THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
Semester 1 2016-2017

School of Business
MGMT3475 Current Topics in Human Resource Management

I. Instructor and Tutor

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Ng (no tutorial for this course)
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Office hours: By appointment
Teaching assistant: Hogan Wai (waikf@hku.hk)
Pre-requisites: No pre-requisites needed, even though some knowledge of human resource
management is preferred.
Textbook: No designated textbooks. Reading materials will be assigned.

II. Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an in-depth understanding of some of the major, current topics of human resource (HR) management. Furthermore, this course has a strong emphasis on learning through real world examples. This is to enhance the likelihood of students understanding the various HR issues they will face when they are employed after graduation.

Upon finishing this course, students should have a solid understanding of (a) the contemporary issues faced by most HR managers today, and (b) the roles HR managers play in the process of attaining organizational goals.

III. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

CLO1. Demonstrate critical thinking when presented with human resource problems and express
their views and opinions on human resource issues in an articulate way.
CLO2. Use theories and empirical findings to identify the solutions for key HR challenges.
CLO3. Conduct topic and case analysis to apply theoretical concepts.
CLO4. Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills.

IV. Alignment of Program and Course Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes	Course Learning Outcomes
1. Acquisition and internalization of knowledge and skills in key functional areas	CLO1, CLO2
2. Application and integration of business knowledge	CLO3, CLO4
3. Inculcating professionalism and leadership	CLO1, CLO2, CLO3
4. Developing global outlook	CLO1, CLO2, CLO3
5. Mastering communication skills	CLO3, CLO4

V. Teaching and Learning Activities

Lectures and video sharing
Interactive lectures on major concepts and issues with PowerPoint slides are conducted. All the slides are provided in the course packet. (Expected contact hours = 20 hours, 20% of study load)

In-class activities
Discussion questions will be provided to encourage a group or individual student to participate in discussions and share views. (Expected contact hours = 10, 10% of study load)

Group case analysis
Students are divided into groups and are required to meet outside the class, analyze the assigned case, and submit a written report at the end of the semester. (Expected contact hours = 20, 20% of study load)

Group presentation
Students are divided into groups and are required to conduct a project on a HR topic. Each group makes a 20-minute oral presentation. (Expected contact hours = 20, 20% of study load)

Tests
Students need to study for three in-class tests. (Expected contact hours = 30, 30% of study load)

VI. Assessment

Learning outcome	Teaching & learning activity	Assessment method
1. Describe and explain the nature of current HR issues faced by organizations.	Lectures, videos	Test 1 20% Test 2 20% Test 3 20%
2. Use theories and empirical findings to identify the solutions for key HR challenges.	In-class activities, group case analysis, and group presentation	Class Participation 10% Group Case Analysis 15% Group Presentation 15%
3. Apply learned concepts and theories to real-life company examples.	In-class activities, group case analysis, and group presentation	
4. Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills.	Group case analysis and group presentation	

*Class Participation

Class participation forms an integral part of your assessment. It is an individual-level assessment. You are encouraged to actively participate in all classroom discussions and activities. In order to be a successful professional, you need to be outspoken and show great initiative at work.

*Peer Evaluation for Group Work

In normal cases, each individual group member receives the same total score for his/her group work. However, in some cases, individual group members' scores will be adjusted depending on their efforts and contribution to the group work.

VII. Standards for Assessment

1. Three In-Class Tests (20% each)

The in-class tests will be closed-book. They will be used to assess students' (a) understanding of key HR principles and concepts, and (b) concept application of the learned HR knowledge and theories. The tests consist of multiple choice questions and short-answer questions.

Grading Criteria

Grade	Learning outcomes
A+, A, A-	90-100% of the responses are correct.
B+, B, B-	80-89% of the responses are correct.
C+, C, C-	70-79% of the responses are correct.
D+, D	60-69% of the responses are correct.
F	Less than 60% of the responses are correct.

2. Class Participation (10%)

Class participation will be assessed through assigning points for individual participation.

Grading Criteria

Grade	Learning outcomes
A+, A, A-	Extremely well prepared for class discussion and active in sharing views
B+, B, B-	Partially prepared for class discussion and quite active in sharing views
C+, C, C-	Not well prepared for class discussion and only occasionally sharing views
D+, D	Not well prepared for class discussion and no sharing of views
F	Never prepared for class discussion and no sharing of views

3. Group Case Analysis (15%)

Each group will be required to submit a written analysis of the assigned case. This case study is designed to assess students' (1) analytical skill to identify critical HR issues and problems, (2) application of relevant HR concepts and theories to analyze the situations and formulate creative and feasible solutions relevant to contexts, and (3) the effectiveness of written communication and working in a team. The following grading criteria are applied:

Grading Criteria

Grade	Learning outcomes
A+, A, A-	All key HR problems are identified, insightful and detailed analyses, sufficient supports with relevant data/facts, effective application of HR concepts and theories, well thought-out and feasible recommendations, and excellent writing.
B+, B, B-	Most of the key HR problems are identified, generally insightful and detailed analyses, appropriate use of relevant data/facts, acceptable application of HR concepts and theories, generally logical and feasible recommendations, and decent writing.
C+, C, C-	A few key HR problems are identified, somewhat insightful and detailed analyses, insufficient use of relevant data/facts, limited application of HR concepts and theories, mediocre and infeasible recommendations, and marginally acceptable writing.
D+, D	Less important HR problems are identified, analyses lacking a clear focus and consistency, limited use of relevant data/facts, little application of HR concepts and theories, recommendations not well-thought out and not practical, and poor writing.
F	Key HR problems are entirely overlooked, poor analyses with no consistency in logics, absence of relevant data/facts, no application of HR concepts and theories, poor recommendations, and unacceptable writing.

