

## **Human Resources II**

**Degree/study:** Bachelor degree in ADE, Economics, Business Sciences-Management, and International Business Economics

**Year of study:** 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year

**Groups:** 1, 2, and 3

**Term:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Number of ECTS credits:** 5

**Language of Instruction:** English

### **Professor**

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Office hours: on Wednesday from 11:00 to 12:00

### **Contacting me**

I am looking forward to meeting you during the course. If you have a question regarding the course, please consult the syllabus. If the question is not answered by the syllabus, please write me an email or come to the office hours. For emails that contain questions that I believe are of general interest, I will post the question (anonymously) and the corresponding answer to the discussion board on Aula Global. This way, I make sure that everyone has the same information at the same time. For questions that are not of general interest but specific to you I will either email you with the reply or I will ask you to come to the office hour. Please note that all communication regarding the course will be addressed to your student email address from UPF. Please check this email regularly or automatically forward it to an address that you check regularly. If you are an exchange student, you will also be assigned a UPF email address, which will be the email used for communicating all information regarding the course.

### **Time and location of sessions:**

#### *Theory Sessions:*

Group 1: Thursdays & Fridays, 9:00-10:30

Group 2: Monday & Tuesday, 13:00-14:30

Group 3: Thursdays & Fridays, 15:00-16:30

*Seminars:*

Group 101: Wednesdays, 9:00-10:30  
Group 102: Wednesdays, 13:00-14:30  
Group 103: Wednesdays, 14:30-16:00  
Group 201: Fridays, 10:30-12:00  
Group 202: Fridays, 12:00-13:30  
Group 203: Fridays, 13:30-15:00  
Group 301: Mondays, 14:30-16:00  
Group 302: Mondays, 16:00-17:30  
Group 303: Mondays, 17:30-19:00

*Seminar dates*

Seminars take place in week 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 of the course. There will be no seminar in the week of February 23 and in the week of March 2 (week 8 and 9 of the course).

For **group 101, 102, and 103**, the seminar dates are:

21-01, 28-01, 04-02, 11-02, 18-02, & 11-03

For **group 201, 202, and 203**, the seminar dates are:

23-01, 30-01, 06-02, 13-02, 20-02, & 13-03

For **group 301, 302, and 303**, the seminar dates are:

19-01, 26-01, 02-02, 09-02, 16-02, & 09-03

## **1. Course description**

In many industries, the personnel--or the *Human Resources*--of an organization is one of the most vital factors shaping its success or failure. Decisions that involve selection, training, job assignments, and, in some cases, separation of employees have crucial consequences for businesses. These consequences do not only involve financial gains or losses and have legal implications but also affect individuals and their motivation and ability to be productive and satisfied persons. Effectively managing and leveraging a company's Human Resources thus requires an appreciation of how Human Resource decisions are shaped by and shape individuals' motivation, well-being, productivity, and sense of identification with the organization they work for. This course offers the latest psychological perspectives on the main challenges in Human Resource and Personnel Management; starting with an individual's entry into an organization all the way until her exit. By the end of the class, you will have a deep understanding and basic hands-on experience with regard to hiring, compensation, motivation and well-being, organizational exit, and many more HR practices in light of the empirical evidence that supports or discourages their use.

## **2. Competences**

By following this course, students will be able to acquire or expand a number of general and subject-specific competences.

### **General**

- Understanding and correctly interpreting academic writings.
- Being able to justify and defend your position using coherent arguments.
- Developing reasoning and critical thinking abilities in order to analyze controversial issues.
- Accepting the diversity of opinions as a fundamental ingredient of academic life and as an essential component of contemporary society. Being able to form your own opinion while respecting the diverging opinions from others.
- Reinforcing your habits of self-discipline, self-control and rigor in completing academic work and in managing your time schedule.
- Having a proactive attitude toward learning about the topics you do not know and toward the learning process and/or professional activity more generally.
- Being able to make creative use of the knowledge and concepts learnt in the course. Being able to adapt those to novel and original situations.
- Being able to demonstrate a level of knowledge that is sufficient for professional action.
- Being able to select and use the appropriate information to formulate adequate solutions to problems.

