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### PSC 522.01: Human Resource Management

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Political Science 522  
**Human Resource Management**  
Fall 2003

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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, including 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.umtbookstore.com](http://www.umtbookstore.com) or call 406-243-1234).

### **Course Requirements**

Lessons must be completed each Monday by roughly midnight. Students are required to read all assigned readings, participate on the discussion board, and complete two take-home exams.

### **Course Grading**

The midterm exam will comprise one-third of the course grade (100 points); the final exam will comprise one-third (100 points); and participation on the Discussion Board will comprise one-third (100 points). The Discussion Board responses will be graded weekly because they involve case study analyses as well as more general questions. The highest 10 weekly grades will be summed (10 points each week), thereby allowing you to miss two weeks if necessary.

A = 270-300 points (90%); B = 240-269 points (80%); C = 210-239 points (70%)

## **Weekly Assignments**

### Lesson 1 (Due Sept.8)

### Introduction to the Human Resource Function

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 1 and Douglas McGregor's "Staff-Line Relationships"), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

### Lesson 2 (Due Sept. 15)

### Centralized Merit Systems

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 3, Van Riper's "Americanizing a Foreign Invention," and the Pendleton Act of 1883), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

### Lesson 3 (Due Sept. 22)

### Societal Values and Civil Service Reforms

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 4), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

### Lesson 4 (Due Sept. 29)

### Strategic Human Resource Management

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins pp. 20-26 and Tompkins "Strategic Human Resource Management in Government: Unresolved Issues"), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

### Lesson 5 (Due Oct. 6)

### Equal Employment Opportunity

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapters 7 and 8), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

**Midterm Exam** (Due by email attachment Oct. 13; exam questions are found below)

### Lesson 6 (Due Oct. 20)

### Job Analysis and the Theory of Job Standardization

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 5 and Excerpt from the Report of the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

### Lesson 7 (Due Oct. 27)

### Job Evaluation and Pay Systems

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 6 and Risher's "Are Public Employers Ready for a "New Pay" Program?"), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 8 (Due Nov. 3)      Employee Recruitment and Selection

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 9), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 9 (Due Nov. 10)      Employee Training and Development

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 10), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 10 (Due Nov. 17)      Performance Appraisal and Counseling

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins 11 and Walton's "The Parable of the Red Beads"), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 11 (Due Nov. 24)      Employee Relations

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 13), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Lesson 12 (Due Dec. 1)      Collective Bargaining and Labor Relations

Read the mini-lecture on-line, read the materials in the readings packet (Tompkins Chapter 14), and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

**Final Exam** (Due Dec. 8 by email attachment; exam questions are found below).

**Open-Book Take-Home Exams**

**Midterm Exam** (Due Oct. 13 by email attachment)

This is an essay exam. Pay attention to proper form and logical development. Respond to **TWO** of the following questions.

1. Based on the assigned readings and your personal analysis of them, demonstrate your understanding of the human resource function and the line-staff partnership required to perform it.
2. Based on the assigned readings and your personal analysis of them, demonstrate your understanding of centralized merit systems of the kind created by the Pendleton Act, including both their structural form and their strengths and weaknesses.

3. Scientific management's theory of job standardization holds that jobs should be defined scientifically through careful job analysis, that their worth should be determined scientifically by evaluating job content, and that the job incumbent should be paid according to the demands the job places on him or her. Write an essay demonstrating your understanding of this theory and offering a critique of it. (Note that you will need to draw on more than one chapter.

**Final Exam** (Due Dec. 8 by email attachment)

This is an essay exam. Pay attention to proper form and logical development. Respond to **TWO** of the following questions:

1. Explain why it is difficult to predict who will prove to be the best employee from among the many job applicants from which you have to choose. Assuming you are not subject to a centralized merit system, what selection strategies would you adopt and why?
2. Although everyone seems to think that performance appraisal is necessary, rarely do workers or managers feel it is done well. Write an essay describing and justifying the type of system you would put in place as the manager of a bureau comprised mostly of white collar professionals. If you do not believe that formal, semi-annual systems are the best route to take, design an alternative means of guiding employee performance and work improvement.
3. An employee has reportedly taken a punch at his supervisor. Describe how you will respond in your role as office manager. Define due process and just cause and explain how you will observe them in considering disciplinary action against the employee.