Human Resources II

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Degree/study: Bachelor degree in ADE, Economics, Business Sciences-Management, and International Business Economics  
Year of study: 3rd and 4th year  
Groups: 1 & 2  
Term: 2nd  
Number of ECTS credits: 5  
Language of Instruction: English

PLEASE READ THIS SYLLABUS CAREFULLY AND CONSULT IT BEFORE RAISING ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE.

Contacting me

I am looking forward to meeting you during the course. If you have a question regarding the course, please consult the syllabus. If the question is not answered by the syllabus, please write me an email or come to the office hours. For emails that contain questions that I believe are of general interest, I will post the question (anonymously) and the corresponding answer to the discussion board on Aula Global. This way, I make sure that everyone has the same information at the same time. For questions that are not of general interest but specific to you I will either email you with the reply or I will ask you to come to the office hour. Please note that all communication regarding the course will be addressed to your student email address from UPF. Please check this email regularly or automatically forward it to an
address that you check regularly. If you are an exchange student, you will also be assigned a UPF email address, which will be the email used for communicating all information regarding the course.

**Time and location of sessions:**

**Theory Sessions:**

Group 1: Monday & Tuesday, 13:00-14:30

Group 2: Thursdays & Fridays, 15:00-16:30

**Seminars:**

Group 101: Fridays, 10:30-12:00

Group 102: Fridays, 12:00-13:30

Group 103: Fridays, 13:30-15:00

Group 201: Mondays, 14:30-16:00

Group 202: Mondays, 16:00-17:30

Group 203: Mondays, 17:30-19:00

**Seminar dates**

For group **101, 102, and 103**, the seminar dates are:

22-01, 29-01, 05-02, 12-02, 19-02, & 26-02

For group **201, 202, and 203**, the seminar dates are:

18-01, 25-01, 01-02, 08-02, 15-02, & 22-02

**I. Course description**

In many industries, the personnel—or the Human Resources—of an organization is one of the most vital factors shaping its success or failure. Decisions that involve selection, training, job assignments, and, in some cases, separation of employees have crucial consequences for businesses. These consequences do not only involve financial gains or losses and have legal implications but also affect individuals and their motivation and ability to be productive and satisfied persons. Effectively managing and leveraging a company's Human Resources thus requires an appreciation of how Human Resource decisions are shaped by and shape individuals’
motivation, well-being, productivity, and sense of identification with the organization they work for. This course offers the latest psychological perspectives on the main challenges in Human Resource and Personnel Management; starting with an individual’s entry into an organization all the way until her exit. By the end of the class, you will have a deep understanding and basic hands-on experience with regard to hiring, compensation, motivation and well-being, organizational exit, and many more HR practices in light of the empirical evidence that supports or discourages their use.

II. Competences

By following this course, students will be able to acquire or expand a number of general and subject-specific competences.

General

- Understanding and correctly interpreting academic writings.
- Being able to justify and defend your position using coherent arguments.
- Developing reasoning and critical thinking abilities in order to analyze controversial issues.
- Accepting the diversity of opinions as a fundamental ingredient of academic life and as an essential component of contemporary society. Being able to form your own opinion while respecting the diverging opinions from others.
- Reinforcing your habits of self-discipline, self-control and rigor in completing academic work and in managing your time schedule.
- Having a proactive attitude toward learning about the topics you do not know and toward the learning process and/or professional activity more generally.
- Being able to make creative use of the knowledge and concepts learnt in the course. Being able to adapt those to novel and original situations.
- Being able to demonstrate a level of knowledge that is sufficient for professional action.
- Being able to select and use the appropriate information to formulate adequate solutions to problems.

