INTRODUCTION

Human Resource management is a central function of any organization. Generally, 50 percent or more of an organization’s operating budget is used to pay the people who work there. HR management can be defined as the effective use of human capital in an organization through the management of people-related activities. It involves leadership, values, employment planning, recruiting and selecting employees, training and compensating them, and evaluating their performance. It also significantly influences the corporate culture and norms.

The general purpose of MGMT E-4240 is to familiarize students with the basic principles and techniques of human resource management. The course takes a practical view that integrates the contributions of the behavioral sciences with the technical aspects of implementing the HR function in the ‘real world.’ Certainly, not everyone who takes this course will become a human resource professional, although they will learn a great deal about those roles. Indeed, for many students this course will be the only HR course they take. However, all managers, no matter what their specialization, play an integral role in carrying out HR policies and practices in their organization – and they have to deal with their organization’s human resources department.

Thus, a basic understanding of human resource management is essential whether the student works in a government agency, financial services, hospital, high technology industry, retail, educational institution, or other type of organization. A key objective of this course is to show that HR management is more than just accepting employment applications and keeping records; it is a central and strategic organizational activity of increasing complexity and importance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

These broad intentions can be defined more precisely through an examination of the course’s specific objectives. By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Appreciate the importance of human resource management as a field of study and as a central management function;
2. Understand the implications for human resource management of the behavioral sciences, government regulations, and court decisions;
3. Know the elements of the HR function (e.g. recruitment, selection, training and development, etc.) and be familiar with each element’s key concepts & terminology; and
4. Apply the principles and techniques of human resource management gained through this course to the discussion of major personnel issues and the solution of typical case problems.
COURSE MATERIALS AND WEBSITE

Note: All of the following materials/texts are REQUIRED reading for this course.

1 - Text Book: The required course textbook is available at the Harvard COOP and online through Amazon and other textbook sellers. You can chose to rent or buy the text (new or used) and it is available in an electronic, as well as print, format:

   ISBN: 9780133791532


2 - Course readings packet: This coursepack contains all seven (7) of the case studies, which you are required to read and analyze. It also contains each of the additional required readings noted in the schedule and syllabus.

   Coursepack link: [http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/50701371](http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/50701371)

   (You will be required to register to be able to view and purchase the cases.)

   *Cases in Coursepack:*
   - People Express
   - Merck Sharp & Dohme Argentina, Inc. (A)
   - S. G. Cowen: New Recruits (A)
   - Rob Parson at Morgan Stanley (A)
   - Performance Pay for MGOA Physicians (A)
   - The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co.
   - Human Resources at Hewlett-Packard (A)

   You will submit two written case analyses based on these cases and each figures prominently in the final exam.

   It is crucial that the reading for each unit be completed before that unit is covered in class. Students in class will be expected to contribute effectively to class discussions based not only on common sense and personal experience, but also on the required readings.

   Course Website:

   [https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18273](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/18273)

   Consult the website regularly for course updates, additional materials and other resources.

   Course Graders/Assistants

   Sally Robinson
   srobinson@hbs.edu

   Prof. Michael Thomas
   mailmichaelthomas@gmail.com
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Extension School is committed to providing an accessible academic community. The Disability Services Office offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities. Please visit www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/disability-services-accessibility for more information.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are responsible for understanding Harvard Extension School policies on academic integrity (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/student-conduct/academic-integrity) and how to use sources responsibly. Not knowing the rules, misunderstanding the rules, running out of time, submitting "the wrong draft", or being overwhelmed with multiple demands are not acceptable excuses. There are no excuses for failure to uphold academic integrity. To support your learning about academic citation rules, please visit the Harvard Extension School Tips to Avoid Plagiarism (www.extension.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources/tips-avoid-plagiarism), where you'll find links to the Harvard Guide to Using Sources and two, free, online 15-minute tutorials to test your knowledge of academic citation policy. The tutorials are anonymous open-learning tools.

