

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Political Science  
Master of Public Administration, Local Government Program

PA 9922b  
**Human Resource Management**

Course Outline  
Winter Term 2011

**FACULTY**

Catherine Burr, MIR  
Home office: (519) 660-8995  
E-mail: [cdburr@uwo.ca](mailto:cdburr@uwo.ca) OR [cburr@sympatico.ca](mailto:cburr@sympatico.ca)

**Office hours:** In person after class, during class breaks or by appointment anytime during the term; also, consultation by e-mail and telephone.

**TIMETABLE & LOCATION**

Three weekends: Friday 3:00 – 7:00 PM and Saturday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.  
**January 7, 8; February 4, 5; March 4, 5.**

All classes will be held in **room 4255 SSC** (Social Science Centre).

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Our course draws on theories and research findings in the fields of human resources management, labour relations, public administration, management and organizational behaviour. Using this interdisciplinary perspective the course aims to blend theory and “best practices” to help you gain an understanding of *progressive and strategic* human resources management (HRM) – including policies, practices, procedures and principles – and how to apply them in a public sector environment. Particular attention will be given to the Canadian local government environment.

The respective and complementary human resource management roles of managers and practitioners will be a theme throughout the course. Similarly, you will be encouraged to view and critically examine the HR management roles and functions from a variety of stakeholder perspectives. We will define HRM to include the management of human resources by executives, managers and supervisors, as well as the management of an organization’s human resources by the human resources (HR) department and HR practitioners. The roles and responsibilities of unions and employees will also be discussed.

It is expected that you will develop an understanding of:

- The relationship of HRM to organizational goals and functions,
- The relationship of HRM to the needs and interests of employees,
- Your HRM role, especially if you are in a leadership position,
- The context, including the legal framework, in which we manage people and the “human resources” of an organization,
- How to strategically and effectively use progressive HRM to further your organization’s goals, the interests of employees, and your own career, management and professional objectives.

Through the research on your essay, the analysis of case studies and our class discussion, it is also expected that you will identify, analyse and seek remedies for HRM issues and problems relevant to you or your environment and organization.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STYLE AND EXPECTATIONS**

- The instructional style is interactive and highly participative. It will involve a blend of informal lecture and case study presentation and discussion, including small group and plenary discussion. *Your contribution to the learning of others is a significant element of the course.*
- Our learning of HRM will be enhanced by student presentations on HRM case studies. As well, each student will take a lead role and act as a discussant for one other case study during the course. **All students are encouraged and expected to participate in class analysis and discussion of all case studies.**
- **It is expected that students will complete the assigned readings, including case studies, prior to each class so that we may then discuss concepts and applications.**
- The case method (business case analysis) will be used in this course. I hope it will strengthen your analytical skills and help you apply key learning points from the readings. The case study guidelines, plus the Learning With Cases text, will help you develop your analysis. I will also review expectations during our first class, and in advance with students doing a case analysis for our first class.
- The use in class of laptops, BlackBerries/PDAs, cell phones and other electronic aids may interfere with classroom learning and be inappropriate (playing games, surfing, emailing, texting, doing homework, etc.), distracting, inconsiderate or offensive. Their use is discouraged and students are expected to use their laptops responsibly. If their use interrupts, disrupts or interferes with class learning (presentations, discussions, lectures and concentration), students will be asked to stop using these devices and it may affect your mark for contribution to learning.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

Stewart, Eileen, Monica Belcourt, George Bohlander and Scott Snell. Essentials of Managing Human Resources. 4<sup>th</sup> Cdn. Ed. Scarborough, ON: Thomson, 2011.

*Note: The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition was used in 2010. There are not significant differences between the two editions. If you are using a used copy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, I have listed the changes for the assigned readings on page 9 of this course outline.*

Belcourt, Monica and Kenneth J. McBey. Strategic Human Resources Planning. 4<sup>th</sup> Cdn. Ed. Toronto: Nelson Thomson, 2010.

Custom course package, #M9956, "Case Studies in Human Resources Management".

*Note: Until this year, we used the text Canadian Cases in Human Resources Management (by Cawsey, Deszca, and Temple; Prentice Hall, 2002).*

*Unfortunately, it is no longer available. If you find a used copy, it may be less expensive than the custom course package. If so, ask me for copies of the two additional case studies or get copies from a classmate.*

Mauffette-Leenders, Louise A., James A. Erskine, and Michiel R. Leenders. Learning With Cases. London, ON: Richard Ivey School of Business, 1997.