Specific

- Develop strategies for managing human resources in organizations.
- Apply techniques of human resource management to different situations and cases

III. Content

Topic 1: Conceptual Foundations of Human Resource Management
Understanding people in organizations: Individual differences in personality, intelligence, and emotional competences

Jobs in their organizational context

Job satisfaction

**Topic 2: Getting People In: Recruitment and Selection**

Hiring process

Selection procedure, criteria, and tools

Hiring goals and philosophies

**Topic 3: Getting Great Results for the People and the Organization**

Motivation and compensation

Managing and evaluating performance

Psychological pitfalls in evaluating people: Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination

Employee training

Development, mentoring, and coaching

**Topic 4: Managing Goodbyes: Employee Separation**

Temporary goodbyes: Managing expatriate assignments and re-entry

Involuntary separation: Layoffs and discharges

Voluntary separation: Turnover and retirement

**IV. Evaluation**

The final grade will include the following components:

- Class Participation: 25%
- Group Project: 25%
- Final exam: 50%
IMPORTANT

The overall grade for the course is the weighted average of the grade obtained for the components. In order to pass this course, students need to meet both of the following criteria:

- The overall average grade of all components has to be at least 5.0 or higher
- The grade on the final exam is at least a 4.0 or higher

If the overall average of all grade components is below 5.0 or if the student achieves a grade below 4.0, the student does not pass the course.

1. Class participation

In order to learn, remember, and be able to practically apply what you learn, it is important to actively engage with the class content and to connect it to your own experience and prior knowledge. Accordingly, this course will provide ample opportunities to actively participate and practically try out different techniques. This is especially true for the seminar sessions. To provide an optimal learning experience, it is important that every student participates actively and engages in the discussions. Accordingly, part of your grade will be based on your active participation during the seminar sessions. That not only means coming to the seminar sessions and participating in the exercises but also sharing your thoughts, experiences, and insights with your fellow students.

Additionally, there will sometimes be practical exercises during the theory sessions. Accordingly, a second component of your participation grade will be based on your participation to these exercises.

Finally, in case I feel that a student or a handful of students participate excellently during the theory sessions, I will award bonus points.

In order to facilitate the discussion and to be able to track your participation, I kindly ask that you use a name tag in all sessions (both theory and seminar sessions).

An important note on Seminar 4

For Seminar 4, I will ask you to form study groups of 5-6 students. These groups have to be formed by January 22. Students within one group have to be part of the same seminar group. These study groups will be used to perform a group presentation (10 minutes) in front of the class during seminar 4 (on February 8 for groups 201, 202, & 203 and on February 12 for groups 101, 102, 103)
Workgroups are asked to find an organization and collect information about the hiring process within this organization (I will provide the questions that you have to ask to the company). During the presentation, groups are asked to **diagnose the strengths and weaknesses** of the organization’s current practices **using the theories, concepts, and research findings encountered during the course** and provide small **recommendations** based on both the scientific evidence and the specifics of the organization on how to improve the current practice.

Please, bring a **1-page summary** of the presentation including the key points and the **full name** of each group members.

### 2. Group project

The purpose of the project is to **fix the lessons in long-term memory** by applying the concepts from the course in a creative, intelligent, and original way to a specific problem or question. The content of the project is **open-ended**; the only requirements are that 1) it must relate to Human Resources, and 2) it must result in a **presentation in front of the class** (max 15 minutes). If it is unclear whether your project fits these requirements, please check with me in advance of developing your work. Some ideas that might make for good projects are:

- Run an experiment to illustrate a concept from the course and present the results;
- Select a business situation in the real world and analyze it to illustrate some of the concepts from the course;
- Create a class activity to illustrate some of the concepts from the course;
- Use language and concepts from the course to write a story, a song, or a short movie;

You may follow one of the suggestions, or do something completely different.

You must form your group and **notify me about your group composition by the end of January**. Groups will present their projects during the last 2 weeks of the course. Please send me (gaelle.bustin@upf.edu) a **1-page executive summary** (Word document) of the project including the key points and the **full name** of each group members, **48 hours before the presentation**. If you plan on using PowerPoint, Keynote or other types of slides, please also send your slides to me 48 hours in advance so I can compile the different slideshows into a single document, which will save time in class.