### **Specific**

- Develop strategies for managing human resources in organizations.
- Apply techniques of human resource management to different situations and cases

## **3. Content**

### *Topic 1: Conceptual Foundations of Human Resource Management*

- Understanding people in organizations: Individual differences in personality, intelligence, and emotional competences
- Jobs in their organizational context
- Happiness and job satisfaction

### *Topic 2: Getting People In: Recruitment and Selection*

- Hiring process
- Selection procedure, criteria, and tools
- Hiring goals and philosophies

### *Topic 3: Getting Great Results for the People and the Organization*

- Motivation and compensation
- Managing and evaluating performance
- Psychological pitfalls in evaluating people: Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination
- Employee training
- Development, mentoring, and coaching

*Topic 4: Managing Goodbyes: Employee Separation*

- Temporary goodbyes: Managing expatriate assignments and re-entry
- Involuntary separation: Layoffs and discharges
- Voluntary separation: Turnover and retirement

**4. Evaluation**

**4.1 Evaluation components**

The grades will be based on the following components:

1. Continuous participation (20 %)
  - a. Preparatory assignments (10%)
  - b. Individual participation during seminar sessions (10%)
2. Group project (30%)
3. Final exam (50 %)

The overall grade for the course is the weighted average of the grade obtained for the components. In order to pass this course, students need to meet both of the following criteria:

- a) The overall average grade of all components has to be at least 5.0 or higher and
- b) The grade on the final exam is at least a 4.0 or higher

If the overall average of all grade components is below 5.0 or if the student achieves a grade below 4.0, the student does not pass the course.

**Grade component 1: Continuous participation**

In order for you to benefit from this course and have a good learning experience, it is essential that you come prepared to class and that you actively participate in class discussions. The participation part of the grade is designed to capture these two key components and give you an opportunity to continuously work on your grade.

*Preparing for classes*

For many sessions there will be *preparatory assignments*, which serve as the basis for discussion and interaction in the classroom. These can be reading assignments or assignments that ask you to answer a certain questionnaire or try out a specific test prior to the session. Whenever there is a preparatory assignment, there will be preparation questions that you are expected to answer with your study group in writing before the class and that you have to upload to Aula Global prior to the session. In some cases a reading assignment covers multiple sessions, in which case the assignment is due prior to the first session on the block of topics. Each group needs to submit their own written answers to these questions by the deadline indicated in the assignment (one written copy per group). Typically, this will be a day before the start of the respective class. For each session, I will randomly pick a few of the assignments and grade them on a pass/fail basis. For many of these questions, there are no right or wrong answers. Instead, a good answer is one that shows that you thought about the issues and are able to justify and support your answers with cogent arguments.

*Submitting assignments.* So as to minimize both logistical challenges and the amount of paper printed and used, all assignments have to be submitted through Aula Global. For each assignment, a link will be provided on Aula Global.

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Assignments should be submitted as .pdf documents and the title of the document needs to contain your group number and the session number. For all assignments, there is a deadline and uploading documents after the deadline will not be possible. In this case, assignments will receive a grade of 0. Assignments that are emailed, handed in after class, or submitted in ways other than the Aula Global link within the given time frame will not be accepted. Likewise, submitting assignments without identifiable authorship or submitted in a format other than .pdf that fails to open will not be considered. For each group, the single one assignment with the lowest grade will be dropped from consideration for the final grade. This means that each group has one “free shot”. On rare occasions, the preparatory assignments are individual assignments.

*A note on plagiarism.* All assignments need to be original and unpublished. Assignments will be routinely checked for plagiarism which if detected will result in a grade of 0 on the assignment and will be reported to the Dean’s office.

### *Participating in classes*

In order to learn, remember, and be able to practically apply what you learn, it is important to actively engage with the class content and to connect it to your own experience and prior knowledge. Accordingly, this course will provide ample opportunities to actively participate and practically try out different techniques. This is especially true for the seminar sessions. To provide an optimal learning experience, it is important that every student participates actively and engages in the discussions. Accordingly, part of your grade will be based on your active participation during the seminar sessions. That not only means coming to the seminar sessions and participating in the exercises but also sharing your thoughts, experiences, and insights with your fellow students. Accordingly, one component of your participation grade will be based on your participation during the seminar sessions.

Additionally, I will be discussing questions related to the class readings on occasion during the theory sessions. I strongly encourage students to engage in these discussions as well (even though they will not be part of your formal participation grade). In case I feel that a student or a handful of students participate excellently during these discussions, I will award bonus points towards your participation grade.

