



PA 5104
Strategic Human Resource Management (3 credits)
Thursdays 6:00-8:45 pm
Humphreys 15

1. Instructor Information

Instructor name:	Shahrin S. Upoma, Ph.D.
Instructor preferred pronouns:	She/her
Email address:	upoma001@umn.edu
Office hours:	By appointment (Each week, I will have 6-7 slots available on my calendar to sign up. Please use this link https://tinyurl.com/DrUpomaofficehours to sign up, meetings can be either virtual or in-person.

2. Course Description

“People are the lifeblood of any organization.”, “They are the most important asset.” Different forms of these phrases can be found in annual reports, presentations, speeches, articles, etc. In public service organizations-the government and nonprofit agencies that pursue public purposes-people are the most critical input or resource needed for successful operations and high performance. As such, effective management of this precious resource should be the top priority of public service organizations. This course is dedicated to that topic.

Human resource management (HRM) is a large topic that includes many areas of specialized practices, including job design, compensation, benefits administration, and so forth. HRM is also the specific career path of many who choose to work in the public service. However, this course is valuable to all those choosing to serve the public, whether in government or the nonprofit sector. As there is a variety of ways to examine human resource management, the approach in this course is clarified as follows:

- i. This course approaches the management of human assets from a **strategic perspective**. While this course covers HRM topics such as HR Strategy, Planning and Recruitment, Staffing, Training and Development, Retention, Performance Management, Compensation and Benefits, and other aspects of HRM, this course considers the relationship between these HRM practices and organizational effectiveness. In turn, this course adopts an integrative approach. Thus, application of your (1) knowledge from previous coursework

in strategy, management, accounting, finance, operations, and so forth, (2) work experience, and (3) judgment, critical thinking, and creativity will be important to your learning experience in this course.

- ii. This course will take a **general management perspective**. HRM policy decisions can no longer be designated as a staff function for an organization to achieve a competitive advantage. The employment of HRM policies and practices is a general management responsibility. In turn, this course focuses on the role of managers and how they can develop and implement effective, efficient, and ethical human resource practices that support an organization's strategic objectives.

3. Learning Outcomes

Course Objectives:

The primary objective of this course is to examine the core components of the human resource management process, from job analysis and design, recruitment and selection, to performance management. The course highlights several constraints, imposed by laws and regulations, confronting government and nonprofit managers and various approaches and techniques used to address these constraints when managing people.

- i. Provide students a conceptual grounding in the basic themes and concepts of strategic human resource management.
- ii. Create an opportunity for students to apply conceptual materials to practical examples and grapple with real issues facing government and nonprofit managers.
- iii. Provide an opportunity for the development of expertise in at least one human resource management topic.

Student Learning Outcomes:

In completing this class, students should develop knowledge across the four categories specified in Anderson and Krathwohl (2001): a) factual knowledge of human resource management in the public service; b) conceptual knowledge of what is involved in managing people in public service organizations; c) procedural knowledge through our work with real human resource management dilemmas and cases, and d) metacognitive knowledge through our work in understanding contingencies in human resource management settings and through exploring yourself and how you would handle these situations as a future manager.

In addition to this knowledge, this course will endeavor to accomplish the following student learning outcomes:

1. Students will develop comprehension of major SHRM theories and concepts.
2. Students will learn how to apply SHRM theories and principles to real-life public service scenarios and consider the consequences of different strategies.

3. Develop greater regard for ethics, as they play a role in strategic human resource decisions, and an ability to make judgments based upon ethical and environmental considerations.
4. Students will analyze real human resource management challenges and consider how to address these challenges within the boundaries of the law and the current approaches to SHRM.
5. In developing training on a selected SHRM topic or area, students will evaluate different research and techniques on this topic and develop recommendations on what they understand to be the current thinking and most useful knowledge and techniques in this area in the creation of their training.

Source: Anderson, L. W. and Krathwohl, D. R., eds. (2001). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Complete Edition*. New York: Longman.

4. Learning Resources

Required Textbook:

There is no required textbook assigned for this class.

Assigned Articles:

We will read several articles related to the research in the SHRM. These readings will include theoretical pieces, news articles, empirical research, and other relevant materials. Any assigned articles will be made available for download in each week's module on Canvas.

NOTE: While I upload readings in the lesson modules and send out several reminders about assignments and other work, fundamentally the syllabus is my contract with you—when in doubt, you should always refer back to the syllabus. You are responsible for managing the requirements of the course and meeting your deadlines.

5. Instructional Philosophy:

My goals are to stimulate *intellectual growth* and *personal development* by facilitating discussions of course material, integrating course material effectively so you gain a sense of mastery of the topics covered, and upholding critical thinking *concerning* major topics in strategic HRM.

