

**Commerce 2BC3**  
**Human Resource Management and Labour Relations**  
**Winter 2012 Course Outline**  
**Instructor: Dr. Schat**

**Human Resources and Management Area**  
**DeGroote School of Business**  
**McMaster University**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

As a core course in the Commerce program, this course is designed to: (1) facilitate students' learning of key principles and concepts of Human Resource Management (HRM) and Labour Relations, (2) contribute to the development of students' skills related to HRM, and (3) provide students with the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills related to HRM.

**INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

<p><b>Section C01</b> Tues. 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM Thurs. 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM Fri. 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM</p> <p><b>Location:</b> KTH/B135</p>	<p><b>Section C02</b> Mon. 9:30 - 10:20 AM Tues. 10:30 - 11:20 AM Thurs. 9:30 - 10:20 AM</p> <p><b>Location:</b> KTH/B135</p>	<p><b>Teaching Assistant(s)</b></p> <p>TBA</p>
<p><b>Dr. Aaron Schat</b> Instructor Email: <a href="mailto:schata@mcmaster.ca">schata@mcmaster.ca</a> Office: DSB/417 Tel: (905) 525-9140 x23946 Office Hours: Monday 2-3 PM or by appointment</p>		

**COURSE ELEMENTS**

Credit Value: 3	Leadership: No	IT skills: No	Global view: Yes
Participation: Yes	Ethics: Yes	Numeracy: Yes	Written skills: Yes
Oral skills: Yes	Innovation: Yes	Group work: Yes	

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a basic knowledge of the key aspects of managing human resources in domestic and multinational organizations, emphasizing the link between human resource policies and practices and organizational strategy. Topics include human resource planning, job analysis, staffing, the legal environment, training, performance appraisal, compensation, employment relations, health and safety, labour relations, and recent developments and future trends.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students in this course will:

- (1) Learn the key principles and concepts of Human Resource Management (HRM) and Labour Relations;
- (2) Appreciate the contribution of HRM to organizational effectiveness;
- (3) Be exposed to evidence-based HRM – that is, what research in HRM, organizational behaviour and related fields teach about how to effectively manage people in organizations;
- (4) Learn how individual character strengths (and weaknesses) contribute to (in)effective management of people in organizations;
- (5) Have the opportunity to apply knowledge and develop skills related to HRM via self-assessment and reflection, peer interactions, and class activities and discussion;
- (6) Contribute to a dynamic classroom learning environment by identifying, creating, and engaging in activities that help the class to learn.

These objectives will be accomplished through lectures, presentations, videos, in-class exercises, discussions, and student contributions.

## REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Zinni, D. M., Mathis, R. L., & Jackson, J. H. (2011). *Human Resources Management*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Edition. Nelson: Toronto. \$99.95 (CDN)

Note: An e-book version of this text is also available from the publisher at [www.nelsonbrain.com](http://www.nelsonbrain.com). The price quoted here is for 6-month usage of the e-book and is subject to change. \$69.95 (CDN)

Avenue to Learn registration for course content, readings and case materials <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/> \$ FREE

Note: Announcements, updates, and scheduling changes will be posted to the course website so be sure to check website regularly.

### NOTE REGARDING ASSIGNED READINGS:

It is your responsibility to ensure that you read the material from the text and any other readings that are assigned. Class lectures and activities will assume that the assigned material has been read. At times, I will spend some time lecturing on particularly important, difficult, and/or

interesting text material and at other times my lectures will cover material that is not in the assigned readings. Therefore, you will be in a better position to learn and engage the lecture material if you have first read the assigned readings.

## EVALUATION

Learning in this course results from attending to text and class material and participating in discussions, assignments, and other course activities. Your grade will consist of evaluations of both individual and group work, as indicated in the table below. For group assignments, individual group members will receive the group grade, although adjustment may be made if there is evidence that an individual's contribution was inadequate.

### ***Components and Weights***

Character Strengths Assessment	Individual with group/peer input	10%
Service Learning Activities	Individual and/or Group	15%
Mid-Term Exam	Individual	35%
Final Exam	Individual	40%

### ***Character Strengths Assessment (10%)***

To work effectively with other people – whether it is as a peer, team member, or manager – you need to know your character strengths and weaknesses and be aware of how these manifest when you interact with other people at work and in other contexts. This is even more important for anyone in the organization who is involved in hiring decisions, determining work responsibilities, making training and development recommendations, or evaluating the performance of others in the organization. Most of you taking this course will be responsible for making these types of decisions at some point in the future.

