



Course Syllabus: EDUC 4523  
Trends and Issues in Training & Development  
West College of Education  
10347 Section X10  
Fall 25 and August 25<sup>th</sup> – December 12<sup>th</sup>

Contact Information

Instructor: Mr. Giancarlo Martini  
Office: Bridwell Hall | West College of Education | Room 226  
Mentoring Hours: 9:00-11:00 Mon-Wed  
Office phone: (940) 397-7449  
Cell Phone: (940) 600-2001  
E-mail: [Giancarlo.martini@msutexas.edu](mailto:Giancarlo.martini@msutexas.edu)

Instructor Response Policy

I'm here to support you throughout this course, and I want you to feel comfortable reaching out whenever you have questions, concerns, or just want to share an idea. I check messages regularly during the week and do my best to respond within 24 to 48 hours. If you email me over the weekend, I'll typically get back to you by Monday evening. For assignments, I aim to provide thoughtful feedback within a week of submission so you can continue growing and improving. If something urgent comes up, feel free to flag it in your message subject line so I can prioritize it. I also hold weekly virtual support hours, think of them as a relaxed space to connect, ask questions, or chat about course topics. Whether you're thriving or struggling, I want you to know I'm here, and I genuinely care about your success in this class.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

We will be pulling information from various books in this course; however, the majority of the course will be from open-source material.

Course Description

This course will address general trends and issues that affect technology as well as training and development in Human Resources. Effective strategies and model programs will be discussed to enhance individual development in classrooms and training and development

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Each of you brings to this class a wealth of experience, and knowledge that can be tapped to enhance our learning environment. Preparation and participation

will also aid in facilitating an optimum learning experience. Through online discussion and engagement, readings, assignments, Internet exploration, and 2 videos we will explore trends and issues related to training and human resource development within organizations. After successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

1. Comprehend the purpose of human resource development in organizations and the major categories of human resource development programs, with an emphasis on training and development
2. Understand the process of conducting needs assessments
3. Understand how training practices, and the organization of the training practices, support organizational goals
4. Understand the process and characteristics of a learning environment
5. Understand the process involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating a training program
6. Assess the forces of contemporary trends and significant issues on the future of the field of training and human resource development

#### Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

The TASP offers a schedule of tutoring assistance for selected subjects. Please contact the TASP at (940) 397- 4684, or visit the ASC homepage for more information, [Tutoring & Academic Support Program](#).

#### Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

#### Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

## Grading/Assessment

*Table One: Course Assignments: Due Dates, and Points*

Course Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Introductory Post	7 Sep, 11:59PM	5
Discussion One: Why HRD Matters	14 Sep , 11:59 PM	5
Discussion Two: Needs Assesment in Action	21 Sep, 11:59 PM	5
Discussion Three: Aligning Training With Strategy:	28 Sep, 11:59 PM	5
<b>DROPBOX SUBMISSION ONE: NEEDS ASSESMENT*</b>	5 Oct, 11:59 PM	10
Discussion Four: What Makes a Learning Enviornment Work	12 Oct, 11:59 PM	5
Discussion Five: Designing for Impact	19 Oct, 11:59 PM	5
Discussion Six: Technology's Role in HRD	26 Oct , 11: 59 PM	5
<b>DROPBOX SUBMISSION TWO: SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING PAPER*</b>	2 Nov, 11: 59 PM	10
Discussion Seven: Trends Shaping the Future	9 Nov, 11:59 PM	5
Discussion Eight: Video Reflection	16 Nov, 11:59 PM	5
<b>DROPBOX SUBMISSION THREE: TRAINING FLOW MAP*</b>	23 Nov, 11:59 PM	25
<b>**THANKSGIVING BREAK**</b>	-	-
Final Exam	7 Dec, TBD	20
<b>TOTAL POINTS FOR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS*</b>	-	110

*Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment*

You can change table information but will need to use table tool if you add more columns or rows. Do not leave any blanks in table. Follow instructions listed under Course Schedule.

Assignments	Points
Discussions	45
Dropbox Submission Papers	45
Final Exam	20
Total Points	110

*Table 2: Total points for final grade.*

Grade	Points
A	95
B	85 to 89
C	75 to 79
D	65 to 69
F	Less than 65

## Discussion Posts

Our weekly discussions are a vital part of this course, they're where we build community, exchange ideas, and apply what we're learning to real-world HR and

training contexts. Each of you brings valuable experience and insight, and these conversations are designed to help us learn from one another while deepening our understanding of the course material.