I will respond to all emails within **2 BUSINESS DAYS**. Business days are Monday through Friday, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM CST. I may respond to emails over the weekend and in the evenings, but this is not guaranteed. Therefore, if you have questions, especially about an assignment that is coming due on a Sunday, make sure to email me with plenty of time allotted. If you have not received a response within the **aforementioned time period**, please contact me

again. To ensure that your email reaches me, either always use your UMN email address or email me through Canvas.

6. Technology:

Canvas: In this class, Canvas, UMN's online learning management system, will be used for all course activities and communication channels. All assignments will be posted through the Canvas course site unless otherwise directed. Information on how to use Canvas is available through the [Canvas Student Guide](#). Canvas can also be accessed via [MyU](#).

Zoom: Although our primary goal is to meet in person for this class, given the current circumstances and in some unforeseeable events, we might need to shift to online. In that case, Zoom will be used for video conferencing. More will be discussed in class.

7. COVID-19, Face-Covering Requirement, Symptoms, Vaccination, and Boosters

The University requires all students and employees to be vaccinated or have a valid exemption; more information is on the [safe-campus website](#). On January 5, 2022, President Gabel announced an update on COVID-19 and campus operations which strongly encourages all community members to get a booster as soon as they are eligible. For information about getting a booster and how to schedule an appointment, please refer to [the University's getting the Vax 2.0 initiative](#).

Stay at home if you experience any signs of illness or have a positive COVID-19 test result, and consult with your healthcare provider about an appropriate course of action. Absences related to illness, including COVID-19 symptoms, for yourself or your dependents, are [excused absences](#) and I will work with you to find the best course of action for missed work and course content. I will follow these same protocols and will let you know if the delivery of this course has to be temporarily changed as the result of my own circumstances.

The above policies and guidelines are subject to change because the University regularly updates [pandemic guidelines](#) in response to guidance from health professionals and about the prevalence of the virus and its variants in our community. Any changes in the COVID-19 policy will be indicated in email messages from the Administration and these syllabus details will be modified as needed.

8. Course Expectations:

Behavioral Expectations: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. To assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction (e.g., surfing the Internet, texting, tweeting, Facebooking, etc). Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result minimally, in a request to leave the class. Please put your cell phone on silent.

Academic Honesty: I sincerely trust and expect that academic dishonesty will not be an issue in this course. Unfortunately, it has become a very serious problem on many campuses. The purpose of including the following statement is to prevent any misunderstandings about what constitutes academic dishonesty and what I will do if I should encounter or seriously suspect it. An act of academic dishonesty will result in a referral to Judicial Affairs. Any of these violations will be considered academic dishonesty and treated as such.

- **Cheating.** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.
- **Fabrication.** Making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- **Falsification.** Manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research or academic work is not accurately represented in the research or work record.
- **Multiple submissions.** The submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor of the class for which the student submits the work.
- **Plagiarism.** The appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
- **Complicity.** Intentionally or knowingly helping, or attempting to help, another or commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Late Assignments and Makeup policy:

Due dates for assignments are provided on the course syllabus, course module on Canvas, and will be announced via emails. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due on those days. An assignment submitted **within 24 hours of the due date will only be eligible for 90% of the original point total.** Assignments submitted after 24 hours will receive a **ZERO**, no exceptions. If you know that you will not be able to complete coursework for extenuating personal or work-related reasons, make sure you inform me in advance. Personal and family circumstances can require such instances and will be considered genially. Make-up exams will be given only for legitimate reasons and with proper written documentation. If you fail to take an exam or turn in a late assignment without a reasonable excuse, you will receive a "0" for that portion of the course.

Disability Resources

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations. For more information, please see <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>. If you are registered with Disability Services and have a

current letter requesting accommodations, please let the instruction team know as early in the semester as possible so that we can make any needed adjustments.

9. Important Deadlines

- Monday, January 31- last day to drop classes without receiving a ‘W’
- Monday, March 7- Friday, March 11 – Spring break
- May 2- Last day of class

10. Learning Assessments

Weekly Assignments (25%)

Research has demonstrated that for courses to be a successful learning experience for students, engagement is critical, both in and outside of the classroom. Therefore, throughout the semester, you will have a selection of assignments that will total a maximum of **five points** per module. Most modules will be weeklong, and the first assignment will be available in **week 3**. These assignments will include discussion items, exercises, and short quizzes. These weekly assignments are designed to help reinforce the material covered in the modules. Together, these weekly assignments constitute 25% of your grade.