The purpose of this exercise is to equip you with knowledge of your personal character strengths and provide you with an opportunity to consider how you might develop and use these strengths now and in the future. This assignment consists of several components, the details of which will be provided early in the semester.

## **Service Learning Activities (15%)<sup>1</sup>**

The success of an organization depends on the dedication and contributions of members. Your effectiveness as an individual member of an organization depends on your understanding of the organizational dynamics and your role in shaping those dynamics. You can constructively shape these dynamics by engaging in leadership service behaviour – that is, doing things for the good of others and for the good of your organization. In this course, you are encouraged to think about this section of COM 2BC3 as an “organization” that you are a member of and whose “culture” you have responsibility for shaping. Specifically, you will be required to engage in leadership service as a way of contributing to a constructive learning environment in this class. The service you do in this class reflects your willingness to exercise leadership, contribute to a team, help others, and develop high quality relationships, which will make this a much more dynamic and engaging learning opportunity for you and your classmates.

You can earn up to 100 Service Points in the semester (100 points would equal 15% of the course grade). Up to 50 of these points can be earned with Team Service, although you are not required to do Team Service. A description of potential service activities is provided below. If you have an extraordinary service effort, you can earn up to 10 extra credit points (worth 1.5% toward the course grade) in the course beyond the 100 point maximum. Documentation of why this extra credit is warranted must be presented to the professor when you request such extra credit.

You should keep track of your individual and team service activities on a Service Record Form which will be available from the course website. The form requires that you describe your service and get a signature from a classmate certifying that your action took place and helped your classmates and/or positively contributed to the learning environment in the course. Team service should be tracked on a separate Service Record Form (and should include the names of all team members who participated in the activity). **You must turn in a hard copy of your cumulative service record in the last class of each odd-numbered week beginning with week 3 (See the last page of the course outline for the week numbers).** The Teaching Assistants, and/or Service Records Team, in conjunction with the professor, will review, approve, or offer feedback on your activities each week. Each student must submit their cumulative Service Record Form in class on the final day of classes (April 3).

### **INDIVIDUAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES (up to 100 points)**

A list of potential individual service activities is provided below. Each activity counts for 10 points. By the end of the semester, each student should compile a record that includes at least 5 and up to 10 (if you do no team service) of these activities. These activities should be documented in your Individual Service Record. You need to take initiative to choose and accomplish these activities. Making regular small contributions throughout the semester is strongly recommended. This is not an exhaustive list of all individual service activities. There are many others that would enhance the learning environment and would qualify. Creativity is strongly encouraged. If you have an idea, ask the instructor if it is appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> The instructor thanks Dr. Melissa Gruys and Dr. David Bright for sharing their ideas for this course element. For more information, see: Gruys, M., & Bright, D. (2011). In-class service as a requirement in Human Resource Management education. *Journal of Human Resources Education*, 5, 13-31.

## Potential Individual Service Activities

***Brief presentation on media story or current event related to course material.*** HRM topics are regularly featured in the news media (newspapers, etc.). Sharing these stories with the class can help to make a topic “come alive”. You should provide the media information (e.g., bring in the newspaper article or show/send to the instructor a video clip of the media file) and briefly relate it to the course material. Note: More in depth versions of this presentation could be considered for more points or for a team service project (see below).

***Brief presentation re: how an actual company uses HR practices.*** This would be a short presentation of a “case example” of how a particular company does a particular HR function, such as recruiting, hiring, performance evaluation, training, etc. (e.g., How does Home Depot select sales associates?; How does the OPP train its tactical response unit?). Note: More in depth versions of this presentation could be considered for more points or for a team service project (see below).

***Other brief class presentation.*** The nature of this class provides numerous opportunities for small presentations/contributions in addition to the 2 types of presentations mentioned above. Qualifying presentations must ***last 1-5 minutes***. You may speak individually on a topic in class or you may ***represent others*** (for example, by summarizing a discussion with members of your team). Ideally, you should notify the instructor at the beginning of the class in which you would like to make the short presentation, although a spontaneous contribution would also qualify.