While the grading is subjective, the following dimensions are valued: (1) **creativity** of ideas, (2) evidence of serious thinking and/or **hard work**, and (3) quality of the **oral presentation**.

A lot of group projects in the past have been amazing, so **my expectations are high**!
As the name indicates, the group project is a GROUP assignment. Every group member gets the same score as long as **all members make a substantial contribution to the final result**. However, because I know that this is, unfortunately, not always the case, a peer evaluation system will be in place. You will be required to evaluate your team members’ (except for your own) performance / contribution to the group project at the end of the semester, and this will be used to adjust individual team members’ group project grade. (The peer evaluation form will be posted on Aula Global – If you do not complete it, I will just assume that you consider all group members’ contribution to the group work to have been equal.)

### 3. Final exam

The final exam will encompass the totality of the content covered in the theory sessions, seminars, and obligatory readings for this class. The final exam will be divided in two parts.

**Part 1**

The first part will be a True or False Exam. Knowledge is knowing what you know and what you don’t know! Therefore, the grading scheme of the first part of final exam will be based on Certainty-Based Marking (CBM), a method that uses the students’ certainty of their answers as a moderating factor in their final mark. Experiments making use of confidence judgments in marking tests have repeatedly shown that this method stimulate more careful thinking and learning than simple (right/wrong) marking, and to provide more reliable assessment of the students true knowledge of the course.

How does it work concretely?

In CBM, students select both an answer and their level of confidence: they score full marks for knowing that they know the correct answer, some credit for a tentative correct answer but are penalized if they believe they know the answer but get it wrong. Here is the scoring scheme that will be used for the final exam:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you think your answer has a probability of being correct of...</th>
<th>You should select a Confidence level of...</th>
<th>if your answer is correct you will score ...</th>
<th>if your answer is wrong you will score ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than 67%</td>
<td>1 (Low)</td>
<td>1 point</td>
<td>0 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-80%</td>
<td>2 (Medium)</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>-2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greater than 80%</td>
<td>3 (High)</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>-6 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students are strongly encouraged to try out CBM for themselves before the exam! This can be achieved on the website (www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt) using any of a range of exercises in different fields. I recommend completing the economics exercises module at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/laptlite/sys/run.htm?kaplan or one of the other exercise sets. Additionally, I will present example questions at the beginning of the theory sessions so that you get acquainted with the type of questions and can train using the CBM answer system.

**Part 2**

The second part will be a Multiple Choice Exam. The grading scheme of the second part of final exam will be:

- 1 point for a good answer
- -1 for a bad answer
- 0 for a non response

**Recovering a failing grade**

Under some conditions, students who failed the course will be authorized to take an additional evaluation. The additional evaluation will be a written exam taken during the third trimester of the academic year.

Only students that have participated in the course and the evaluations activities will be authorized to take the additional evaluation, as stated in the following article of the Agreement of the Government Council (Article 11.4.2)

“Podran concórrer al procés de recuperació tots els estudiants que, havent participat a les activitats d’aprenentatge i avaluació durant el trimestre, hagin obtingut la qualificació de suspens de l’assignatura corresponent en l’avaluació trimestral. No hi podran concórrer els que no hagin participat en les activitats d’aprenentatge i avaluació o hagin renunciat a l’avaluació.”

It is understood that students have participated in the learning activities and continuous assessment during the term when they have attended class and have completed the exercises and other classroom activities. I understand that students have attended the final examination when they hand it out.

More concretely: to be **eligible** to take the recovery evaluation, students must meet ALL of the following conditions:

- the student has attended more than 66% of the seminars (i.e., at least 4 seminars out of 6).
- the student has completed the group project
- the student has taken the March exam

Since, as it is stated in the above mentioned article, only those students who have
failed the whole subject may participate in the process of recuperation, there will be no opportunity to participate for improving the grade if initially it is equal to or higher than 5.0.