*Note: A couple of years ago I listed this text as "recommended" but not required. Although I encouraged students to read and use the analysis described here, many students did not and the quality of their case study analysis and presentation was noticeably poorer. Since then I've listed this text as "required", however, you may wish to purchase one copy to be used by several students. Just use it – it makes a difference!*

Additional readings may be handed out in class from time to time, or made available through the Local Government Library. Additional HR text books (either more detailed than our texts or of a specialized nature) have been placed in the LG Library, and may be useful for your case study analysis and essays.

## **Guidelines and other documentation to be distributed**

In addition to the course outline, the following documents will be distributed in order to clarify expectations:

- Essay Guidelines
- Case Study Guidelines
- Case Study Questions

With the course outline a "Preliminary Information" memo has been emailed to students, including sign-up for the cases. Email updates (and exercises, as appropriate) will be provided prior to each weekend class, and as needed.

Please get in touch if you wish any further clarifications.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

Guidelines and additional information will be distributed to students in advance of our first class.

Feel free to suggest alternative due dates if these dates conflict with other course requirements or workload. I especially welcome a collective decision for change of due dates. I value flexibility; just be aware that I would like to submit the course marks by mid April.

*It is the student's responsibility to submit his or her own original written material in courses.*

### **Case analysis presentations: 30 %**

- Two per student @ 15% each.
- Your choice of the cases listed in the course outline, pages 6-8.
- Presentations in Weeks 1, 2 or 3.
- Note: Owing to the class size, and as a substitute for one case analysis presentation, students will be given the option to prepare an article review and use it to facilitate class discussion concerning a case study topic. See the Case Study Guidelines for more information about this option.
- I encourage you to consider doing a case presentation (or article review) in week 1. There are two interesting cases for Week 1 and in past years students have successfully done an analysis and presentation on the first Saturday. **If you wish to select a Week 1 case, please e-mail me no later than Tuesday, January 4, 2011 (preferably earlier).**
- Case study questions and guidelines will be e-mailed to you in advance. They will assist you to select your case study and focus your analysis.

### **Contribution to learning: 20 %**

- Continuous. Includes your role as discussant for one case and meaningful contribution to learning in class exercises and discussion, including cases. Drawing from the readings is of high value, applications and examples are also welcome.

### **Essay: 50 %**

- Due date to be discussed in class (likely end of March, but I'm flexible).
- **All students must submit a question and topic statement for your essay prior to week 2 (no later than January 31, 2011).** While there is no mark for the essay question and topic statement, feedback will be given and I will advise and assist you as you focus and clarify your topic/question and identify appropriate resources.
- For the essay you have a choice to:
  - prepare a detailed outline valued at 15%, with the essay valued at 35%, OR
  - discuss or submit a less detailed outline where your objective is to seek feedback (no grade), with the essay valued at 50%, OR
  - submit the essay (valued at 50%) with no outline.
  - **Outlines are due one month prior to the due date for the essay.**
- Essay guidelines will be e-mailed to you in advance.
- Note: You may NOT submit an essay without prior approval of your topic statement/question.

## **Weekly Topic Schedule: An Overview**

### **Week 1: January 7, 8**

- Overview of the course.
- Introduction to Human Resources Management (HRM): what, why, roles.
- Strategic HRM: introduction, evolution.
- Current HR challenges; the strengths and weaknesses of HRM in the public sector environment, and particularly in local government; mapping the stakeholders.
- Introduction to the case method.
  
- The legal framework of HRM (introduction; this will be continuously discussed throughout the course).
- Defining and designing work.
- Recruitment
- Selection.
- Orientation.

### **Week 2: February 4, 5**

- HR planning – an introduction
- Strategic HRM and the role of HR planning.
- Training.
- Developing your people - and yourself.
- Succession planning
  
- Managing performance.
- Performance appraisal: systems and their implementation.
- Conducting performance appraisal; participating in your own performance review.
  
- Dealing with poor performance.
- Disciplinary policies and procedures.
- Employee rights and management rights.
  
- Labour relations, collective bargaining and contract administration: the basics.
- Labour relations in the public sector.
  
- Roundtable: essay topics, issues, research sources and questions [or in Week 3].

### **Week 3: March 4, 5**

- Downsizing and restructuring
- Amalgamations
  
- Total compensation: pay, incentives, and benefits/employee services.
- Compensation in a local government environment: Private sector approaches and public sector conditions.
- Recognizing and rewarding employees.
  
- Health and safety.
- Equality in the workplace/workplace harassment.
  
- Managing HR strategically: what, why, who and how?
- Roundtable: course learnings and applications

## Weekly Topic Schedule and Readings: Detailed

### WEEK 1: January 7, 8

#### FRIDAY

- Overview of the course: What is this course about? What is expected?
- Assessing your learning needs: What do you want to learn?
  
- Introduction to Human Resources Management (HRM): what, why, roles.
- Strategic HRM: introduction, evolution.
- Current HR challenges in the public sector, particularly in local government.
- The strengths and weaknesses of HRM in the public sector environment, with an emphasis on local government.
- Mapping the stakeholders re: HRM.

