



PA 5104

Human Resource Management for Public & Nonprofit Orgs (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 4-5 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 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, the 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 also 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 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 a comprehension of major HRM theories and concepts.
2. Students will learn how to apply HRM 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 HRM.
5. In developing training on a selected HRM 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. Course Format

This is a graduate-level lecture course. We will meet course objectives through readings, participation in class discussions, mini-lectures, simulations, case analyses, presentations, and the sharing of students' own experiences. You are encouraged to monitor Canvas and your email for all course updates.

The teaching method is based on an active learning model. This approach requires that students prepare by reading the substantive course readings and cases and come ready to engage in a lively conversation about the materials and their own experiences. I will assume you've done the readings, taken time to reflect on the issues they raise, and arrived in class with some thoughtful opinions. For this format to work, you will need to read with a critical eye and think about how the readings fit together and relate to your experiences. As you read, think broadly about issues you want to raise for discussion. The course is a significant amount of work, but students find that they also gain a tremendous amount from their participation. I expect you to work hard, but I also give you structured time to receive feedback throughout the semester.

Class Structure

The class will be organized with one topic a week. We will generally spend our sessions discussing the readings, doing a simulation, or some other engaged exercise. Generally, at the beginning of the class, I will review major points and add comments designed to elaborate on key concepts, fill in historical background, raise alternative perspectives, or draw connections to contemporary events. We will then have a discussion of the readings, facilitated by student discussion leaders. In each class, we will generally discuss an HR case, listen to a speaker, or participate in an in-class exercise or activity. However, given the small and intimate nature of the class, I reserve the right to adapt what we cover based on the group's interests. This will be an evolving course shaped by all of you.

5. Learning Resources

Required Textbook:

Human Resource Essentials for Public Service: People, Process, Performance by Mary E. Guy and Jessica E. Sowa.

Assigned Articles:

In addition to the chapters from the book, we will read some articles related to the research in HRM. 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.

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.

6. 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/Monday, 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.

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.

7. 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, and 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**. Similarly, an assignment submitted **within 48 hours of the due date will only be eligible for 80% of the original point total**. Assignments submitted after **48 hours** will receive a **ZERO**, with 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.

8. Learning Assessments

Weekly readings	15%
Class participation	5%
Topic master	15%
LinkedIn assignment	20%
Strategic planning of diversity training	25%
In-class expert presentation	20%

Participation and Preparation

Weekly readings (15%)

Each week you will be assigned approximately 4-5 readings including a book chapter and articles, often with an applied case study. To help you better synthesize the reading material for the course, facilitate weekly discussions, and provide an easy reference for what you learned in the course, every week you will use the template provided on Cnavas to guide your response to the week's readings. You should pick one of the readings and questions posted, and craft a concise and thoughtful response. There is a word limit of 300 words. This assignment is due by Monday at 8 pm each week.

You are responsible for doing these *weekly* for 9 weeks. Out of the nine weeks, **you are responsible for seven reading notes**. You can: a) do all 9 and drop your lowest 2 grades; b) do 8 and drop your lowest grade; or c) skip 2 weeks. The choice is yours. If you do less than 7 reading notes, you will receive a 0 for each additional week you miss.

This is NOT meant to be busy work, but rather to help you better understand what you are reading and highlight where there are questions or misunderstandings of the material. Best answers will display a) critical reading, b) multiple sources, c) opinion, and utilize more than one article in your responses.

Please use citations in reading notes (e.g. Upoma, 2022). Steer away from beginning with "I believe" or "I think" or "In my opinion". Instead, ground your responses in what you've read. You can end with an opinion, but back it up with data/facts/experience.

It will be graded according to a check/check plus/check minus system in which you will receive a check (roughly = 92) for comprehensively completing the assignment, a check-plus (roughly = 100) when you go above and beyond, and a check-minus (equal to a 75) when you just do the bare minimum.

Class Participation (5%)

Class attendance and active participation are expected, as an essential part of the learning process. I will facilitate discussion and help integrate the prevailing views of class members with core theoretical ideas. In this way, the direction and quality of the discussion are the *collective*

responsibility of the group. This includes preparing for class sessions by reflecting on the readings and actively participating in the discussion. All readings for each week are to be prepared in advance of the class session. You are adults who are responsible for managing your own learning and, as a result, I do not have an absence policy. However, it is unlikely that you will be able to participate well in class if you are not fully prepared. Participation is not gauged by the volume or frequency of your voice, but by your attention to the conversation.