***Prepare chapter summaries or answers to chapter review questions and share them with your team members.*** Teams might consider assigning “topic experts” within their teams. These individuals would master the material for a given chapter, summarize it (or answer review questions, etc.), and distribute this information to their teammates. A summary *or* a set of answers to the review questions of a single chapter would count as a service activity.

***Write practice multiple choice exam questions for each unit.*** Write 5-7 multiple choice questions based on a particular unit (based on chapter or lecture notes) and submit them to the instructor. The instructor will compile them and create a practice exam to be distributed to the class before the mid-term or final exam.

***Organize an exam study session.*** This would involve you taking the initiative to organize a study session that involves your team members or other members of the class. Leading the effort would include setting a date, finding a location, and preparing the atmosphere by making sure that it is conducive to studying.

***Help another team with their service project.*** Help another team with some element of their service project (e.g., participate in a survey they are conducting; help Directory team gather photos and other information from class members).

***Get another team to help with your team’s service project.*** Good leadership includes effective delegation. There is no reason why you should do all of the work for a team service project. This activity counts only if you personally arrange for participation from others outside your team.

***Exemplary leadership displayed in your team project.*** If you “go above and beyond the call of duty” in your team project, you should be recognized. Team members must nominate you.

**Recognition for special accomplishment in class:** From time to time, the professor may acknowledge unique accomplishments by members of the class – (e.g. extraordinary service, highest score on an exam, etc.)

**Make video recording of your team's Workshop/Presentation.** If your team serves as “Today's Experts” or leads a different presentation, you would make a video or other record of the activities. Send this document to the professor who may post it to the course website.

**Other leadership service activity that contributes to the learning environment of your team or our class.** If you notice exemplary service from others, consider nominating them.

### **TEAM SERVICE PROJECTS (up to 50 points)**

Team-level service activities are worth up to 50 points. Teams can consist of between 2 and 5 members. Team membership is voluntary. It is the responsibility of individual students to form or join a team. The instructor will not assign teams or find teams for individual students to join. A list of potential team service projects is outlined below. Creative ideas that are not included on this list are most welcome. Speak to the instructor if you have an idea you are considering.

#### **Option 1 – “Today's Experts” Team Presentation (50 points)**

The “Today's Experts” presentation is a team service project that carries the most service points (50) because it involves a significant time commitment and should contribute substantially to class learning. The “Today's Experts” team will study a course topic and present it to the class using one of the formats described below. Each team member will receive 50 service points when the presentation is complete. The presentation has three major purposes: to provide you with experience applying human resource management concepts and theories to specific content and situations; to develop your ability to work effectively as part of a team; and to gain experience being an “expert” while presenting your work to an audience of peers. You should approach this presentation as if you are leading a professional training session for employees in an organization.

Preparing for this presentation will require coordination outside of class. Do NOT divide the presentation into sections and have individual team members work independently – this should be a true team effort and be presented as a cohesive presentation (in “one voice”). Be creative and have fun with it. The presentation should involve class member participation. You should be intentional about what knowledge/skills you want your classmates to take away from the session.

Interested teams should choose a topic and then select the type of presentation format that they would like to use. The presentation format options include:

1. *Debate.* Two teams must agree to participate in a debate on an HR topic such as labor unions, performance based pay, etc. Please consult with the professor to discuss your topic and how you plan to conduct the debate.
2. *Movie analysis.* Your team will view a movie and analyze the human resources (HR) topic and theme that is demonstrated or addressed in the movie. Your class presentation will highlight the HR topic present in the movie by showing movie clips and discussing them.

3. *Evidence-based HRM.* Your team will select a topic from the field of HR, review current research and other relevant literature, and prepare a presentation for the class.
4. *Organizational analysis.* Your team will choose an organization from the local business community and present that organization's HR challenges and practices. (e.g., how does this organization select or train employees; what approach to compensation does this organization use (pay-for-performance, benefits)? This could be an organization where a team member works, an organization where a friend or family member works, or simply an organization about which you are interested in learning. You could gather information through interviews with organizational members or by examining materials provided by and written about the organization. Be sure permission is obtained to share information with the class.
5. *Other.* Your team will choose a creative presentation format (e.g., role plays, educational game, original video) to present course material.