**Readings: Belcourt, ch. 1, 2, 3 (64-77). Stewart, ch. 1.** Exercises related to these topics and readings will be emailed to students in advance of our class. Students will be assigned to groups.

- Introduction to the case method [or on Saturday if time is short].

**Readings: "Learning with Cases", in particular, Part 2: Analyzing the Case, p. 40-54.**

#### SATURDAY

- The legal framework of HRM (introduction; this will be continuously discussed throughout the course).

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 2.**

- Defining and designing work

**Readings: Belcourt, ch.4. Stewart, ch. 3.**

- Recruitment
- Selection

**Readings: Belcourt, ch. 9 (see also ch. 5, 6, 7, 8). Stewart, ch. 4. Case 9 - Burnaby Glass**

- Orientation

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 5 (p. 132-150, 162-163). Case 10 - A Matter of Fit**

## WEEK 2: February 4, 5

### FRIDAY

- HR planning – an introduction.

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 4.** A class exercise will use the following four mini-cases (in the custom course package), with each student assigned to one case: ***“The 2010 Vancouver Olympics”***, ***“The Great Pyramid of Giza”***, ***“Doctor Shortage at a Crisis Stage in Canada”***, ***“Talent Development”***.

- Linking Week 1 to Week 2: Strategic HRM and the role of HR planning

**Readings: Belcourt, ch. 1, 2, 9. Stewart, ch. 1 (p. 26-27), 4 (94-98).**

**Case 6 – Family Medical Group of Companies**

- Training

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 5.**

### SATURDAY

- Developing your people - and yourself

**Readings: Belcourt, ch. 9. Stewart, ch. 5 (p. 132-134, 154-158). Case 4 - GENTRO Limited**

- Succession planning

A class exercise will use the mini-case “Nike Inc. – A Doomed Succession Plan?”

- Managing performance
- Performance appraisal: systems and their implementation
- Conducting performance appraisal; participating in your own performance review

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 6. Case 12 - AMAX Automotive**

- Dealing with poor performance
- Disciplinary policies and procedures
- Employee rights and management rights

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 6 (p.190-191), ch. 9 (p. 282-295). Case 21 - Regulatory Review Commission**

- Labour relations, collective bargaining and contract administration: the basics
- Labour relations in the public sector

**Readings: Stewart, ch. 10.** A short case/exercise will be distributed in advance.

- Roundtable: essay topics, research sources and questions [or in Week 3]

## WEEK 3: March 4, 5

### FRIDAY

- Downsizing and restructuring

**Readings:** *Belcourt, ch. 10; Stewart ch. 1 (p. 12-13), and ch. 3 may also be of interest.. Case: Downsizing Decision at the Department of Public Works*

- Amalgamations

**Readings:** *Belcourt, ch. 12. Case: City of Toronto: Courage in the Face of Chaos.*

### SATURDAY

- Total compensation: pay, incentives, and benefits/employee services
- Compensation in a local government environment: Private sector approaches and public sector conditions.
- Recognizing and rewarding employees

**Readings:** *Stewart, ch. 7.*

- Health and safety

**Readings:** *Stewart, ch. 8. Case 18 - Northern Copper Corporation*

- Equality in the workplace/workplace harassment

**Readings:** *Stewart, ch. 2 (p. 42-45, 53-56). Either a short case or exercise will be distributed in class.*

- Managing HR strategically: what, why, who and how?

**Readings:** *Drawing on all the readings from our course, in particular: Belcourt, ch. 1, 2, 3, 14. Stewart, ch. 1, 4. Case 1 - Hallington Utilities Services*

Reflection and roundtable discussion: *Be prepared to discuss the following -*

- What have you learned that will influence you in your role as (a) manager, (b) public servant, (c) employee, and/or (d) HR practitioner?
- How might your learning influence your decision-making, behaviour and perspective on HR management and the employer-employee relationship?
- How might your learning influence what you expect of and how you relate to your organization's HR department?



Readings from Stewart, Essentials of Managing Human Resources  
4<sup>th</sup> Cdn Edition vs. 3<sup>rd</sup> Cdn edition

The Bookstore has the 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Edition as it is now available from the publisher. However, used copies of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Edition may still be available (as we used the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in this course last year). The chapter numbers remain the same and the editions are quite similar, however, some changes have been made that affect the assigned readings.

Here are the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition readings (where they differ):

Week 1:

Orientation

ch. 5 (p. 152-157)

Week 2:

Strategic HRM and HR planning

ch. 1 (p. 10-30), ch. 4 (p. 108-112)

Poor performance/discipline

ch. 6 (p. 221-225)