Students will receive strong marks for participation if they are consistently engaged and make a good-faith effort to advance our collective understanding. Be creative. Question what you read. Make trouble. Give us reasons to be persuaded; direct us to evidence; challenge our consensus; question the statements that we have made to one another. At the same time, please bear in mind that the classroom is a public academic forum. Please be respectful and follow standards of ethics and etiquette appropriate to such a setting.

Our group includes students with diverse political viewpoints and students from many different academic, social, and professional backgrounds. For our class meetings to be productive, people will need to feel comfortable expressing minority views, engaging in respectful debate, asking basic questions, and sometimes saying, “I don’t get it.” Please make sure that in class and beyond, you do what you can to make this possible.

Some people are less comfortable than others speaking in public. But, you are pursuing a degree in public affairs. If you want to succeed in this arena – as a program evaluator, a policy analyst, a manager, a nonprofit director, an advocate, an activist, whatever – you should do everything you can now to get comfortable speaking your mind (in a clear and accessible way) in a room of fifteen people.

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, you will sign up to be a Topic Master, and, as the topic master, you will be responsible to post at least **three articles** about government or nonprofit organizations appearing in the news about employees and the human resource management process (you may 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. **Among the three, one must be a journal article related to the issue in news.** This practice will serve several purposes: 1) you will stay updated on the latest news in HRM, 2) this will hone your skills of public speaking, and 3) you will be able to link the readings to a broader context of HRM.

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 HRM concepts. The materials can include

video, internet, and print media. The requirements for a post are A) credible publication outlet and B) students must provide a working link to the story for their classmates to peruse.

LinkedIn Assignment (15%)

LinkedIn Learning offers free courses on a variety of topics including Human Resource Management. Completion of these courses yields a certificate that can be not only professionally beneficial but also lucrative to many employers. In this course, you will be required to complete at least 6 hours of HR-related training modules on LinkedIn learning and a reflection essay on the experience (500 words max and a copy of the certificate). You can submit it anytime during the semester upon finishing the course, but the last day of submission will be the last of the class (May 1, 2023).

Planning of Diversity Training (25%)

For the final assignment, you will be tasked with examining diversity plans for an organization (public, non-profit, private) of your choosing. The assignment will entail critically evaluating the diversity practices of the organization and offering modification/introduction (if they do not have any training plans currently for the employees) or improvement of current training plans based on the insights from the course materials. The written part of the project will consist of a one-page resource list and a three-to-four-page detailed handout of the training. More details along with the rubric for grading will be posted under the assignment section of the course.

In-class Expert Presentation (20%)

At the end of the semester, you will be expected to present your diversity training plan to your peers and me. Depending on the number of students, all presentations can occur on one day or multiple days toward the end of the semester. You will have approximately 10-12 minutes to present with 2-3 minutes assigned at the end for questioning.

Guest Lectures

Over the course of the semester, we will have approximately 6-7 guest lectures. You are expected to attend each of them as they will be conducted during regular class hours. Although participation in these sessions will not be directly graded, I expect you to be present and actively participate in the discussion.

Guest speakers invest a lot of time and energy in preparing for class. I have invited several notable individuals to speak during our classes. To show interest and respect for our guest speakers by engaging with their experiences and our class topics, I ask that you bring in one question for each guest speaker.

Grading Scale:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
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.

9. 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.

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.

10. Important Deadlines

- Monday, January 30- last day to drop classes without receiving a ‘W’
- Monday, March 6- Friday, March 10 – Spring break
- May 1- Last day of class
- May 4-10- Final exams
- May 10- End of Spring Semester

Detailed Course Schedule

**All times are in CST.*

Week & Class dates	Topic
Week 1: January 19	Introductions, syllabus, expectations, assignments
Week 2: January 26	Module 1- What is HRM? Evolution of HRM in the United States, Employment Laws
Week 3: February 2	Module 2- Strategic Human Resource Management
Week 4: February 9	Module 3- HR in Nonprofit Organizations
Week 5: February 16	Module 4- Job Design, Analysis & Description
Week 6: February 23	Module 5- Recruitment and Selection of a Diverse Workforce
Week 7: March 2	Module 6- Compensation and Benefits
Week 8: March 9	SPRING BREAK
Week 9: March 16	Module 7- Training and Development and Retaining
Week 10: March 23	Module 8- Performance Management
Week 11: March 30	Module 9- Discipline and Termination
Week 12: April 6	Module 10- Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining
Week 13: April 13	Module 11- Fair and Inclusive Workplaces
Week 14: April 20	Module 12- Work/Life Balance & Workplace Safety
Week 15: April 27	Module 13- Looking forward: Challenges and Opportunities
Week 16: May 4	Final presentations

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