine HR issues and trends. Active and constructive participation during small group activities will help you apply knowledge.

Online Participation

HRM 464 is taught both in a traditional classroom and online (2/3 is spent in the classroom, and 1/3 is online). This format enhances learning by allowing more dialogue and debate outside the classroom and using class time more efficiently. The instructor will post study questions for each module, *typically on Wednesday*. Students are required to respond to these questions online, and an online discussion among students and the instructor will follow. Our objective is to develop critical thinking skills whereby class subject matter is understood, evaluated, assumptions made or challenged, and conclusions are drawn.

During the first half of the course, homework assignments and discussion questions are posted. Discussions are then held online. The online discussions are then concluded in class, making our face-to-face time more efficient. When reading the Annual Review articles, guidelines for thinking critically appears in the "Annual Review Assignments" module.

You will read at least one other student’s individual paper and respond to that student in two ways. First, you will state one thing you learned by reading the paper (e.g., I learned that nearly 20% of organizations now have substantial personal health or wellness programs, according to the United Benefits Advisors’ 2007 Employer Opinion Survey). Second, you will then ask a question that demonstrates critical thinking (e.g., what differentiates organizations that promote wellness from those that do not, and why is that important?). Of course, another student should then attempt to respond to the question, starting a great online discussion.

During the second half of the course, the discussion questions will relate more to the HR Consulting Project. Students will post questions about their projects (e.g., “How should we evaluate the client’s performance management system?” or ask for advice (e.g., “Should we report to the client’s management team using PowerPoint when only two managers are present?”). Students will also post the results of their client visitations online for student reaction and discussion.

During the last three weeks of course, student groups will post drafts of the report they plan to present to their client’s management. Students will react and evaluate these drafts online. The constructive feedback offered online will be summarized in class, again facilitating learning and increasing efficiency.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: *Class attendance is essential and obligatory. It is your responsibility to regularly attend classes and complete assignments as scheduled.* Twenty percent (20%) of the final grade is based on class participation. Consistent with SUNY-Oswego policy, I reserve the right to drop anyone from the course if absences are excessive.

CLASSROOM, ONLINE AND CLIENT BEHAVIOR:

As you need to conduct yourself appropriately in business, it is important for you to behave appropriately in the classroom, online, and with your Consulting Project client.

Examples of appropriate class behavior include arriving on time, leaving after class is concluded, paying attention to others, listening to and responding to others' contributions, and turning your cell phone off. Please see me before class if you need to do one of these things (e.g., you are expecting an important phone call, you need to leave early).

The quality and quantity of your online participation is 15% of your final course grade. In order to develop critical thinking skills, it is important that you respond to the instructor's questions, ask questions, and react to comments made by other students during the online sessions. You are expected to participate each week with at least one posting (either to the instructor or to another student). Each posting is worth 1 point up to the maximum of 15 points, or 15% of the course grade. To qualify, each posting must be of minimum quality as judged by the instructor (e.g., pertain to the subject matter, stimulate discussion, and add value to the debate).

SPECIAL NOTE:

If you have a disabling condition that might interfere with your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact me, or contact the Office of Disability Services (312-3358).

INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY

Intellectual integrity on the part of all students is basic to individual growth and development through college course work. When academic dishonesty occurs, the teaching/learning climate is seriously undermined and student growth and development is impeded. For these reasons, any form of intellectual dishonesty is a serious concern and is therefore prohibited. *Students are expected to be fully familiar with the campus policy on intellectual integrity that can be found in the undergraduate catalog.*

POINTS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR HR CONSULTING PROJECT

1. Describe the company's short and long-term strategy. What impediments to success exist within the company? What specific changes would you recommend to the company to assist it in facing the future?
2. Analyze and describe the company's current HR systems. To what extent do existing HR systems assist or hinder the company in its performance? What evidence do you have to support this? Does the company evaluate its HR systems, programs, policies, etc.? How? How should / could it?
3. Is the company effective in meeting its goals and objectives? How do you know? How does the company know? Does HR appear to contribute to the company's effectiveness or lack thereof?
4. How were the existing HR systems developed? By Whom? When? For what purpose? Are they still relevant? Have they been redesigned?
5. Does senior management value the role of HR in the company? What evidence do you have of this? What role does the senior HR manager play within the top management circles? Do line managers in the company see themselves as HR managers?
6. What ongoing or new challenges from the company's environment are on the horizon? Is the company prepared for these changes from a corporate strategic perspective? From a HR perspective?
7. Most importantly, what recommendations would you make to the company concerning HR systems in order to improve performance? Are these recommendations feasible and practical (meaning likely to be implemented), given the company's history, culture, resources and management team?
8. To what extent does the HR function enact the roles described by Dave Ulrich (HR Champions, 1997)?

The above questions are merely guidelines. If they leave out anything of significance in your company, feel free to include it. Throughout your analysis you should determine *why* everything is as it is, diagnose systems as having an appropriate or inappropriate "fit" with each other and the company, and make any necessary *recommendations* for changes.