COURSE CONTENT

MGMT E-4240 is divided into six instructional units, each of which represents a different set of the human resource management functions. An instructional unit involves lectures, class discussions, case analyses, and reading. A summary of each unit of the course is below.

Unit 1: Introduction to Human Resource Management
The focus of the first unit is on identifying what the personnel and human resource function is all about. It explores the typical responsibilities of HR departments and how they are affected by the corporate culture, environmental forces, and government regulations. It also introduces the topics of strategic and employment planning.

Unit 2: Staffing
Once the organization has determined its strategic and human resource objectives and analyzes the jobs to be filled, it is ready to fill them. Unit 2 reviews the two steps in the staffing process: recruitment and selection. Recruitment aims at identifying and attracting the largest possible number of qualified applicants to hire for each job.

Unit 3: Compensation & Benefits
This unit focuses on compensation and related issues. Among the topics to be covered are forms of and bases for compensation, job evaluation and compensation/evaluation systems.

Unit 4: Performance Management
This unit discusses and examines performance evaluation as a system including process and procedures used in developing reliable and valid standards, criteria, and evaluation mechanisms. A good performance management system is fair to the employee while also serving the goals and interests of the organization.
**Unit 5: Human Resource Development**

Employee training and development is another important HR function. More specifically, Unit 5 focuses on deciding who is to be trained, in what and how they are to be trained, and how effective was the training for the employee and her/his organizational component. To be effective, training and development programs must be matched to types of employees with specific skill deficiencies and to new skills anticipated to be needed by the organization.

**Unit 6: Global Human Resource Management, Labor Relations & Future Issues**

Declining productivity, substantial demographic shifts, changing employee attitudes and expectations, innovation technologies, and government regulations will continue to affect human resource management into the 21st century. This final unit deals with the most significant trends in human resource management and how they can be addressed through innovative and effective organizational strategies.

---

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please refer to the Course Schedule document for a week-by-week and unit-by unit summary, including assigned readings and dates of specific assignments, including written case analyses. This is available on the course web site.

---

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN CASE ANALYSES**

Each in-class case study discussion and each written case analysis requires you to review the case and answer key questions. In submitting the written case analysis, students should focus on the specific questions noted below, giving equal attention to each.

**Case #1 and case questions:**
People Express

1. Is the People Express approach to human resource management effective? Why or why not?
2. Analyze Don Burr’s philosophy of human resource management. What advice would you give him to improve HRM at People Express?
3. If Don Burr decided to try building a new People Express type of airline again today, would you accept his offer to become Vice President of Human Resources? What would you do differently from your predecessor?

**Case #2 and case questions**
Merck Sharp & Dohme Argentina, Inc (A)

1. What is the culture of Merck Sharp & Dohme? What implications does it have for leadership and transformation?
2. Evaluate the leadership of Antonio Mosquera. Was he effective? Why or why not?
3. What specific advice would you give to executives of Merck Sharp & Dohme to effectively transform the organization?

**Case #3 and case questions:**
SG Cowen: New Recruits (A)

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of SG Cowen’s recruiting and job search process. To what extent do they result in finding the best candidates for SG Cowen?
2. Compare and contrast how the different bankers approached finding the best candidates. To what extent is their approach aligned with Chip Rae’s strategy?
3. How effectively did Chip Rae and SG Cowen evaluate the background and personal factors in the hiring and selection process? What changes would you suggest?

**Case #4 and case questions:**
**Performance Pay for MGOA Physicians (A)**
1. What are the values and culture of the hospital? What is important to them as an institution? To what extent is the compensation system aligned with those values?
2. Evaluate the new compensation system that is linked to profitability. What are the pros and cons? Does it help the hospital fulfill its mission?
3. In a competitive labor market, does this compensation system help recruit and retain the right talent? Explain – and if not, what would you do to make it more effective?

