

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**  
**FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**  
Semester 1 2021-2022

MGMT3475A/B Current Topics in Human Resource Management

**I. Instructor and Tutor**

*Instructor:* Prof. Thomas Ng (no tutorial for this course)

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*Office:* KKL Building, Room 726 *Phone:* 3917-8344

*Office hours:* By appointment

*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.

*Course TA:* Alex Poon (KKL605, 3917-4467, ccpoon@hku.hk)

**II. Course Description and Objectives**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an in-depth understanding of some of the major topics of human resource (HR) management that are especially relevant to contemporary organizations. In addition, this course has a strong emphasis on learning through real world examples. In so doing, this course enhances 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 dealing with those issues.

**III. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

*CLO1.* Demonstrate critical thinking when presented with HR problems and express their views and opinions on HR issues in an articulate way.

*CLO2.* Use theories and empirical findings to identify the solutions for key HR challenges.

*CLO3.* Conduct topic 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 (CLOs)
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	CLO1, CLO2, CLO3
4. Developing global outlook	CLO1, CLO2, CLO3
5. Mastering communication skills	CLO3, CLO4
6. Cultivating leadership	CLO1, CLO2, CLO3

## **V. Teaching and Learning Activities**

### *Lectures*

Lectures with PowerPoint slides will be conducted. The relevant slides for each class will be available online before the class starts. (Expected contact hours = 20 hours, 20% of study load)

### *Class activities*

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

### *Group presentation*

Students are divided into groups and are required to conduct a project on an assigned HR topic. Each group makes a 30-minute oral presentation. (Expected contact hours = 30, 30% of study load)

### *An end-of-term test*

Students are required to study for one end-of-term test. (Expected contact hours = 40, 40% of study load)

## **VI. Assessment**

<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Teaching &amp; learning activity</b>	<b>Assessment method</b>
1. Describe and explain the nature of current HR issues faced by organizations.	Lectures, videos, discussions	End-of-term test      50%
2. Use theories and empirical findings to identify the solutions for key HR challenges.	Class activities, assignments, and group presentation	Participation      20% Group Presentation      30%
3. Apply learned concepts and theories to real-life company examples.	Class activities, assignments, and group presentation	
4. Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills.	Class activities, assignments, 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 assigned 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. An End-of-Term Test (50%)*

An end-of-term test will be administered to assess students' (a) understanding of key HR principles and concepts, and (b) concept application of the learned HR knowledge and theories.

Grading Criteria

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

*2. Class Participation (20%)*

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

Grading Criteria

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

*3. Group Presentation (30%)*

Students are divided into groups and are required to conduct a HR-related project. Each group makes a 30-minute presentation. The group presentation will be evaluated based on such criteria as presentation styles, content coverage, articulation on critical issues, use of concepts discussed in class, quality of interaction in the Q&A session. In determining the grade, input from the audiences' evaluations and their questions will be considered.

Grading Criteria

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Learning outcomes</b>
<b>A+, A, A-</b>	Professional presentation style, comprehensive content coverage, well-articulated on critical issues, effective use of HR concepts, and quality interaction with audience.
<b>B+, 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.

<b>C+, C, C-</b>	Mediocre presentation style, limited content coverage, marginally acceptable discussion of critical issues, infrequent use of HR concepts, and limited interaction with audience.
<b>D+, D</b>	Weak presentation style, key content omitted, unclear focus on critical issues, very limited use of HR concepts, and poor interaction with audience.
<b>F</b>	Unacceptable presentation style, questionable content coverage, omitting critical issues, zero use of HR concepts, and no interaction with audience.

*\*Course Final Grade*

Final grade for the course will be assigned according to the accumulative score that a student has obtained from all of the assessment criteria above. That is,

Test (50%) + Class Participation (20%) + Group Presentation (30%)

*\*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 is:

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**

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Topic

- 1 Employee-organization fit
- 2 Validity of job interviews in employee selection
- 3 Employees' personality
- 4 An expanded view of job performance
- 5 Psychological contract and its breach
- 6 The role of mentoring in employees' career development
- 7 The growing trend of job mobility
- 8 Employee emotions and misbehaviors
- 9 Layoffs, survivors, and fairness
- 10 The balance between work and family

- 11 Expatriation (**The group presentation around this time**)
  - 12 Employee voice (**The end-of-term test around this time**)
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### **X. The Group Presentation Topic**

As the aim of this course is to gain knowledge of the current topics in HR, the group project requires you to conduct the following:

- (a) Identify two organizations. They can be in the same or different industries. Identify the new and interesting HR practices in these two organizations. Some examples of HR practices include novel selection methods, unconventional training designs, unique ways of enhancing employees' career growth, tailored work-family balance measures, and innovative compensation/bonus schemes.
- (b) The HKU library website has subscribed to many electronic databases that can allow you to look for articles which might have the company information you look for. For example, on the [lib.hku.hk](http://lib.hku.hk) website, go to "Research Tools" and then "Electronic Resources," choose "Business & Commerce" under *All Subjects* and "E-Journal Collection" under *All Database Types*.
- (c) Evaluate those practices (e.g., What are the main advantages and disadvantages? How are they converge or diverge? How are they new or interesting? Do you think these practices are value-adding? Which set of practices is more value-adding from your group's standpoint? Do you expect these practices to become popular in the future or remain to be unique examples?)
- (d) On the "presentation day," deliver your results and address any follow-up questions. I will evaluate your group's performance as a whole. Evaluation criteria broadly include presentation skills and content of your presentation. The most important determinants are whether you have identified interesting, novel, and contrasting HR practices adopted by two different organizations, presented them in a coherent way, and shown a good understanding of those practices. All the presentations will be held toward the end of the semester. No written reports are required for this project.

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