When deciding on a format, teams should weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each option and try to reach a consensus. Once the final decision is made, each team will discuss their idea with the professor. The presentations will be scheduled throughout the term based on the topics that are being discussed for a given class period. It is expected that the presentations will last for 20-30 minutes. Team members can decide who will present information during the presentation; it is not required that all group members present as long as the other group members agree to that format. Please arrive early for class on the day of your presentation. If you have special technology needs (e.g., want to have internet access, sound, etc.), let the professor know well in advance.

### **Option 2 – Other Team Service Projects (25 points)**

Besides the “Today’s Experts” Presentation option, your team will also have the opportunity to do other service projects that contribute to the learning atmosphere in the class. A list of potential options is provided below. For these, each team member will receive 25 service points when the project is complete. You are also encouraged to come up with other team activities. Consult with the instructor to discuss the idea and determine an appropriate point allocation.

**Directory Team:** Create a class directory. Collect the following information on each member of the class: name, phone number, e-mail address, major, year level, interests, hobbies, etc. Take digital pictures (or ask class members to submit their own) and integrate them with biographical information to create a class directory. Send this document to the professor so that he can post it to the course website.

**Service Records Team:** Distribute and gather the class members’ service records. Enter scores for service into a spreadsheet provided by the professor.

**Name Familiarity Team:** Create and carry out two activities to help us learn each other’s names. Each activity should take no longer than 10-15 minutes and should take place during the first month of the semester. Finally, work with the **Directory Team** to create a name recognition quiz that can be administered to the class. Students will get individual service points if they can correctly identify at least 20 people in the class.

**Celebrations Team:** Organize an effort to celebrate a class milestone (e.g., completion of mid-term exam). Any celebration should include a 10-15 minute program – for example an awards

ceremony, speech, chant, etc. Be creative. If you intend to include food/snack, do not pay for this yourself, but involve other groups.

**Exam Review Team:** Organize a review/study activity (game, etc.) for the class to prepare for the midterm or final exam that can be administered during the class prior to a given exam.

### External Service

In unique circumstances, consideration will also be given to allocating points to service activities that are directed toward helping others outside of the class. Such activities must meet the following criteria:

- 1) The activity needs to be related to course content (i.e., HRM).
- 2) The activity needs to be something that demonstrably helps an individual or organization that is in need of and can benefit from such assistance (e.g., a non-profit). The key criterion here is that it needs to be clear that you are doing that person/organization a favour. It cannot be a situation where they are doing you a favour by participating in one of your class requirements.

Potential examples include:

- helping someone in need (e.g., high school student; someone who is unemployed) with their job search, resume preparation, interview coaching, etc.
- doing a training needs assessment for volunteers at a social service agency.

Before carrying out an external service activity, you must consult with the professor to ensure it is appropriate and to determine the points that will be allocated to it.

### Mid-term Exam (35%) and Final Exam (40%)

There will be one mid-term exam and one final exam in this course. The mid-term exam is scheduled for **Friday, February 10 from 7 – 8:30 PM**. The location(s) of the mid-term will be announced in class as this date approaches. The mid-term will be composed of 75 multiple choice questions and will be based on material (from the text readings and scheduled classes) that is covered prior to the date of the exam. More details will be announced in class. For those who write the midterm exam, the final exam will not be cumulative (i.e., will be based on material since the midterm exam). For those who are unable to write the midterm exam, the final exam may be cumulative at the discretion of the instructor. More information about the final exam will be provided later in the course.

### Grade Conversion

At the end of the course your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme.

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT	LETTER GRADE	PERCENT
A+	90 - 100	C+	67 - 69
A	85 - 89	C	63 - 66
A-	80 - 84	C-	60 - 62

B+	77 - 79	D+	57 - 59
B	73 - 76	D	53 - 56
B-	70 - 72	D-	50 - 52
		F	00 - 49

### ***Communication and Feedback***

Students that are uncomfortable in directly approaching an instructor regarding a course concern may send a confidential and anonymous email to the respective Area Chair or Associate Dean:

<http://www.degroote.mcmaster.ca/curr/emailchairs.aspx>

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the Administrative Assistant.

