

Course Syllabus: Professional Orientation
College of Education
COUN 4103 Section X-20/DX-1
Spring 2024

Contact Information

Instructor: Penny Miller, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Office: Instructor does not have an office on campus
Office hours: Office hours are by appointment
Office phone: NA, the instructor does not have an on-campus phone
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Instructor Response Policy

The instructor will attempt to respond to email and voice mail within one business day. If students do not receive a response, please text the instructor at the cell phone number listed.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

There is no textbook for this course. All materials are provided in D2L.

Course Description

The course will provide students with an overview and understanding of the human resource development and training and development workplace.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

Objectives:

1. To gain a more in-depth understanding of a particular aspect of human resources
2. To understand the legislative and regulatory environment within which companies operate in respect to employment
3. To understand how the policies and practices in the area of concentration can impact the business strategy of an organization
4. To better understand how the academic knowledge of the area of concentration translates in the practical world of business
5. To understand the potential impact of the policies and practices in the area of concentration on employee morale and engagement

In this class, my intent for students is to walk away with a better understanding of how human resource practices and programs should interact with the overall organizational strategy and enhance profitability and/or efficient resource use. At

all times in the course, students should be trying to discern answers to the following questions:

1. What is the business strategy?
2. How does the strategy impact the choice of alternatives?
3. How does the choice of HR programs/processes impact the success of the organization's business goals?
4. What other factors impact the choice among alternatives?
5. What impact does organizational culture have on the attainment of business goals and how do various HR strategies impact culture (or vice versa).

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2020-21](#)

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

| Assignments | Points |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Discussion Participation | 60 |
| Article Reviews | 120 |
| Paper | 200 |
| Journal | 100 |
| Final Exam | 100 |
| Total Points | 580 |

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

| Grade | Points |
|-------|---------------|
| A | 522 |
| B | 464 to 521 |
| C | 406 to 463 |
| D | 348 to 405 |
| F | Less than 348 |

Homework

Articles: Each class week (except the first and last—12 weeks), students will find an article from a journal or a news magazine relating to their area of concentration. Post the article (or a link to the article) on the discussion board. Then write a summary of the most important points from the article in your post. Be prepared to respond to questions. These articles may be a portion of the research for the paper.

Discussion Participation: Because of the way class is structured, participation is vital to get the most from the course. Therefore, class discussion is a significant portion of the grade. Each student is expected to respond to the discussion posts of two other students. These responses should provide another perspective, additional information, or ask a question.

Projects Required

Paper: Each student will write a research paper to explore in a more complete manner a topic in your area of concentration. The paper must be in APA format. The length should not be less than 10 pages, not including the cover page, abstract, or bibliography. Double spaced, 1-inch margins. Provide an introduction, a review of current thought on your topic, and examples of applications in the workplace, using organizations which serve as benchmarks for successful integration of best-in-class practices. Due **April 14**.

Journal: There is no specific length or format for this assignment. Use your judgement in terms of readability and understanding. Each student will keep a journal with the following sections:

- Interviews: Interview at least 3 managers with HR responsibilities (it may be HR managers or small business owners) to discuss their organization's processes relating to your area of concentration. Look for what they have implemented, why, and how they perceive the process works (or doesn't work) for them. Choose three different types/sizes of businesses.
- Using information from your articles and your research, discuss your recommendations for how these businesses could better design their processes to improve employee recruitment, retention and engagement and better achieve the organization's objectives.
- Due **March 10**

Final Exam

The final exam is 100 points (approximately 17% of the points for the semester). The final exam will be "take home." It will be an essay test, focused on a few questions relating to the content of the course. Students may discuss the exam and questions with one another, but I would not expect to see substantially the same answers on multiple tests (in other words, brainstorm together, but write your own answers.) The exam will be available for download April 24. **Due May 3.**

Extra Credit

Students always want to know if there is a way to get extra credit. I hope you won't need it. All extra credit is due **May 3**. However, if you find yourself in a position to require extra credit, you may earn it in one of two ways:

- Attend meetings of a professional HR association. For those who live in the Wichita Falls area, the WFHRMA meets on the second Tuesday of each month, from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM at Vernon College on Maplewood. If you live outside the area, an internet search should show local possibilities. Provide a 1-page summary of the meeting and the topic of the program to the instructor. Most chapters charge for attendance and may include a meal for in-person meetings. Not only is there an opportunity to learn something, but this is a networking opportunity for those who may want to find a job after graduation. **10 points each time.**
- Read one of the books on the book list provided by the instructor. You may find you will need to do an interlibrary loan for some, so if you want to use this alternative, decide before the last minute. The instructor does have a single copy of many of them and will loan them out—you only get points if you give the book back. Once read, provide a two-page summary of the book, highlighting the main points and how they could be applied in the workplace. **25 points.**

Late Work

Late work will be accepted, but there will be a late penalty of 10%.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 19, 2024

Deadline to file for graduation: February 12, 2024

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" March 25, 2024

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

This is an on-line class and there are not required class meeting. However, weekly discussion posts are a part of the course.

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](#).

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.

Grade Appeal Process

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

Course Schedule:

Notice

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

| Week or Module | Activities/Assignments/Exams | Due Date |
|------------------------|--|----------|
| Week 1 1/16 to 1/21 | Review the syllabus and post questions for clarification to General Discussion Board Post an introduction | |
| Week 2 1/22 to 1/28 | Read supplemental materials Article discussion Post area of concentration | 01/28 |
| Week 3 1/29 to 2/4 | Article discussion | 2/4 |
| Week 4 2/5 to 2/11 | Article discussion | 2/11 |
| Week 5 2/12 to 2/18 | Article discussion Read supplemental material | 2/18 |
| Week 6 2/19 to 2/25 | Article discussion | 2/25 |
| Week 7 2/26 to 3/3 | Article discussion | 3/3 |

Course Schedule:

| Week or Module | Activities/Assignments/Exams | Due Date |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| Week 8 3/4 to 3/10 | Article discussion Journal | 3/10 3/10 |
| 3/11 to 3/17 | Spring Break | |
| Week 9 3/18 to 3/24 | Article discussion | 3/24 |
| Week 10 3/25 to 4/7 | Article discussion Read supplemental material Note: Includes Easter Break 3/27 - 3/31 | 4/7 |
| Week 11 4/8 to 4/14 | Article discussion | 04/14 |
| Week 12 4/15 to 4/21 | Article discussion Paper | 4/21 4/21 |
| Week 13 4/22 to 4/28 | Article discussion | 4/30 |
| Week 14 4/29 to 5/3 | Final Exam Extra credit | 5/3 5/3 |