

Leadership and Human Resource Management (PA586)
Thursday 6:00-8:50
University Center 105, The Woodlands
Fall 2007 – Sam Houston State University

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Office Hours: Thursdays 5-6 here at the University Center; on the SHSU campus, Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00-9:30; or by appointment.

Course Objectives

PA586 is the core human resource management (i.e. personnel administration and policy) and leadership course for the MPA degree. Its purpose is to provide a broad perspective on the various concepts and practices related to the management of human resources in an organizational setting, particularly in the public sector. Specific objectives are:

- to help you gain a fuller understanding of key conceptual and operational elements in human resource management;
- to help you consider the role of personnel management in a system such as the one that generally predominates on the federal level here in the United States;
- to help you appreciate the political dimensions of public sector human resource management;
- to help you relate dimensions of leadership and human resource management to your present and future experiences as public managers;
- to help you understand major issues involved in the debate over civil service reform;
- to help you further develop skills in critical thinking (i.e. thinking logically, selecting different information sources purposefully, writing clearly, discussing thoughtfully) as we analyze various HR functions and their relation to employees, management, and public purposes.

PA586 is part of the MPA core and thus it investigates a significant breadth of subject matter related to leadership and HR management. This course is not, however, designed to train human resource specialists.

Class Format

PA586 is a graduate seminar and our weekly sessions will thus consist of some lecturing and a great deal of discussion on the assigned topics. Everyone is expected to read the assigned material before class. That is a necessary condition for participation. Additionally, participation depends on curiosity, a desire to engage others and, last but not least, a commitment to be part of a successful collective endeavor.

Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work (exams, quizzes, and attendance) will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe a religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Requirements

Examination (25%). There will be one exam toward the latter stages of the semester. It will cover central points from readings and seminar discussions. The exam is a combination of short answer, identification, multiple choice and short essay. Please note: a makeup exam can only be given under extraordinary circumstances.

Discussant (10%). Once during the term you are required to play the role of discussant in the weekly discussion on the assigned topics and readings. This responsibility requires the preparation of a structured review of the evening's materials. The objective is to guide the group with description, analysis, and questioning that brings the material into a clearer focus.

Reaction Papers (15%). On two occasions this term, you will write a two to three page critical reaction to a particular topic/issue that we cover.

Analysis Paper (30%). You are responsible for the undertaking and successful completion of a research paper on a human resource management topic mutually agreed upon by student and professor (exact length and operational details will be further explained in early September). First, this involves selecting a substantial issue facing human resource management or leadership in the public sector. Of course, I expect it will be an issue or dimension that interests you. Additionally, you are encouraged and expected to go beyond "describing" or "reporting" the issue; in other words, you should bring an analytical eye and a point of view to what is ultimately a piece of analysis.

Presentation (10%). Your inquiry into a particular issue/concern that we considered during this term is of interest to all of us. For this reason, you will present (the content and medium of your presentation are up to you) your work to the group as the semester comes to a close.

Participation (10%). Week-in, week-out engagement and contribution is expected. This means preparing thoroughly for our meetings and being active in class discussions, whether I am lecturing or one your classmates leading us in the role of discussant. There are distinct advantages in a seminar environment but remember, successful learning in a seminar format depends on everyone actively participating. At times, participation will include working on in-class exercises based on the day's assigned readings. – Attendance will have an impact on participation; if you miss two class meetings you will lose one-tenth of your possible participation points; if you miss three or four you lose one-quarter and one-half of those points, respectively; and to make everyone accountable, you will receive a failing grade in the course if you miss more than four class meetings.

Grading Scale. The standard graduate-level SHSU grading scale is in effect: 90-100 A, 80-89 B, 70-79 C and below 70 warrants a failing grade according to the Graduate School.

Required Texts

Cayer, N. Joseph 2004. *Public Personnel Administration* (4th edition). Thomson-Wadsworth.

Reeves, T. Zane. 2006. *Cases in Public Human Resource Management* (2nd Edition). Thomson-Wadsworth.

Rusaw, A. Carol. 2001. *Leading Public Organizations: An Interactive Approach*. Harcourt.

On a few occasions I will provide you with handouts or exercises (either to review together in class or to read for the next week) to supplement our study of particular topics and points of interest. You are responsible for those materials.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Aug. 23 – Course Introduction, Preliminary Discussions on Leadership
Assigned readings: Rusaw, pp. 2-3, 11

Week 2

Aug. 30 – Further Operationalizing Leadership
Assigned readings: Rusaw, pp. 13-46, 69-85
Video: excerpts from “Lean on Me” and/or “Brubaker” and “At the Helm”

Week 3

Sept. 6 – The Environment for Public Management and the Evolution of the Public Personnel System
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 1-41; Reeves, Cases 7, 17

Week 4

Sept. 13 – Personnel System Design Issues and Practices
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 42-56
Video: “Setting the Stage”

Week 5

Sept. 20 – Techniques of Personnel Administration
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 57-82; Reeves, Case 18
Video: “All Systems Go”

Week 6

Sept. 27 – Techniques of Personnel Administration (continued)
Assigned readings: Handout, Reeves, Cases 4, 6, 21
Preliminary roundtable on individual research topic selection

Week 7

Oct. 4 – The Lifeblood of an Organization: Staffing and Maintaining the Workforce

Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 83-101; Reeves, Cases 1-3, 15, 19, 22-23
Video: "Help Wanted"

Deadline for First Reaction Paper

Week 8

Oct. 11 – Personnel Administration Systems and Performance, People and Performance
Assigned readings: Handout; Rusaw, pp. 89-121, 139-160, 197-218; Reeves, Case 20
Video: "High Performance"

Deadline for Analysis Topic (one page outline/statement of intent for the issue you will analyze)

Week 9

Oct. 18 – Motivation
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 102-123; Rusaw, pp. 47-68

Week 10

Oct. 25 – Labor-Management Relations and Negotiating
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 148-173; Rusaw, pp. 161-177; Reeves, Cases 9-11
Video: "Pulling Together"

Week 11

Nov. 1 – Rights and Duties of Public Employees
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 124-147; Reeves, Cases 13, 26-28, 30

Week 12

Nov. 8 – Social Equity and Diversity as Personnel Management Challenges, Issues in Today's Public Personnel Administration's Landscape
Assigned readings: Cayer, pp. 174-194; Rusaw, pp. 123-138; Reeves, Cases 12, 14, 16, 29

Week 13

Nov. 15 – **Examination**
No assigned readings

Week 14

Nov. 22 – **Thanksgiving Break**
No assigned readings

Week 15

Nov. 29 – **Presentations**

No assigned readings

Deadline for Second Reaction Paper

Week 16

December 6 – **Presentations**

Deadline for Analysis Paper

No assigned readings