**Case #5 and case questions:**
**Rob Parson at Morgan Stanley (A)**
1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Morgan Stanley performance assessment and management system.
2. To what extent was Rob’s manager responsible for making Rob successful and how do you think he did? What could he have done differently? What challenges did he face?
3. What should the HR Manager recommend in terms of Parson’s performance? Should Rob stay with the company? If so, how should the performance assessment and management system be altered?

**Case #6 and case questions:**
**The Ritz-Carlton Hotel**
1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Ritz’s training and development system. To what extent does the system create the leadership, values, and culture of the Ritz? What specific aspects of the training program help new recruits understand what it is to be a Ritz employee?
2. How do you balance quality standards against the need to empower employees to customize their responses to specific situations? Give specific examples as they relate to the Ritz.
3. Do you think this training approach would work in other service industries? Why or why not?

**Case #7 and case questions:**
**Human Resources at Hewlett-Packard (A)**
1. Discuss the ‘HP Way’ in terms of how Hewlett-Packard manages people?
   a. What are the primary values?
   b. What are the company personnel policies and internal structures which support these values?
   c. What other business policies support the HP Way?
2. Discuss the pros and cons of working for a company such as Hewlett-Packard. Would you like to work for this kind of company? Why or why not?
3. Can Hewlett-Packard continue to apply its HRM approach as the company grows and moves into new businesses? How will it be able to adapt to a changing competitive environment and future trends in business and Human Resource management?

---

**STUDENT EVALUATION**

Basis for Evaluation:
There will be three (3) sources of evidence of each student’s performance in this course: written case analyses, a final examination and class participation.

a. **Written Case Analyses:** These will consist of answers to the questions of two (2) of the cases out of the seven (7) listed above. Students must prepare a written case analysis for any one case in Units 1, 2, or 3 and for one of the cases from Units 4, 5, or 6. Case analyses must be limited to answering the questions posed about the case in this syllabus and should not exceed five (5) typewritten, double-
spaced pages. All case analyses must be submitted before the case is due for class discussion. Each case analysis will count for 25% of the final course grade (with both cases combined accounting for 50% of the course grade).

**Important Note:** Any case accepted late by the Instructor will be subject to a grade reduction of one full letter grade. Cases will only be accepted late at the discretion of the Instructor and on the basis of a bona fide medical or family emergency.

b. **Final Examination:** This is an open-book, take-home, essay examination that covers the entire course, including class lectures and discussions as well as the required reading. It will be distributed at the last class and is due back during the final examination period (see class schedule). Students will answer any three (3) questions in 500-750 words each out of four (4) offered. There will be no make-up exam. The exam grade counts for 40% of the final course grade.

c. **Course Participation:** Independent of a student’s mode of course participation—in-person, at a distance, or a hybrid—class participation is vital and contributes to the quality and richness of the course and student learning. The professors will utilize a combination of means for assessing participation over the course of the semester. Measures will include data derived from students’ use of the course website/Canvas site, which indicates the frequency and duration of students’ utilization of course lectures, materials, resources, etc. Combined metrics for participation will include:
   - In-class participation
   - Participation in live chats during live streaming of course sessions
   - Utilization of course lecture videos
   - Postings to Discussions: students should post a minimum of three (3) comments related to issues, articles, news stories, reports or other items of interest to the discussion board during the course of the semester. They should also interact with—and respond to—the postings of their classmates.

By using a combination of metrics, no student will be disadvantaged by his or her mode of participation or by any unanticipated technology issues (e.g. problems with a live video broadcast), which occasionally arise. Professors will consider both the quality and quantity of participation. Course participation accounts for 10% of the final course grade.

**Grading:**
Final grades will be computed based on the above percentage shares and assigned as letter grades.

---

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

*Instructors*

Michael Thomas  
[mailmichaelthomas@gmail.com](mailto:mailmichaelthomas@gmail.com)  
Phone: 617-357-9620, x 119

Peter Martel  
[pmartel@hbs.edu](mailto:pmartel@hbs.edu)  
Phone: 617-496-8838