In order to facilitate the discussion and to be able to track your participation, I kindly ask that **you use a name tag in all sessions (both theory and seminar sessions).**

### *Overall continuous participation grade.*

As previously mentioned, a grade will be awarded based on both preparation for and participation in class. A high continuous participation grade will be given to students who come prepared to class, hand in the answers to the preparation questions, positively contribute to the discussions, and are engaged with the course material. A low continuous participation grade will be given to those who miss many classes, do not or rarely participate to the course discussions, frequently come unprepared, and fail to engage in the class activities.

## **Grade component 2: Group project**

**Group project.** I will ask you to form study groups of 5-6 students. These groups have to be formed at the end of the second week of the course. Students within one group have to be part of the same seminar group. The study groups will be responsible for preparing the reading assignments for the respective sessions. The same study groups will also be used to perform the group project.

For the group projects, workgroups are asked to apply what they learned in the course to a real organizational problem related to one of the different Human Resource Management tasks that we discuss in the course (e.g., Selection and Hiring, Training and Development, Measuring and Managing Performance, Compensation and Motivation, Employee Separation). This means that student groups have to find an organization and collect as much information as possible about a certain HRM practice within this organization. Among others, this information should include interviews with at least three different members of the organization and at least one research paper that is not part of the course's reading list. Therefore, it is ideal, if groups chose an organization that they have good access to and can obtain a lot of information about (e.g., because they work or worked for this organization, did an internship there, know someone who works there). Groups are asked to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the organization's current practices in a given HRM area (e.g., hiring) using the theories, concepts, and research findings encountered during the course and the additional reading and provide recommendations based on both the scientific evidence and the specifics of the organization on how to improve the current practice. The grade for the group project will be based on the presentation of the group project during the final part of the course.

### **Grade component 3: Final exam**

The final exam will be a Multiple Choice Exam featuring questions encompassing the totality of the content covered in the theory sessions, seminars, and obligatory readings for this class.

Knowledge is knowing what you know and what you don't know! Therefore, the grading scheme for the final exam will be based on Certainty-Based Marking (CBM), a method that uses the students' certainty of their answers as a moderating factor in their final mark. Experiments making use of confidence judgments in marking tests have repeatedly shown that this method stimulate more careful thinking and learning than simple (right/wrong) marking, and to provide more reliable assessment of the students true knowledge of the course.

#### *How does it work concretely?*

In CBM, students select both an answer and their level of confidence: they score full marks for knowing that they know the correct answer, some credit for a tentative correct answer but are penalized if they believe they know the answer but get it wrong. Here is the scoring scheme that will be used for the final exam:

If you think your answer has a probability of being correct of...	You should select a Confidence level of...	if your answer is correct you will score ...	if your answer is wrong you will score ...
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less than 67%,	1 (Low)	1 point	0 point
67-80%	2 (Medium)	2 points	-2 points
greater than 80%.	3 (High)	3 points	-6 points

Students are strongly encouraged to try out CBM for themselves before the exam! This can be achieved on the website ([www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt)) using any of a range of exercises in different fields. I recommend completing the economics exercises module at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lapt/laptlite/sys/run.htm?kaplan> or one of the other exercise sets. Additionally, I will present example questions at the beginning of the theory sessions so that you get acquainted with the type of questions and can train using the CBM answer system.

#### 4.2 Recovering a failing grade

Under some conditions, students who failed the course will be authorized to take an additional evaluation. The additional evaluation will be a written exam taken during the third trimester of the academic year.

Only students that have participated in the course and the evaluations activities will be authorized to take the additional evaluation, as stated in the following article of the Agreement of the Government Council (Article 11.4.2)

“Podran concórrer al procés de recuperació tots els estudiants que, havent participat a les activitats d'aprenentatge i avaluació durant el trimestre, hagin obtingut la qualificació de suspens de l'assignatura corresponent en l'avaluació trimestral. No hi podran concórrer els que no hagin participat en les activitats d'aprenentatge i avaluació o hagin renunciat a l'avaluació.”

It is understood that students have participated in the learning activities and continuous assessment during the term when they have attended class and have completed the exercises and other classroom activities. I understand that students have attended the final examination when they hand it out.

More concretely: to be **eligible** to take the recovery evaluation, students must meet ALL of the following conditions:

- the student has attended more than 66% of the seminars (i.e., at least 4 seminars out of 6).
- the student has completed the group project
- the student has taken the April exam

Since, as it is stated in the above mentioned article, only those students who have failed the whole subject may participate in the process of recuperation, there will be no opportunity to participate for improving the grade if initially it is equal to or higher than 5.0.