Discussion topics will be available throughout the semester, but you'll only be able to post during the designated discussion week (typically Sunday to Sunday). To keep our conversations meaningful and collaborative, please post your **main discussion post at least 24 hours before the Sunday deadline\***. This gives everyone time to read, reflect, and respond thoughtfully, and helps us avoid last-minute posting that limits interaction.

Each week, you'll be expected to:

- Write one **main post\*** (minimum 300 words) that responds directly to the discussion prompt
- Write **two response posts\*** (minimum 150 words each) to two different classmates
- Post on **at least two separate days\*** during the week to keep the dialogue flowing

Posts should reflect thoughtful engagement with the assigned readings and course concepts. Please reference our materials when relevant, and feel free to share personal experiences or outside resources that enrich the conversation. If you'd like to include a supporting document or link, that's great, just make sure your main post appears directly in the discussion thread (not as an attachment).

Grades for discussion are based on:

- The quality and depth of your main post (50%)
- The relevance and engagement of your response posts (25%)
- Timeliness, effort, and any additional contributions (25%), including early posting, extra replies, or helpful resources

All discussions will be graded using the **Discussion Grading Matrix** found in the Resource Module. Remember: meeting the minimum requirements earns a passing grade, but going beyond, (by posting early, engaging deeply, and supporting your peers) can elevate your score and enrich our learning environment.

Let's make these discussions dynamic, respectful, and insightful. I'm excited to hear your perspectives and see how you connect course concepts to your own experiences and goals.

## Dropbox Submission Assignments Dropbox Assignment One - Needs Assessment. \*

This assignment introduces you to the foundational process of needs assessment, a critical first step in designing effective training programs. You'll identify a real or realistic scenario where training may be needed, analyze the situation, and determine whether training is the appropriate solution.

This scenario will serve as the anchor for future assignments in this course, so choose something meaningful, relevant, and rich enough to explore in depth.

### Assignment Instructions

#### 1. **Select a Scenario\***

- Choose a real-world situation from your workplace, volunteer experience, or community setting where performance issues, skill gaps, or organizational changes suggest a need for training.
- If you don't have a personal example, you may create a realistic fictional scenario based on common workplace challenges (e.g., onboarding, leadership development, customer service, compliance).
- Be sure to **sanitize or change names\*** to protect confidentiality.

#### 2. **Conduct a Needs Assessment\*** In a written report (3-5 pages), address the following:

- **Background:** Briefly describe the organization or setting, including relevant context.
- **Problem Identification:** What issue or opportunity triggered the need for training?
- **Stakeholders:** Who is affected by this issue? Who would benefit from training?
- **Performance Gap:** What is the difference between current performance and desired performance?
- **Root Cause Analysis:** Is training the right solution, or are other interventions needed?
- **Training Recommendation:** If training is appropriate, what type of training would you propose?

#### 3. **Support Your Analysis\***

- Include **at least two peer-reviewed sources\*** to support your assessment and recommendations.

- Sources should be cited in APA format and integrated meaningfully into your discussion.

#### 4. **Reflection\***

- Why did you choose this scenario?
- How do you see this topic connecting to your career goals or interests?

#### Submission Guidelines

- Submit your assignment as document via the course Dropbox.
- Use clear headings and organized formatting.
- Cite all sources in APA format.
- Due by **Sunday September 28 at 11:59 PM (CST).** \*

#### **Dropbox Assignment Two –Self-Directed Learning Paper. \***

Self-Directed Learning (SDL) has empowered adult learners for decades, but in today's workplace, it's more than a personal skill, it's a strategic advantage. This assignment explores how SDL impacts individual and organizational performance, and challenges you to think critically about how you can apply SDL in your own professional journey.

#### Assignment Instructions

Write a **3–5 page paper\*** (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) that includes the following components:

##### Part I: Understanding SDL

- Define Self-Directed Learning and explain its significance in adult education and workplace training.
- Discuss how SDL has evolved and why it matters in today's professional environments.
- Use **at least two peer-reviewed sources\*** to support your analysis (APA format required).

##### Part II: SDL in Action

- Analyze how SDL is supported or hindered by workplace culture.
- Explore the benefits and challenges of SDL for both individuals and organizations.