4. Group Presentation (15%)

Students are divided into groups and are required to conduct HR-related projects. Each group makes a 20-minute presentation. The group presentation will be evaluated based on such criteria as presentation style, content coverage, articulation on critical issues, use of concepts discussed in class, responses to criticisms (if any).

Grading Criteria

Grade	Learning outcomes
A+, A, A-	Professional presentation style, comprehensive content coverage, well-articulated on critical issues, effective use of HR concepts, and quality interaction with audience.
B+, B, B-	Decent presentation style, appropriate content coverage, clear discussion of critical issues, moderately effective use of HR concepts, and acceptable interaction with audience.
C+, C, C-	Mediocre presentation style, limited content coverage, marginally acceptable discussion of critical issues, infrequent use of HR concepts, and limited interaction with audience.
D+, D	Weak presentation style, key content omitted, unclear focus on critical issues, very limited use of HR concepts, and poor interaction with audience.
F	Unacceptable presentation style, questionable content coverage, omitting critical issues, zero use of HR concepts, and no interaction with audience.

*Course Final Grade

Individual students' final grade for the course will be assigned according to the accumulative score that s/he has obtained from all of the assessment criteria above. That is,

Test (60%) + Class Participation (10%) + Group Case Analysis (15%) + Group Presentation (15%)

*Late Assignment Penalty

All assignments are required to be submitted on or before the specified due date and time to the instructor or the assignment submission destination. The penalty policy for any late assignments will be as follows:

        1 day late → deduct 25%, 2 days late → deduct 50%, 3 days late → deduct 100%

VIII. Academic Conduct

The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, paraphrasing of someone else's ideas, unauthorized collaboration on out-of-class projects, cheating on in-class tests, and unauthorized advance access to test materials. This website will tell you more: **http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/.**

Classroom misconduct: Lateness, early departures, interruptions (phones, chattering), absenteeism, dishonesty in class participation, and other disrespectful behaviors.

IX. Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Topic
1	Sep 1	Introduction
2	Sep 5, Sep 8	Employee-organization fit
3	Sep 12, Sep 15	Validity of job interviews in employee selection
4	Sep 19, Sep 22	Employees' personality
5	Sep 26, Sep 29	An expanded view of job performance
6	Oct 3, Oct 6	Psychological contract and its breach **(Test 1 around this time, 4 topics)**
7	Oct 10*, Oct 13	The role of mentoring in employees' career development
8	Oct 17*, Oct 20*	Reading week – no class
9	Oct 24, Oct 27	The growing trend of job mobility
10	Oct 31, Nov 3	Employee emotions and misbehaviors **(Test 2 around this time, 4 topics)**
11	Nov 7, Nov 10	Layoffs, survivors, and fairness
12	Nov 14, Nov 17	The balance between work and family
13	Nov 21, Nov 24	Expatriation
14	Nov 28	Employee voice **(Test 3 around this time, 4 topics)**

* A school holiday

X. The Group Case Analysis Topic

You will form groups (group size may vary depending on class size, but roughly between 4 and 6 people) and work on an assigned case. Your report should **<u>NOT</u>** be longer than 20 pages of text (12-point font, 1-inch margins, and double-spaced). This includes all the tables, figures, and appendices you used. The due date is **<u>Dec 19 (Monday) at noon (please put your report in the assignment box on the 7th floor of KKL Building)</u>**

Saini, D. S. (2015). *A popular HR chief burned to death: People management dynamics at the Indian subsidiary of Suzuki Ltd*. The Asia Case Research Center.

The assigned questions are:
1. What led to the violent incident?
2. Discuss the cross-cultural issues (Japan vs India) in this case?
2. How could a wider leadership have prevented the violent incident from happening?

XI. The Group Presentation Topic

Since the aim of this course is to know more about the current topics in HRM, the group project requires you to conduct the following:

(a) identify a Fortune 500 company (US or Global),
(b) identify any interesting/novel HR practices in that organization,
(c) evaluate those practices (e.g., do you think these practices are value-adding? What are the downsides of having these practices?),
(c) present to the audience your findings in a 15-minute presentation, and
(d) respond to the criticisms and questions raised by an assigned team who will know in advance the organization your group has chosen. The Q&A section lasts for 10 minutes at most.

I will evaluate your group's performance. Evaluation criteria broadly include presentation skills and content of your presentation. The most important determinant is whether or not I am convinced that the organization has interesting/novel HR practices and your evaluation of those practices.

All the presentations will be held toward the end of the semester. All groups will have to submit their chosen organizations at least three weeks prior to the end of the semester. No written report is required for this course component.

The information contained in this syllabus is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class.