Topic Master (25%)

As you get prepared to work in the public service (or think in a different way about your current work in government or the nonprofit sector), it is important to gain awareness of the real-world issues facing employees in the public service, including how they are managed, their rights as employees and citizens, and other HRM issues. Therefore, during the second week of the class (January 27), you will sign up to be a Topic Master, and, as the topic master, you will be responsible to post at least **three instances** of government or nonprofit organizations appearing in the news about employees and the human resource management process (you can post more than three if you find interesting articles), you will present the summarized issues to your peers in the second half of the class, and will be leading the discussion. This practice will serve several purposes: 1) you will be updated on the latest news in SHRM, 2) this will hone your skills of public speaking, and 3) you will be able to link the readings to a broader context of SHRM.

As a topic master, your goal should be to present the readings in a way that demonstrates your understanding of the issue and ability to apply relevant SHRM concepts. The materials can include video, internet, and print media. The requirements for a post are: A) credible publication outlet B) students must provide a working link to the story for their classmates to peruse.

Midterm Exam (25%)

There will be a take-home midterm examination (short answer and essay) covering selected topics. The examination is designed to test the student’s ability to understand and critically evaluate the

reading, lecture, and discussion materials covered during the semester. The examination is weighted at 25 percent of the total grade.

Strategic Planning of Diversity Training (25%)

At the beginning of the semester, students will be tasked with examining diversity plans for an organization (public, non-profit, private) of their choosing. The assignment will entail critically evaluating the diversity practices of the organization and offering modification/introduction (if they have not any training plans currently in place for the employees) or improvement of current training plans based on the insights from the course materials. This project will consist of **four parts**: a 12 to 15-minute audio/visual presentation, submission to the professor of the script associated with that presentation, a one-page resource list, and a two-to-three-page handout. More details along with the rubric for grading will be posted under the assignment section of the course.

Guest Lectures

Over the course of the semester, we will have approximately 2-3 guest lectures. You are expected to attend each of them as they will be conducted during regular class hours. The details of the guest lectures will be provided later in the semester.

Final Grade Breakdown:

Course Component	Percentage of Total
Weekly assignments	25%
Topic Master	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final assignment (Diversity training plan)	25%

Grading Scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	67-69
F	Below 67

An Incomplete grade (I) may be assigned at my discretion if, due to extraordinary circumstances,

the student was prevented from completing their course work on time. The assignment of an Incomplete requires the written agreement of the instructor and the student specifying the time in which the student will complete the outstanding work.

There is no “extra credit” available in this course.

11. Detailed Course Schedule

**All times are in CST.*

Week	Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1 January 18-23	Introductions, syllabus, expectations, assignments	
Week 2 January 24-30	Module 1- What is HRM? Evolution of HRM in the United States, Employment Laws	1. Sign up for the topic master schedule by January 27 th . 2. Read the assigned articles
Week 3 January 31-February 6	Module 2- Adopting a Strategic Approach to Managing Human resources	1. Read the assigned articles 2. First weekly assignment due by February 6, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 4 February 7-13	Module 3- Job Design and Job Analysis	1. Read the assigned articles 2. Weekly assignment due by February 6, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 5 February 14-20	Module 4- Recruitment and Selection of a Diverse Workforce	1. Read the assigned articles 2. Weekly assignment due by February 20, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 6 February 21-27	Module 5- Compensation and Benefits	1. Read the assigned articles 2. Weekly assignment due by February 27, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 7 February 28-March 6	Module 6- Performance Management	1. Read the assigned articles 2. Weekly assignment due by March 6, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 8 March 7-13	SPRING BREAK	No weekly assignment due, Midterm questions will be made available.
Week 9 March 14-20	Module 7- Training and Development	Midterm due by March 20, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 10 March 21-27	Module 8- Employee Separation and Retention	1. Read the assigned articles 2. Weekly assignment due by March 27, 11:59 pm CST.

Week 11 March 28-April 3	Module 9- Discipline and Termination	1.Read the assigned articles 2.Weekly assignment due by April 3, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 12 April 4-10	Module 10- Diversity Management	1.Read the assigned articles 2.Weekly assignment due by April 10, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 13 April 11-17	Module 11- Labor Relations	1.Read the assigned articles 2.Weekly assignment due by April 17, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 14 April 18-24	Module 12- Ethics and Professionalism	1.Read the assigned articles 2.Weekly assignment due by April 24, 11:59 pm CST.
Week 15 April 25-May 1	Module 13- The future of SHRM	No weekly assignment due, prepare the final assignment.
Final week May 2-8	No class	Submit the Final Assignment by May 8, 11:59 pm, CST.
May 11	End of Semester	

**The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.*