- Provide a real or realistic example of SDL in a workplace or training context.

### The Twist: Design Your Own SDL Plan

- Imagine you've been given the freedom to create your own self-directed learning experience for professional growth.
- Outline a **personal SDL plan**\* that includes:
  - A learning goal or skill you want to develop
  - Resources you would use (books, courses, mentors, etc.)
  - A timeline and strategy for staying accountable
  - How you would measure success or progress
- Reflect on how this plan aligns with your career goals and how it could be supported (or challenged) by your current or future workplace culture.

### Submission Guidelines

- Submit your paper as a Word or PDF document via the course Dropbox.
- Use APA formatting for citations and references.
- Due by **Sunday October 26 at 11:59 PM (CST)**. \*

## **Dropbox Assignment Three: Flow Map\***

Training isn't just about delivering content—it's about designing a clear, engaging, and effective learning experience. In this assignment, you'll create a **visual training flow map**\* using a digital tool (such as Canva, Lucidchart, PowerPoint, or any other design platform you prefer), and write a **3–5 page paper**\* explaining the training program you've designed.

This assignment helps you think like a training designer: What are the learning goals? How will learners progress? What methods and materials will you use? And how will you measure success?

### Assignment Components

#### Part I: Create a Training Flow Map

- Use a visual design tool (e.g., Canva, Lucidchart, Miro, PowerPoint, etc.) to create a training flow map that outlines the structure of your training program.
- Your map should include:
  - Training objectives
  - Modules or sessions
  - Delivery methods (e.g., online, in-person, blended)
  - Activities or assessments
  - Timeline or sequence

- Evaluation checkpoints

Tip: Think of your flow map as a blueprint for your training, make it clear, organized, and visually engaging.

Part II: Write a Strategic Training Plan (3–5 pages)

In your paper, explain the thinking behind your training design. Include:

**1. Training Topic & Audience\***

- What skill, knowledge, or behavior are you training?
- Who is your target audience (e.g., new hires, managers, volunteers)?

**2. Needs Assessment Summary\***

- Briefly explain why this training is needed (you may reference your Assignment One scenario if applicable).

**3. Training Objectives\***

- What should learners be able to do or understand by the end of the training?

**4. Training Design & Flow\***

- Walk through your flow map: What happens in each stage/module?
- Why did you choose this structure and delivery method?

**5. Technology & Tools\***

- What tools or platforms will support your training (e.g., LMS, Zoom, interactive content)?

**6. Evaluation & Outcomes\***

- How will you measure the effectiveness of the training?
- What success looks like for learners and the organization?

**7. Peer-Reviewed Support\***

- Include **at least two peer-reviewed sources\*** to support your training design choices and methodology (APA format required).

Submission Guidelines

- Submit your training flow map as a separate file (PDF, PNG, or link to online design).
- Submit your written paper as a Word or PDF document via the course Dropbox.
- Use APA formatting for citations and references.
- Due by **Sunday at 16 November 11:59 PM (CST).**\*

Final Exam

The final exam will be a culmination of all course material discussed, and will be further explain in D2L.



## Extra Credit

I believe learning is a dynamic process, and sometimes students want to go above and beyond. To support that, I offer limited opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. These are designed to deepen your understanding of course concepts—not to replace missed work or boost grades at the last minute.

Here's how it works:

- **Opportunities will be announced as they appear\*** and may include attending virtual HR webinars, writing short reflections on relevant articles or videos, contributing to discussion boards beyond the required posts, or completing optional mini-assignments tied to course themes.
- Each extra credit activity will be worth **up to 3 points\***, and you may earn a **maximum of 9 extra credit points\*** over the semester.
- All extra credit must be submitted by the **posted deadline\***, no late submissions will be accepted.
- Extra credit is **optional\*** and cannot be used to replace required assignments or participation.
- To maintain fairness, extra credit will be available to **all students\***, not on an individual request basis.

If you spot a relevant event, article, or opportunity that connects to our course themes, feel free to suggest it, I'm always open to creative ideas that enrich our learning experience.

Let's make learning meaningful, not just measurable.

## Late Work

Deadlines matter. They help keep the course on track and ensure fairness for everyone. As such, **late work is generally not accepted\*** unless there is a documented emergency or prior arrangement.

