MGMT 321 – Introduction to Human Resource Management  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:45am

Course Syllabus and Schedule

Professor: Dr. Cindy Parker  
Email: c.parker8@gmu.edu  
Office: 213 Enterprise Hall  
Phone: (703) 993-4184  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:00 – 6:00pm (by appointment only)  
Course uses Blackboard (Courses 9.1): http://mymason.gmu.edu (note: username and passwords are the same as your Mason Mail account).

COURSE OBJECTIVES & FORMAT

Course Description: A broad survey of all areas of human resources management, designed to provide line supervisors and/or staff human resource specialists with a thorough understanding of the role of human resource management and the techniques available to management in making effective use of the human resources of an organization.

Management Program Learning Goals: Students who are competent in the management discipline will meet the following learning goals (note: goals addressed in this course are printed in bold):

1. Students will understand and apply the theories, models, research findings, and tools related to organizational behavior.

2. Students will understand and apply the theories, models, research findings, and tools related to the management functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling.

3. Students will analyze and solve problems creatively.


5. Students will synthesize key aspects of strategic management. (optional: including industry dynamics and creative disruptions, new venture creation, innovative processes, and strategy formulation and implementation)
Course Learning Objectives:

1. Define the function of human resource management in an organization.
2. Identify the many specific components of an effective human resource program.
3. Integrate organizational human resource needs with concepts of human needs and theories of motivation.
4. Develop skills in analyzing human resource problems and determining appropriate solutions.
5. Demonstrate ability to integrate theoretical concepts into policy decisions regarding human resource matters.

The course will focus on active learning and will mix a lecture-based approach with discussion and application. Research strongly suggests that active learning in conjunction with traditional lecture-based teaching methods is effective for student learning and skill-building. Successful active learning requires a major investment from both of us. You will need to study the assigned readings before each class meeting, do a fair amount of thinking, and be prepared to contribute to the class discussion.

REQUIRED MATERIALS


2. HR Cases on e-reserve: Use the link and password provided on Blackboard to access the cases on e-reserve. Please access and print these cases as soon as possible to ensure that you have a hard-copy of each case.

NOTE: Please bring a copy of relevant cases with you to each class, per the course schedule.

Appointments and e-mail. I strongly urge you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, or obtain additional help. It is best to contact me via email to set up a phone or in-person appointment (cparker8@gmu.edu).

Special Accommodations. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Inclement Weather. In the event of inclement weather, please consult Mason’s website or call the main information line (703.993.1000). If the University is officially closed, our class will not meet. If the University remains open during an inclement weather event, our class will meet as scheduled, unless you receive an email from me to the contrary.

Cell Phones, Pagers and Computers. These items are to remain off and put away during the entire class. Students who choose to talk on cell phones or text message will be asked to leave the class. The use of laptops during class time is not permitted.
ABSENCE/LATE ASSIGNMENTS

If you miss a class, you may access the slides used in class on the course website. I would strongly suggest that you also ask a classmate for his/her notes as it is likely that key points will be brought up in class discussion and may not be captured on the slides. Once you have reviewed a classmate’s notes, if you have targeted, specific questions on material covered, I will gladly meet with you to answer your questions. However, I will not have time to “re-do” the lecture, nor will I have documented class notes.

Make-up Exams: Make-up examinations will not be given unless a student has a university-validated excuse that the instructor is notified of in advance of the examination. Without exception, students who request a make-up exam will be asked to provide appropriate documentation before a make-up exam is scheduled. Failure to provide appropriate documentation will result in a score of zero for the exam. Make-up exams must be completed within two weekdays of the original exam date. Per SOM policy, approval of absence from the final exam must be obtained from the Assistant Dean of Academic and Career Services before a make-up exam will be arranged.

Late Assignments: HR Proposals are due at the beginning of the class period on their due date. If you do not turn in your paper in class on the day it is due, six (6) points will be deducted immediately. Two (2) additional points will be deducted for each 24 hour period of lateness. NO paper will be accepted after 72 hours from the time the proposal was due. If you will be in attendance on the day your paper is due, you may email me your proposal, but I must receive the emailed paper before the beginning of class.

Attendance: While attendance itself is not evaluated, you cannot earn credit for assessments if you are not in class. Therefore, it is clearly in your best interest to attend class and arrive to class on time.