For students who will participate in exchange programs recognized by the Faculty in the 3rd trimester and therefore cannot attend the additional examination, special arrangement will be made between the instructor and the student. Students that fall in this category should let the instructor know within 7 days of their grade being posted on Campus Global. Failure to do so implies that no extra arrangement will be made.

V. Bibliography and material

This course is not based on a single textbook but instead uses a careful selection of articles. This includes a mixture of articles that are more research orientated and some that are more oriented towards (managerial) practice. There is a set of compulsory readings. These are the readings that everyone is expected to read. Content from the compulsory readings will be tested for in the final exam.

In addition, there is a set of additional, optional readings that serve as resources that students can consult at their own discretion if they are interested in further exploring a certain topic. These additional, optional readings will not be tested in the exam.

Reading, additional material as well as the PowerPoint slides will be posted in “Aula Global” a few hours in advance of every theory session.

6. Methodology

This course consists of a combination of theory and seminar sessions. Theory sessions will cover the core theoretical issues by presenting central constructs, discussing important theoretical frameworks, and revisiting seminal research studies.

The aim of the seminar sessions is to apply these theoretical concepts to cases and real life examples, and to allow students to engage with the course material on a more experiential basis. To meet this aim, the seminar sessions will be based on a variety of different formats including the analysis of case studies, practical exercises, role play, and group discussions of issues of current societal relevance as they relate to the course content.

Theory and seminar sessions complement each other and attending and participating in both the theory sessions and seminar sessions is critical to properly follow the course and master its material and content.
IMPORTANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

• Attendance at the seminars is required, and so is arriving on time. Absences and late arrivals (more than 10 minutes) will be penalized by deducting points from the class participation grade. In case you have a legitimate excuse (illness, death in family, other excuses on a case-by-case basis), I will give the opportunity to make-up for one (and only one!) seminar. Note that legitimate excuses are invalid without supporting documentation. Please do not take this personally – I require supporting documentation because there were students in the past that fabricated reasons.

• Don’t miss class. Getting a classmate’s notes is a poor second choice.

• Although I will try to maintain the class schedule and objectives, unforeseen circumstances may force me to make adjustments.

7. Schedule

Note: This schedule is tentative and may be subject to change. Please consult Aula Global for the most up-to-date version.

Week 1

Theory 1: Course Introduction and Overview: Making the Case for Evidence-Based Human Resource Management

Theory 2: Understanding People (in Organizations): Individual Differences in Personality, Intelligence, and Emotional Competences

Week 2

Theory 3: Understanding Jobs (and their context)

Theory 4: “I Love My Job”: Understanding Job Satisfaction

Week 3

Seminar 1: Evidence-Based Practice: The Marshmallow Challenge

Theory 5: Hiring I: A 7-Step Approach to Successful Hiring

Theory 6: Hiring II: Do the best organizations have the best people?

Week 4

Seminar 2: Understanding People: Learn how to measure personality

Theory 7: Avoiding the Psychological Pitfalls in Evaluating People: Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination (Part 1)
Theory 8: Practice Exam + Avoiding the Psychological Pitfalls in Evaluating People: Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination (Part 2)

**Week 5:**

Seminar 3: Group exercise on Hiring

Theory 9: Motivation and Compensation I

Theory 10: Motivation and Compensation II

**Week 6:**

Seminar 4: Group presentation (See point IV Evaluation – 1. Class Participation, for more information)

Theory 11: Managing and Evaluating Performance I

Theory 12: Managing and Evaluating Performance II

**Week 7:**

Seminar 5: Getting Great Results: Team Performance

Theory 13: Training and Development

Theory 14: Temporary goodbyes, involuntary separation, & voluntary separation

**Week 8**

Seminar 6: Getting Great Results: Learn how to give and receive feedback

Theory 15: The importance of happiness in the Workplace

Theory 16: Practice Exam

**Week 9:**

Theory 17: Group Project Presentations I

Theory 18: Group Project Presentations II

**Week 10:**

Theory 19: Group Project Presentations III

Theory 20: Review & Outlook