Several excellent HR Consulting Project information sources exist, including:

(Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM): General Accounting Office (www.gao.gov) reports:

- (GAO/OCG-00-14G) Human Capital: a Self-Assessment Checklist for Agency Leaders, September 1999.
- (GAO/GGD-00-28) Human Capital: Key Principles from Nine Private Sector Organizations, Jan 2000.
- (GAO-01-965T) Taking Steps to meet Current and Emerging HR Challenges, March 2000.

HRM 464 SCHEDULE- SPRING 2008

(Class time will be allowed for groups to meet and work on their HR Consulting Project)

Week	Module	In Class	See Angel for On-line Discussion Questions: do on week assigned and discuss in class following Monday	Readings
1/25 1/28	Course Introduction	Course Introduction and Expectations	None	Watson Wyatt- Human Capital Index- Human Capital as a Lead Indicator of Shareholder Value ¹
2/4	HRM in Perspective and Trends HR Roles and Competencies	Course online training HRM in Perspective HR Competencies	Respond to and discuss posted questions online. Select presentation/paper topic. <i>Complete online discussions in class the following week. The online questions will typically be posted on Wednesday.</i>	SHRM Workplace Forecast: 2006 ² HR Champions- chapter 1 & 2
2/11	HR Roles- Strategic Partner	Group Teambuilding Company Presentations Human Resource Roles Role 1: Strategic Partner Company Presentations	Discuss behaviors that make HR managers strategic partners, and how this role adds value and influences organizational effectiveness. Discuss Annual Edition articles 1 & 3.	*Annual Editions- articles 1 & 3 HR Champions- chapter 3
2/18	HR Roles- Administrative Expert	Meeting HR Requirements Role 2: Administrative Expert Company Presentations	Online discussions: The administrative expert role is often overemphasized in organizations. Why is this so? What can HR do to expand its impact?	Annual Editions- articles 15-19 HR Champions- chapter 4

¹ <http://www.watsonwyatt.com/research/resrender.asp?id=W-488&page=1>

² <http://www.shrm.org/trends/061606WorkplaceForecast.pdf>

Week	Module	In Class	See Angel for On-line Discussion Questions: do on week assigned and discuss in class following Monday	Readings
2/25	HR Roles- Employee Champion	Creating a Productive Work Environment Role 3: Employee Champion Company Presentations	Online discussion: What recent developments make the admin expert role significant? Post your paper on Angel. Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking.	Annual Editions- articles 20 & 22 HR Champions- chapter 5
3/3		Individual HR Topic Presentation/Paper (1)	Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking. Hand in hard copy of your paper.	Annual Articles 23-26 HR Champions (chapter 6 & 7)
3/10	HR Roles- Change Agent	Individual HR Topic Presentation/Paper (1) Developing Effective Human Resources Role 4: Change Agent	Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking. Online discussion: why must organizations change? How can HR managers help the change process?	JetBlue Case Annual Articles 27 & 28
3/17	HR Alignment	Individual HR Topic Presentation/Paper (if needed) Aligning HR with Business	Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking. Online discussion: why must organizations change? How can HR managers help the change process?	HR Scorecard (chapter 1 & 2) Annual Articles 27 & 28
3/24	Spring Recess	None	None	None
3/31	The Measurement Challenge	Compensation and Benefits HR Scorecard: The Measurement Challenge	Online discussion: what is an HR scorecard, how is it developed, and why is it important?	JetBlue Case (revisited)

Week	Module	In Class	See Angel for On-line Discussion Questions: do on week assigned and discuss in class following Monday	Readings
4/7		Health and Safety	<p>Online discussion: what role does HR play with respect to the health and safety of it s employees?</p> <p>Post your paper on Angel.</p> <p>Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking.</p>	Annual Articles- 29 & 30
4/14		Fostering Employee/Mgt Relationships Individual HR Topic Presentation/Paper (2)	<p>Online discussion for student papers: summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking.</p> <p>Hand in hard copy of your paper.</p>	Annual Articles- 31 & 32
4/21	Creating an HR Scorecard	Individual HR Topic Presentation/Paper (2) Creating a HR Scorecard Consulting Recommendations/Dry Runs	<p>Online discussion for student papers: for one paper, summarize one thing you learned and ask one question that demonstrates critical thinking.</p> <p>Assignment: each group posts questions regarding their HR Consulting Project. Students respond to these requests for advice.</p> <p>Online discussion: How can HR create a HR scorecard that measures organizational effectiveness?</p>	HR Scorecard- chapters 3 & 4
4/28	HR Alignment & Measurement	International Human Resource Management Measuring HR Alignment Consulting Recommendations/Dry Runs	<p>Assignment: each group posts questions regarding their HR Consulting Project. Students respond to these requests for advice.</p> <p>Online discussion: What is international HR and why is its importance increasing?</p>	Annual Articles 33 & 34 HR Scorecard (chapter 5 & 6)
5/5	HR Scorecard Guidelines	Guidelines for Implementing an HR Scorecard Consulting Recommendations/Dry	<p>Assignment: each group posts questions regarding their HR Consulting Project. Students respond to these requests for advice.</p>	Annual Editions- articles 44 & 35 HR Scorecard- chapter 8

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Class topics, assignments and due dates are subject to change. For each reading, respond to the questions listed on page 202 (Annual Editions Human Resources 08/09).