PSYCHOLOGY 621, Fall 2012
Introduction to Personnel Psychology

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MEETING TIME/PLACE: Wednesday, 1:00-3:40, Life Sciences (LS) 281
OFFICE HOURS: Monday 2:30-3:30, after class, and by appointment.


ADDITIONAL READINGS: Provided in class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to provide an introductory overview of Personnel Psychology, which represents the “I-side” of the larger field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology. Personnel Psychology is a large and active discipline that covers both research and practice in a variety of areas of Human Resource Management such as job analysis, performance evaluation, selection, training, and compensation. This course will focus on developing the following competencies that the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology has identified as important to the professional preparation for master's level I-O psychology practitioners:

1) Research Methods
2) Ethical, Legal, and Professional Contexts
3) Criterion Theory and Development
4) Job and Task Analysis
5) Employee Selection, Placement, and Classification
6) Performance Appraisal and Feedback
7) Training: Theory, Program Design, and Evaluation
8) Compensation and Benefits

All of these are important topics in their own right, and each easily could be a separate course. Thus, many of these competencies (as well as others) will be further developed in more advanced seminars (e.g., PSY 721).

By the end of the semester, students are expected to have developed 1) an appreciation of the goals and challenges of the “scientist-practitioner” model that guides the field, 2) an ability to design and conduct job analyses and performance appraisal systems as basic building blocks for applied psychological interventions in organizations, 3) an understanding of professional legal standards in applied contexts, and 4) an integrative knowledge of HRM interventions based on psychological theory and methodology. The purpose of the advanced courses (e.g., PSY 721) will be to build on this framework and contribute to students’ abilities to develop, implement, and evaluate selection and training systems.

Pages 3 and 4 include a list of general reference materials on personnel psychology. This list should be especially helpful for furthering your understanding of a particular research or applied topic. In particular, these references may be helpful in preparing for discussion lead, in writing research papers, and in developing the job analysis and performance evaluation systems.
ATTENDANCE - You are expected to be present for every class meeting. If you are going to be absent, please let me know before class. Your class participation grade will be adversely affected if you miss more than 1 class during the semester.

CLASS PARTICIPATION - You are expected to read the material for each week in advance of class and to be prepared to ask questions, discuss alternative views, and generally contribute to the flow of the class. Each student is expected to contribute to each class meeting. The preparation of your weekly written critiques should help you to contribute to class discussion. I will weigh both quality and quantity of input, but if you don’t participate, I have no way of gauging quality.

WRITTEN CRITIQUES - In order to facilitate, guide, and ensure preparation for the class, each student must prepare a 1-2 page, single-spaced critique of the assigned readings. Critiques are to be completed individually and are to be e-mailed to me and the discussion leaders (in an MS-Word attachment that contains your name in the document) by 6pm on Tuesday. For consistency, the subject line of the e-mail critique should read: PSY621 - Week 3 (or whichever week the critique refers to – see page 6 of the syllabus for the weekly schedule). Each critique should include discussion points or questions that you might bring up during the course of the class (thus, you should print out a copy for yourself to bring to class). Critiques might include identification of controversies that are raised, discussion of the relative merits of the readings, identification of theoretical and/or empirical weaknesses, and/or discussion of one or two issues related to the practical application of the readings to organizations. Ideally, these questions/discussion points will be provocative and insightful. You may discuss the readings with your peers, but each critique should be your individual, independent work. When referring to questions you have for specific points in a particular article, please include the page number. Note that discussion leaders do not need to submit critiques for the weeks they are leading.

DISCUSSION LEAD - Each student will be responsible for leading or co-facilitating class discussions. Each class should be devoted to a critical discussion of the assigned articles as well as to meeting the course objectives listed on page 1 of this syllabus. When developing a list of discussion questions for the class, please include the page number if a question comes from a particular place in one of the assigned articles. Discussion leaders should also identify and be prepared to discuss 2 additional, applied articles on the topic for the class -- the more recently these articles were published, the better (articles from 2011 or 2012 are ideal). Please include the full reference for each applied article in the handout for the week. In sum, the idea is for the discussion leaders to become “resident experts” and to teach everyone else the critical issues related to that topic. Discussion leaders will be expected to “set up” the discussion questions raised in class to provide the context for the question (rather than simply just reading the question). Discussion lead will be evaluated based on:
a) demonstrated mastery of the topic area, b) demonstrated holistic or “big picture” thinking, c) the effectiveness of applications and examples, and d) stimulation of class discussion.

TEAM PROJECTS - Students will work in teams to contribute to the development of a comprehensive job analysis and performance evaluation system. Each team will develop a job analysis and performance evaluation system for its respective job. Each team will then present the results of each project during one of the class meetings. Further information about the projects will be provided as the semester progresses.

FINAL EXAM - This exam will involve answering essay questions, which will be designed to facilitate integration of issues discussed in the readings and during class. Answers will be graded based on: a) quality of insight brought to the issue; b) incorporation of relevant theory and research; and c) integration across topic areas.

SUMMARY OF “DELIVERABLES” (COURSE EVALUATION)
A. Class Participation/Written Critiques (20%).
B. Discussion Lead (20%).
C. Team Projects (35%).
D. Final Exam (25%).
REFERENCE MATERIALS


REFERENCE MATERIALS (CONTINUED)


Note: Most of these texts are available in the library or from the instructor.
WEBSITES RELATED TO PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY

SIOP homepage: http://www.siop.org/

American Psychological Association (APA) homepage: http://www.apa.org/

American Psychological Society (APS) homepage: http://psychologicalscience.org/


Educational Testing Service (GRE & Other Tests): http://www.ets.org/

Academy of Management: http://www.aomonline.org/

Research Methods: http://www.aom.pace.edu/rmd/


Performance Measurement Sites: http://www.zigonperf.com/Links.htm

Job Analysis and Personality Research: http://harvey.psyc.vt.edu/


The Dilbert Zone provides a less serious view on work: http://www.unitedmedia.com/comics/dilbert/
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sep 05</td>
<td>Research and Practice in I-O Psychology</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sep 12</td>
<td>Theory and Research Strategies in I-O Psychology</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Criterion Theory</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Sep 26</td>
<td>Job Analysis Perspectives and Approaches</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct 03</td>
<td>Job Analysis in Practice</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Oct 10</td>
<td>Performance Measurement and Performance Management</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>Legal Issues in Personnel Psychology</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oct 24</strong></td>
<td><strong>Job Analysis: Presentation of Projects</strong></td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Oct 31</td>
<td>Recruiting and Personnel Selection</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov 07</td>
<td>Personnel Selection: Validity and Utility</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Training &amp; Development</td>
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<td><strong>Week 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nov 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Class – Prepare for Performance Measurement Project</strong></td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Nov 28</td>
<td>SHRM/Broader View of I-O Psychology</td>
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<td><strong>Week 15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dec 05</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Measurement: Presentation of Projects</strong></td>
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<td>Finals Week</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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