Lateness: Lateness is disruptive and disrespectful to both me and to your fellow students. Often assessments will be given at the very beginning of the class. No additional time will be allocated for late arrivals for any reason, and you will not be permitted to complete the assessment if it has already been collected. Every effort should be made to be in class on time and ready for the topic(s) of the day. Please allow time for traffic or parking problems, as these are frequent occurrences in our area and our school. In addition, I would prefer that the desks nearest the door be left open for late students so that they may easily find a seat with minimum disruption to the class.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

The mission of the School of Management at George Mason University is to create and deliver high quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni that participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Management (SOM) community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following Community Standards of Behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. SOM can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the SOM. Through our personal commitment to
these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

In order to maintain a respectful and distraction-free learning environment,

- Be unobtrusive when entering late
- Do not interrupt me or classmates
- Please turn off all computers, beepers, cell phones, and other handheld electronic devices
- Attend class on time

**Honor System and Code**
The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class. I take honor code violations very seriously and will not hesitate to forward all suspected violations to the Honor Committee for review and adjudication. For a full description of this code please refer to the following url: http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=1039#Honor

Group participation is permissible during in-class small group exercises and while studying for Exams. Discussion with other previous or current MGMT 321 students (in any section) with regard to the HR System Proposal assignment should be limited to format and structure and not include content. Outside sources consulted in your HR System Proposal must be appropriately cited with the body of your paper and on the reference page. No discussion or study aids will be permitted while taking exams, and students will not be permitted to leave the classroom once they have begun their exam. No discussion between students about any aspect of the exams or assessments is permitted.

**Evaluation**
Your learning in this course will be evaluated by the following tools: Examinations, HR System Proposal, and Assessments.

**Examinations (135 points).** Three exams (non-cumulative, 45 points each) will consist of objective test questions (e.g., multiple-choice, true/false) and short-answer/short-essay questions. The exams will cover the chapters assigned in the book, additional assigned readings, and any information (e.g., videos, cases) covered or discussed during class. Students are required to bring green SCANTRON forms (available in the bookstore) and #2 pencils to each of the exams. I will provide paper for the written portion of the exam. I will post an exam study guide on Blackboard approximately five calendar days before each exam. In addition, I will conduct an exam review session during the class meeting immediately prior to each exam.

**HR System Proposal (40 points).** You will write a two-part HR System Proposal for a specific job. Each part is worth a maximum of 20 points. Please consult the syllabus for the due dates of each part. Using the detailed instructions provided on Blackboard, you will propose the components of a recruiting or selection system, and an orientation or compensation program for your chosen job. Detailed instructions for this assignment are provided in a separate document posted on Blackboard – please review these instructions, which will be discussed and clarified during the first month of class.

In addition to bringing a paper-copy of your papers to class on the due dates, you must also submit your papers to SafeAssign on Blackboard. Papers will not be graded until they are submitted to Blackboard.
Assessments (25 points). Before each class you are expected to read the assigned material (text AND cases, if applicable). Throughout the course of the semester there will be an opportunity to show that you are prepared through short pop-quizzes or in-class writing assignments. These assessments are meant to check that you have read and understood the material so that the class discussion will be maximally beneficial to you and your fellow students. Helpful tip: please consult the course schedule and note the dates that we will be discussing each HR case. Be sure to read each case before the class period when it will be discussed.

There will be seven assessments, each worth five points. Your two lowest assessment grades will be dropped and your highest five assessment grades will count toward your Assessment point total. Therefore, there will be no make-up assessments if you miss one, regardless of the reason. Please note that there may be more than one assessment in a single class period, or they may be none. Assessments are unannounced and can be given during any point during the class session. There will be limited time provided to complete each assessment, and no extra time will be provided for late arrivals. Assessments must be completed during the class period assigned, and will not be accepted outside of class.

Points for quizzes will be earned by correctly answering multiple choice and/or short-answer questions related to the topic(s) of the day. Points for writing assignments will be earned by fully addressing the question, making clear connections between concepts from the readings or cases, and integrating material discussed in class. Note: I reserve the right to assign “0” points to students who leave class after turning in an assessment.

Extra Credit. At various times throughout the semester, and at my discretion, extra credit opportunities may be made available to the entire class. These extra credit opportunities will be in the form of in-class assignments or activities; therefore, a student must be present in class when the opportunity is offered in order to have the chance to earn extra credit. However, participation in the activity in and of itself does NOT guarantee that extra credit points will be earned. Please note that under no circumstances will extra credit be offered to individual students.