**Provided that a student is eligible** to take the recovery examination, the grade obtained **at the additional examination will be the final grade for the course**, whatever the initial grades for the different activities of the course. This implies that no component of the initial grade will be kept – in other words, all the activities of the course can be recovered, provided that the student is eligible to take the recovery

examination.

For students who will participate in exchange programs recognized by the Faculty in the 3rd trimester and therefore cannot attend the additional examination, special arrangement will be made between the instructor and the student. Students that fall in this category should let the instructor know within 7 days of their grade being posted on Campus Global. Failure to do so implies that no extra arrangement will be made.

## **5. Bibliography and material**

### **5.1. Recommended bibliography**

This course is not based on a single textbook but instead uses a careful selection of articles. This includes a mixture of articles that are more research orientated and some that are more oriented towards (managerial) practice. There is a set of compulsory readings. These are the readings that everyone is expected to read and to prepare. For compulsory readings, there will be preparation questions that need to be answered and submitted prior to the session for which the reading is assigned. Content from the compulsory readings will be tested for in the final exam.

In addition, there is a set of additional, optional readings that serve as resources that students can consult at their own discretion if they are interested in further exploring a certain topic. These additional, optional readings will not be tested in the exam.

To the extent possible, I will make the assigned reading available for download on Aula Global. Some of the readings can be a bit challenging and I therefore encourage you not to wait for the last minute before starting to read the material for a session.

### **5.2 Case studies**

During some of the seminar sessions, we will be using case studies. Due to copyright restrictions, it is impossible for us to post these case studies on Aula Global. I asked the library to purchase a few hard copies of the relevant case studies and these will be put on reserve and available for your consultation. I am asking you NOT to check out the cases out of the library, as these valuable learning resources need to remain available for everybody. A list of the case studies, which will be available at the front desk of the library will be shared in the syllabus.

## **6. Methodology**

This course consists of a combination of theory and seminar sessions. Theory sessions will cover the core theoretical issues by presenting central constructs, discussing important theoretical frameworks, and revisiting seminal research studies.

The aim of the seminar sessions is to apply these theoretical concepts to cases and real life examples, and to allow students to engage with the course material on a more experiential basis. To meet this aim, the seminar sessions will be based on a variety of different formats including the analysis of case studies, practical exercises, role play, and group discussions of issues of current societal relevance as



they relate to the course content.

Theory and seminar sessions complement each other and attending and participating in both the theory sessions and seminar sessions is critical to properly follow the course and master its material and content.

## **7. Schedule**

**Note:** This schedule is tentative and may be subject to change. Please consult Aula Global for the most up-to-date version.

### **Week 1**

Theory 1: Course Introduction and Overview: Making the Case for Evidence-Based Human Resource Management

Theory 2: Understanding People (in Organizations): Individual Differences in Personality, Intelligence, and Emotional Competences

### **Week 2**

Theory 3: Understanding Jobs (and their context)

Theory 4: Understanding Happiness

### **Week 3**

Seminar 1: Understanding People: Learn how to measure personality

Theory 5: “I Love My Job”: When People, Jobs, and Happiness Get Together

Theory 6: Hiring I: A 7-Step Approach to Successful Hiring

### **Week 4**

Seminar 2: Understanding People: Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination

Theory 7: Hiring II: Do the best organizations have the best people?

Theory 8: Avoiding the Psychological Pitfalls in Evaluating People: Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination

### **Week 5:**

Seminar 3: Getting people in: Salary negotiation

Theory 9: Motivation and Compensation I

Theory 10: Motivation and Compensation II

### **Week 6:**

Seminar 4: Getting Great Results: Design your best place to work

Theory 11: Managing and Evaluating Performance I

Theory 12: Managing and Evaluating Performance II

### **Week 7:**

Seminar 5: Getting Great Results: Team Performance

Theory 13: Training and Development

Theory 14: Temporary goodbyes, involuntary separation, & voluntary separation I

### **Week 8**

Theory 15: Temporary goodbyes, involuntary separation, & voluntary separation II

Theory 16: Practice Exam

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### **Week 9:**

Theory 17: Group Project Presentations I

Theory 18: Group Project Presentations II

### **Week 10:**

Seminar 6: Getting Great Results: Learn how to give and receive feedback

Theory 19: Group Project Presentations III

Theory 20: Review & Outlook