Instructors should conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

Students who wish to have a course component re-evaluated must complete the following form:

[http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Form\\_A.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Form_A.pdf)

In order for the component to be re-read:

- the component must be worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course
- students pay a fee of \$50 in Gilmour Hall #209 (receipt is then brought to APO)
- the Area Chair will seek out an independent adjudicator to re-grade the component
- an adjustment to the grade for the component will be made if a grade change of three points or greater on the 12 point scale (equivalent to 10 marks out of 100) has been suggested by the adjudicator as assigned by the Area Chair
- if a grade change is made, the student fee will be refunded

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the University Senate Academic Integrity Policy at the following URL:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This policy describes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for students and faculty should a case of academic dishonesty arise. Academic dishonesty is defined as to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Please refer to the policy for a list of examples. The policy also provides faculty with procedures to follow in cases of academic dishonesty as well as general guidelines for penalties. For further information related to the policy, please refer to the Office of Academic Integrity at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

## REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

1. Students may request relief from a regularly scheduled midterm, test, assignment or other course component in the following two ways:

- a) **for absences from classes lasting up to five (5) days; or**
- b) **for absences from classes lasting more than five (5) days.**

**a) For absences from classes lasting up to five (5) days**

Students must use the MSAF (McMaster Student Absence Form). This is an on-line, self-reporting tool, for which submission of medical or other types of supporting documentation is normally not required. Students may use this tool to submit a maximum of one (1) request for relief of missed academic work per term as long as the weighting of the component is worth 29% of the final grade or less. Students must follow up with their course instructors regarding the nature of the relief within two days of submitting the form. Failure to do so may negate the opportunity for relief. It is the prerogative of the instructor of the course to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work in his/her course.

If the value of the component is worth 30% or more, students must report to the APO to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation.

**b) For absences from classes lasting more than five (5) days**

Students cannot use the MSAF. They MUST report to the APO to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation.

2. Students who wish to submit more than one request for relief of missed academic work per term cannot use the MSAF. They must report to the APO and discuss their situation with an academic advisor. They will be required to provide supporting documentation and meet with the Director.

3. The MSAF cannot be used during any final examination period.

4. Students who require accommodations to meet a religious obligation or to celebrate an important religious holiday must make their requests in writing within three weeks of the start of term to the APO.

5. Students seeking relief due to: work-related (for part-time students only) commitments; representing the university at an academic or varsity athletic event; and/or conflicts between two (or more) overlapping scheduled midterm exams, have the option of applying for special exam arrangements. Such requests must be made to the APO at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled exam along with acceptable documentation. There will be only one common sitting for the special exam. Instructors cannot themselves allow students to unofficially write make-up exams/tests. Adjudication of the request must be handled by the APO.

## STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

## POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Related to the above, it is important to note that the course outline serves as a guide to give you a general idea of what to expect in the class sessions. Occasionally, at the instructor's discretion, other material may be introduced that is not on the outline. Therefore, it is possible that the topics will not be covered exactly as outlined below.

If you are absent from class for any reason, you should speak to a willing classmate to see what material, announcements, etc. you missed. You are responsible for all material covered in class and on the slides posted to the course website, even if the instructor does not cover that material in class.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Commerce 2BC3  
Winter 2012 Schedule**

WEEK	TOPIC	READING/ASSIGNMENT
1. Jan. 3-6	Intro. To HRM	Read: Chapter 1
2. Jan. 9-13	Strategic HRM and Planning	Read: Chapter 2
3. Jan. 16-20	Legal Environment	Read: Chapter 3
4. Jan. 23-27	Job Design & Job Analysis	Read: Chapter 4
5. Jan. 30-Feb. 3	Recruitment	Read: Chapter 5
6. Feb. 6-10	Selection	Read: Chapter 6 <b>MID-TERM EXAM: (Friday, Feb. 10, 7 PM)</b> <b>Last class period of week cancelled (for midterm preparation)</b>
7. Feb. 13-17	Training & Talent Management	Read: Chapters 7 & 8
8. Feb. 20-24	Reading Week	No classes
9. Feb. 27-Mar. 2	Performance Management	Read: Chapter 9
10. Mar. 5-9	Compensation & Benefits	Read: Chapters 10, 11 (pp. 460-481), 12
11. Mar. 12-16	Health and Safety	Read: Chapter 13
12. Mar. 19-23	Employee Rights and Discipline	Read: Chapter 14
13. Mar. 26-30	Labour Relations	Read: Chapter 15
14. Apr. 2-4	Labour Relations cont'd / Wrap-Up	April 3 – Last day of class in this course <b>Service Records due April 3.</b>
Final Exam	Time to be determined by Registrar (Exam Period: April 7-25)	