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PSC 522.01: Human Resource Management

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Political Science 522
Human Resource Management
Fall 2007

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the field of human resource management. It focuses on the knowledge and skills required by both personnel officers and those who manage personnel on a daily basis.

Course Objectives

1. To acquire substantive knowledge of each major area of human resource management.
2. To develop problem-solving skills relevant to situations faced by managers and personnel officers.

Required Texts

A packet of readings containing chapters from Tompkins, Human Resource Management in Government.

This packet can be ordered through the UM Bookstore and mailed to you for an additional \$6 (www.umbkstore.com or call 406-243-1234).

Course Requirements

Lessons must be completed each Thursday by roughly midnight. Students are required to read all assigned readings, participate on the discussion board, and complete ten short writing assignments.

Course Grading

Your grade for the course will be based on 10 writing assignments. Assignment #3 is worth 40 points and the rest are worth 20 points each for a total of 220 possible points.

A = 205-240
A- = 198-204
B+ = 191-197
B = 182-190
B- = 176-181
C+ = 169-175
C = 161-168

Weekly Assignments

Lesson 1 (Due Sept.6) Introduction to the Human Resource Function

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 1, and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 2 (Due Sept. 13) Strategic Human Resource Management

Read the mini-lecture, Tompkins pp. 20-26, and Tompkins "Strategic Human Resource Management in Government: Unresolved Issues", and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #1.

Writing Assignment #1: Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced case analysis of Case 2.1 Merit Agency Needs and the Dual Career Couple. In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Lesson 3 (Due Sept. 20) Centralized Merit Systems

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 3, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #2.

Writing Assignment #2: Even though the rule of three is used much less frequently today across the U.S., its logic is still worth assessing. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced case analysis of The Rule of Three: A Case Study. In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Lesson 4 (Due Sept. 27) Societal Values and Civil Service Reforms

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read Tompkins Chapter 4, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. **Work on Writing Assignment #3.**

Writing Assignment #3: The Structure of Personnel Systems, Due Oct. 4

After reading Chapters 3 and 4, write a 4-6 page paper (double-spaced) comparing and contrasting the state personnel systems of Massachusetts and Montana on two dimensions: 1) organizational structure (commission, executive office, or combination model); and 2) extent to which the state has a centralized merit system (clearly stated merit principles; centralized screening, testing and certification according to the rule of three; and specific prohibitions against patronage and political interference).

Deduce answers by visiting each state=s website. For Massachusetts, go to **www.mass.gov**. On the left side of the page, click on Governor and Executive Departments, and then Alphabetic List. The two agencies you are interested in are

housed within a cabinet-level department called Executive Office for Administration and Finance. First, find the Civil Service Commission and read about its history and FAQs. Second, find and read about the Human Resources Division. Figure out how the personnel function is shared between HRD and the Civil Service Commission (e.g., who makes personnel rules, who implements personnel rules, and who performs the judicial role if someone claims the rules have been broken).

Go back to the state government homepage, click on search Mass Gen Laws under “Online Services”, find Chapter 31 of Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), and then read till you bleed. Which of the above characteristics of a centralized merit system are reflected in law? Which structural form?

For Montana, go to **www.montana.gov**. On the left side of the page, click on state agencies, then Administration Department (DOA), then State personnel division, which is a unit within DOA. Read about us. Next, go back to the Montana homepage, click on state laws, then Montana Code Annotated. Go to Title 2 Government Structure and Administration, and then read the first few parts of Chapter 18 State Employee Classification, Compensation, and Benefits. (If Montana has characteristics and structure of a centralized merit system you will find them here).

Oct. 4 No Lesson this Week – Submit Assignment #3 by Oct 4.

Lesson 5 (Due Oct. 11) Job Analysis and the Theory of Job Standardization

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 5 (skipping pp. 83-92), and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #4.

Writing Assignment#4: Complete Exercise 5.1 on page 96. (about three pages, double-spaced). Use pages 153-157 in Chapter 7 as a resource. **Note:** This assignment calls for a PLAN characterized by a series of steps. Don't give me conclusions. Don't tell me what you did do. Explain what you will need to do at each decision step to be in compliance with the ADA. Begin with whether the law even applies to you as an employer.

Lesson 6 (Due Oct. 18) Job Evaluation and Pay Systems

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 6, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #5.

Writing Assignment #5. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 6.1 The Troublesome Pay Exception. In responding to the two questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Lesson 7 (Due Oct. 25)

Equal Employment Opportunity

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapters 7 and 8, and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 8 (Due Nov. 1)

Employee Recruitment and Selection

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 9, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #6.

Writing Assignment #6. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 9.1 A Failed Process? Or a Flawed Decision? In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Lesson 9 (Due Nov. 8)

Employee Training and Development

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 10, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing Assignment #7.

Writing Assignment #7. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 10.1 Who Failed Whom? In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Lesson 10 (Due Nov. 15)

Performance Appraisal and Counseling

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 11, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #8.

Writing Assignment #8. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 11.1 Managing Performance from Afar. In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

****No class during Turkey Week****

Lesson 11 (Due Nov. 29)

Employee Relations

Read the mini-lecture and Tompkins Chapter 13, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #9.

Writing Assignment #9. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 13.1 Balancing Agency and Employee Needs. In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings.

Read the mini-lecture and read Tompkins Chapter 14, and respond to the Discussion Board questions. Also submit writing assignment #10.

Writing Assignment #10. Submit by email attachment a two-page, double-spaced analysis of Case 14.1 The Case of the Intoxicated Snow Plow Operator. In responding to the questions posed, demonstrate that you have read, understood, and can apply the relevant concepts in the readings. (You will need to refer back to the Seven Tests of Just Cause in Chapter 13.)

The End!