GRADING

I take grading very seriously and I assign grades based strictly on the number of points earned and the grading scale presented on the following page. In general, the more proactive you are in dealing with your coursework throughout the course of the semester, the less of a likelihood there will be of a grade "problem" or surprise. I am committed to grading assessments, papers and exams in a timely fashion and will post points on Blackboard on a regular basis. Please check your grades on Blackboard throughout the semester so that you know where you stand with regards to points. If you are concerned about your grade, please see me as soon as possible so that I can provide advice about how to make the most of future opportunities to earn points. Remember, I want nothing more than for you to succeed and I am willing to work with you so that you can attain your goals.
**Grading Scale:**
Your grade will be assigned on a straight scale based on the number of points you earn as noted above. Below is the grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>179 and above</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>174-178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>159-173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>154-158</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>139-153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>120-138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 120</td>
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</tbody>
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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please note that the assigned readings are subject to change. Adjustments will be discussed throughout the semester so please keep current.

- **Text** = Mathis and Jackson Textbook
- **HR Cases** = Human Resources Cases on e-reserve (see page 2 of the syllabus for instructions on accessing the cases)

**January 24**
Topic: Course Introduction
Bring a copy of the syllabus with you to class

**January 26**
Topic: Changing Nature of HR Management
Read: Text - Ch. 1

**January 31**
Topic: Individual Performance and Retention (begin)
Read: Text - Ch. 3

**February 2**
Topics: Individual Performance and Retention (finish), Legal Framework of HR
Read: Text - Ch. 4 pgs. 96 - 112

**February 7**
Topic: Legal Framework of HR (finish)
Read: The Basics of Validity (document posted on Blackboard); Text: Ch. 4 pgs. 113 – 125

**February 8**
LAST DAY TO ADD

**February 9**
Topics: Managing Diversity (begin)
Read: Text – Ch. 5
February 14
Topic: Managing Diversity (finish)
Read: Text – Ch. 5; HR Cases: “Bad Hair Day” or Religious Custom?

February 16
Topics: Strategic Human Resource Management (begin)

February 21
Topics: Strategic HR Management (finish); Exam 1 Review
Read: Text - Ch. 2; HR Cases: Someone Has to Go: A Tough Layoff Decision

February 23
Exam 1 Review

February 25
LAST DAY TO DROP

February 28
Exam 1, Part 1 (Chapters 1 – 5)

March 2
Exam 2, Part 2 (Chapters 1 – 5)

March 7
Topic: Jobs and Job Analysis (begin)
Read: Text - Ch. 6

March 9
Topic: Jobs and Job Analysis (finish), Recruitment (start)
Read: Text - Ch. 7

March 14 & 16 – Spring Break/no class

March 21
Topics: Recruitment (finish), Selection (begin)
Read: Text - Ch. 8

March 23
Topic: Selection
Read: Text - Ch. 8

March 28
Topic: Selection
Read: Text - Ch. 8
Due: Job Overview and Recruiting Proposal

March 30
Topic: Selection (finish), Selection case, Compensation (start)
Read: HR Cases: Job Analysis and Hiring Decisions at Ovania Chemical
April 4
Topics: Compensation (finish), Variable Pay (start)
Due: Job Overview and Selection Proposal
Read: Text – Ch. 12

April 6
Topics: Variable Pay (finish), Exam 2 review
Read: Text - Ch. 13

April 11
Exam 2, Part 1 (Chapters 6 – 8, 12, 13)

April 13
Exam 2, Part 1 (Chapters 6 – 8, 12, 13)

April 18
Topic: Training
Due: Compensation Proposal
Read: Text - Ch. 9

April 20
Topic: Training case, Development, Performance Management (begin)
Read: Text - Ch. 10
HR cases: The Training and Development Dilemma at Whitney and Co.

April 25
Topic: Performance Management (finish), Employee Rights (start)
Due: Orientation Training Proposal
Read: Text: Ch. 11;

April 27
Topic: Performance Management cases, Employee Rights (finish)
Read: Text: Ch. 16; HR Cases: Goodyear Ends Ratings System Ahead of Discrimination Suit, Realigning HR Practices at Egan’s Clothiers

May 2
Topic: Employee Rights & Discipline cases, Managing Benefits (start)
Read: Text: Ch. 14; HR Cases: Wrongful Discharge or Simply “Poor Performance?, Ok- Who’s Telling the Truth?

May 4
Topics: Managing Benefits (finish), Review for Final Exam

May 11 (Wednesday), 10:30am – 1:15pm
Exam 3 (Chapters 9 – 11, 14, 16)