## Make Up Work/Tests

Life happens, but so does accountability. Make-up work is only permitted under specific circumstances and must be handled proactively.

- Make-up work is allowed **only in cases of documented emergencies\***, such as illness, family crisis, or other serious, unavoidable conflicts.
- You must notify me **within 24 hours\*** of the missed assignment, quiz, or exam to be considered for a make-up opportunity.

## Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22<sup>nd</sup> , 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

### Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

### Attendance

Attendance in this online course is defined by consistent engagement rather than physical presence. Students are expected to log into the course platform multiple times each week to access materials, participate in discussions, and complete assignments. Simply logging in without contributing does not count as attendance. Meaningful participation includes submitting work on time, engaging in collaborative activities, and responding to instructor communications promptly. Students should interact with the course at least three times per week to stay on track. If a student is inactive for seven consecutive days without prior notice, they may receive a warning and lose participation points. Continued inactivity can result in grade penalties and notification to academic advisors. After three weeks of unexcused absence, students risk administrative withdrawal from the course. Communication is essential; if you anticipate an absence due to illness, travel, or other circumstances, please inform the instructor in advance. Online learning offers flexibility, but it also requires discipline and accountability. Your consistent presence is vital to your success and to the learning community we're building together.

### Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ***\*Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ***\*Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

### Instructor Class Policies

In this online class, students are expected to maintain a professional and respectful presence in all virtual interactions. Attendance is measured by consistent engagement with course materials, timely submission of assignments, and active participation in discussion boards and collaborative activities. Students should log in regularly and respond promptly to instructor communications. While there is no dress code for asynchronous activities, students are expected to dress appropriately when participating in live video sessions, presentations, or group meetings; business casual is recommended. Class etiquette includes using respectful language, staying on topic during discussions, and avoiding disruptive behavior such as spamming, trolling, or inappropriate use of chat features. All communication should reflect courtesy, clarity, and academic integrity. These policies are designed to foster a productive and inclusive online learning environment where everyone can thrive.

### Inclement Weather

In the event of a campus closure due to inclement weather, this online course will continue as scheduled. Because instruction and participation are conducted remotely, weather-related disruptions are unlikely to affect course delivery. However, if severe weather causes power outages or internet connectivity issues for students or the instructor, accommodations such as deadline extensions or alternative assignments may be provided. Students experiencing such disruptions should notify the instructor as soon as possible to discuss options. The goal is to maintain continuity while prioritizing safety and flexibility during unexpected events.

### Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

### Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring

accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

## College Policies

### Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

### Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

### Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

### Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

### *Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law*

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick  
Title IX Coordinator  
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse  
940-397-4213  
[laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu](mailto:laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu)

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

### Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

### Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

<b>Week or Module</b>	<b>Activities/Assignments/Exams</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Week 1 8/25 to 8/31	Welcome & Course Overview Introductory Post	8/31
Week 2 9/1 to 9/7	Why HRD Matters Discussion One	9/7
Week 3 9/8 to 9/14	Needs Assessments Fundamentals Discussion Two	9/14
Week 4 9/15 to 9/21	Strategic Training Alignment Discussion Three	9/21
Week 5 9/22 to 9/28	Conducting a Needs Assessment DROPBOX ASSIGNMENT ONE	9/28
Week 6 9/29 to 10/5	Learning Environments Discussion Four	10/5
Week 7 10/6 to 10/12	Designing for Impact Discussion Five	10/12
Week 8 10/13 to 10/19	Tech in HRD Discussion Six	10/19
Week 9 10/20 to 10/26	Self- Directed Learning DROPBOX ASSIGNMENT TWO	10/26
Week 10 10/27 to 11/2	Trend in Training & Development Discussion Seven	11/2
Week 11 11/3 to 11/9	Video Reflection Week Discussion Eight	11/9
Week 12 11/12 to 11/16	Designing a Training Program DROPBOX ASSIGNMENT THREE	11/16
Week 13 11/17 to 11/23	Evaluating Training Programs Readings & Peer Feedback	N/A
Week 14 11/24 to 11/30	**THANKSGIVING BREAK**	BREAK
Week 15 12/1 to 12/7	Future of HRD Internet Exploration & Wrap-up Discussion	12/7
Week 16 12/8 to 12/14	FINALS WEEK	12/14

TBD.\*

References/Scientifically-Based Research/Additional Readings: