

# Syllabus for HRMN 5540/6540: Personnel Selection

Fall Semester, 2014

**Professor and Office:** H. S. Feild-Room 442 Business Building

**Classroom:** Room 153 College of Business Building

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday 1:50 pm to 2:30 pm or by appointment (Please email me for an appointment.)

**Phone: 844-4071** (Management Department messages; if you leave a message and want me to return your call, please leave a telephone number for me to call. (Sometimes, it may take a day for me to get a message. Email is generally a faster method for contacting me.)

**Office Email:** The best way to get in touch with me is through email. Please use the following email address: [FeildHS@Auburn.Edu](mailto:FeildHS@Auburn.Edu)

**Prerequisites for the Course:**

1. Human Resource Management
2. Business Analytics or Statistics

You **must have taken each** of the above courses to take HRMN 5540.

**Objective of the Course:** The course is directed toward students **majoring in human resource (HR) management** and who plan to work in human resources in an organization. The objective is to learn the technical and legal aspects involved in developing and implementing a sound, human resource selection system. Please note that the course deals with *details* and specifics of HR selection. For that reason, some non-HR majors often prefer a more general course than HRMN 5540 **Personnel Selection.**

**Book:** R. D. Gatewood, H. S. Feild, and Murray R. Barrick (2008). *Human Resource Selection* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Mason, OH: Thomson/Southwestern. **Note:** This edition of the book is not the latest edition. I am using an older edition to save on students' textbook expenses.

**Notes:** Notes for the class are available from Auburn University Bookstore. These are notes from the overheads used in class lectures. They do **not** cover all of the notes given, but they cover approximately 75%. Purchase them and bring them with you on the first day of class. From time to time, I will present material that are note in the note pack but could be covered on an exam.

**Tests/Exams:** Four tests will be given during the semester. The tests will consist of a variety of questions, including multiple choice, listing, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer/discussion. For some tests, there will also be test questions that involve statistical calculations. **Be prepared for any type of test item.** (See the Attachments at the end of the syllabus for examples of test items.) Test content will be based on the textbook, class notes, any exercises/assignments, and class lectures.

For each of the 4 tests, bring the following:

1. **Calculator (one that will calculate a square root)**
2. **Computer scan/answer sheet**
3. **Pencil**
4. **Pen (black or blue)**
5. **Watch.**

Note: Cell phone calculators are not permitted.

**Missing an Exam and Class:** If you miss an exam, you **must** have an *acceptable* excuse. Normally, an acceptable excuse means a **written** note on a letterhead from a physician or other responsible person explaining why you could not be present for an exam. Oversleeping, attending weddings, and taking out-of-town trips that are not university-sponsored are *not* acceptable excuses for missing an exam. If you miss an exam **and have an acceptable excuse**, then contact me **within 2 days** after the original test date to determine when it will be convenient to give a makeup exam. **It is your responsibility to make arrangements with me prior to taking a makeup exam. Note: The same rules apply to make-up exams that apply to regular exams. That is, if you miss a makeup exam, you must have another acceptable written excuse.**

**A written excuse is *not* necessary if you miss a class that is *not* a test date.** Just be sure to get any class notes and other information you missed from a classmate. I do not loan out my notes.

It will be impossible to cover all of the material in the assigned reading in class. Nevertheless, you are responsible for the information assigned. If there is something you do not understand in the assigned reading for a particular class period, be sure and ask any question you have in class. Other students will benefit from your questions. Of course, I welcome questions outside of class as well.

**Grades:** Course grades are based upon your class average. The following grading scale will be used in assigning your final course grade:

<b>90 to 100</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>80 to 89</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>70 to 79</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>60 to 69</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>59 or below</b>	<b>F</b>

Grades will be based on your choice of one of two grading options. You have two options to choose from: (a) take the 4 tests (**Test Option**), or (b) take the 4 tests and complete a research project (**Research Project Option**).

The second option will weight the tests less than the first option. Send me an email telling me which option you plan to choose *no later than* **Oct. 29**. Otherwise, I will assume that you will take the Test Option (take the tests). **Once you choose an option, you must stay with it. (Graduate students taking the course for credit are *required* to choose the Research Project option.)**

Listed below are the scoring weights assigned under the two grading options. The weights assigned to tests and the project cannot be changed.

#### Test Option

Test 1	=	<b>30%</b>
Test 2	=	<b>35%</b>
Test 3	=	<b>30%</b>
Test 4	=	<b>5%</b>

#### Research Project Option

Written Project Report	=	<b>15%</b>
Test 1	=	<b>25%</b>
Test 2	=	<b>30%</b>
Test 3	=	<b>25%</b>
Test 4	=	<b>5%</b>

Shown below is an example of how your final grade will be computed for the Research Project Option. (Grades for the Test Option will be computed similarly with the exception that different weights will be used in the computations.) Suppose, for instance, a student made a 75 on the first test; 75 on the second test; 81 on the third test; and 75 on the fourth test. She made an 82 on her written research project. Her final average and final course grade is calculated as follows:

### Example of Final Course Grade Calculation for the Research Project Option

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Score</u>		<u>Weight</u>	<u>Product</u>	
Written project report	82	X	.15	=	12.30
Test 1	75	X	.25	=	18.75
Test 2	75	X	.30	=	22.50
Test 3	81	X	.25	=	20.25
Test 4	75	X	.05	=	<u>3.75</u>
Average and Final Course Grade				=	77.5 or 78 = C

Calculations for the Test Option are similar to the above; however, the weights differ, and there is no research project requirement.

### Guidelines for the Research Project Option

**Research Project:** There are several activities you can do to satisfy the optional research project assignment. Note that the research project is not solely library or Web-based research. It involves work you do with an actual organization. It involves a **written report** submitted to me toward the end of the semester (see the syllabus for the submission date) and an oral presentation to the class. See the class schedule for the applicable dates. [Note: Each of the research projects described below must be written following the *American Psychological Association (APA) Style Manual* (5<sup>th</sup> or 6th edition). Copies of the *Manual* are available from the library or university bookstore.]

Your written report will be graded according to the criteria shown at the end of the syllabus. The research project will count 15% of your final grade. Listed below are your options if you choose the Research Project grading option:

**1. Project--**Rather than strictly library research, this research option is a project in which you actually participate in its development. Quite likely, you will still have some library research, but *the emphasis is on something that you do regarding HR Selection in an organization*. One example of such a project is to conduct an analysis of a company's selection program. What this would mean is going into a company and conducting interviews with appropriate individuals concerning the selection program used in the company. If you choose this option, be sure that the company has a *formal* selection program. You will need to develop an interview form, ask your questions, record the interviewees' answers, and then *critically analyze* their selection program from the perspective of the content covered in the textbook and class. Issues such as the type of selection measures used, how they were developed or selected, the conduct of validity studies on these measures, and selected managers' perceived value to the organization of the selection program are **some** of the topics that should be addressed in the write-up of your project.

The above-described project is just one of many that you can do. For example, an empirical study that tests the relationship between performance on a selection test or some other predictor and job performance can be done. Also, you may have an idea of your own that you may want to propose. As long as your idea deals with HR selection or recruitment in an actual organization, your project has a good chance of being acceptable. Of course, feel free to discuss your ideas with me but do so early.

**2. The Development of a Selection Plan**--Another option is for you to develop a selection plan for a specific job in an organization. This option will also involve a written report describing your project objectives, what you did, and what you found. Basically, such a project would consist of you *doing an actual job analysis* (following task analysis procedures such as those described in Chapter 8) of a particular job to identify important job tasks, the development of the knowledges, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to successfully perform these important tasks, and the specification of the predictors that should be tried out for the job. The predictors, in terms of content and how they would be related to the KSAs should be discussed. For example, one type of predictor you might consider is a commercially available paper-and-pencil test. You can find possible options by consulting Burors' *Mental Measurements Yearbook* (in the Reference section of the Library). (Note: If you are interested in this option, read Chapters 7 and 8 in the textbook for an example of the development of a selection plan.) As noted earlier, the *APA Style Manual* should be used as a guide in writing your paper.

**3. The Development of an Employment Interview**—This option consists of following the procedures outlined in the text, particularly pp. 303-305; 334-344; 506-512. Using a critical incidents' job analysis for a specific job, you would work with a supervisor(s) or key incumbents to identify work behaviors that describe particularly good or poor aspects of job performance. Interview questions and a system for scoring answers to these questions are then developed. Your report would consist of describing the steps you went through in developing the interview. Your results should show specific interview questions and a key for scoring applicants' answers to the interview questions.

**If you choose to do a project, you will need to type a one-page proposal of what you plan to do.** Email this written proposal to me anytime before **or** no later than the *assigned date listed in the course schedule*. In your proposal, describe what you want to do and how you want to go about it. A final, *printed* copy of your research project is due on **Nov. 14** or earlier (*no email of final research papers*). Projects turned in to me late, that is, **after our class ends on Nov. 14 (1:50 pm)**, will begin being deducted 10 points for each day late. Do not delay starting your project to the end of the semester; give yourself enough time so that you can do a quality job.

**Extra-Credit Oral Class Presentation:** Each student in class who would like extra credit (6 points added to scores on Test 3) can make a 5-minute oral presentation to the class on an article concerning *human resource selection or recruitment*. Six points assigned to the presentation as a grade will be added to your Test 3 exam score. More information on the class presentations is given in a later section of the syllabus. Dates of

student extra-credit presentations will be chosen on **Aug. 20 and Aug. 22**. You will need to sign up if you are going to present an article for extra credit. I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity; it has made a difference in a few, past students' final course grades.

**Suggestions on How to Study for the Class:** Listed below are several suggestions for enhancing your chances of doing well in the class:

1. **Read** all assigned material *before* you come to class.
2. **Ask questions** in class if you do not understand.
3. When you start preparing for a specific test, begin at least a **week** in advance.
4. **Outline** the details of the assigned text material. Then, **know**, not just read your outlines.
5. Take advantage of extra-credit opportunities.
6. If you do not perform as well as you like on tests, consider taking the research project option.

**You will need to bring a calculator to class to use for several of the in-class exercises. Bring a calculator (that can take a square root) with you to class until we complete Chapter 5. You can use a calculator on the tests as well. Do NOT use a smart cell phone as your calculator on tests.**

**University Regulations:** There are several university regulations that you need to keep in mind. These are as follows:

**Communications:** The College of Business requires enrolled students to have an Auburn University email address. Email is the official form of communications at Auburn University. It is the responsibility of students to contact the Information Technology Help Desk to initiate an email address, which will activate all official student correspondence from Auburn University and their course instructors.

**Special Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students who need special accommodations should make an appointment to discuss your Accommodations Memo with me during my office hours as soon as possible. If scheduled office hours conflict with classes, please arrange an alternate appointment time. If you do not have an Accommodations Memo but need special accommodations, contact The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096. A student must present this memo to the course instructor to be signed. This memo is then returned to the Program for Student Disabilities Office.

**Academic Honesty:** All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code (Title XII) found in The Tiger Cub will apply to this class.

**Cell Phone/Tablet Policy:** **Do not use your cell phone or tablet in class. When class begins, put them out of sight (in your purse, pocket, etc.).** If

**you have a specific need to have it available to you, please leave class quietly.**

## Schedule for HRMN 5540/6540: Personnel Selection

Listed below is the *approximate* schedule we will be following for the course. Although we may deviate from the schedule somewhat, the dates listed below showing coverage of particular topics, assignments, and tests should be reasonably accurate. However, I **may** have to shift some assignment dates during the semester. In deciding what information to read for a particular class, divide the number of pages in a particular chapter by the number of days allocated for coverage of the chapter. That number is the approximate number of pages to read for the assigned class period. The information listed for a specific date is what we will be covering in class on that date.

### I-An Overview of the Class/Introduction to HR Selection

**Aug. 18, Mon.**      **Review of Course Syllabus Chapter 1: An Introduction to Selection. What is HR Selection? How is it Related to the Law?**

**Aug. 20, Wed.**      **Chapter 1: An Introduction to Selection  
*Extra-Credit Presentation Sign-up***

### II-Legal Issues in HR Selection

**Aug. 22, Fri.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection  
*Extra-Credit Presentation Sign-up***

**Aug. 25, Mon.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Aug. 27, Wed.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Aug. 29, Fri.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Sept. 1, Mon.**      **Holiday**

**Sept. 3, Wed.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Sept. 5, Fri.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Sept. 8, Mon.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

**Sept. 10, Wed.**      **Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection**

### III-Human Resource Measurement

- Sept. 12, Fri. **Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection and Chapter 16: Measures of Job Performance**, only pp. 669-686.  
(*Note*: A specific lecture on the content of Chapter 16 will *not* be given. Nevertheless, you are responsible for the material, pp. 669-686.)
- Sept. 15, Mon. **Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection**
- Sept. 17, Wed. **Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection**
- Sept. 19, Fri. **Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection**
- Sept. 22, Mon. **Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection**
- Sept. 24, Wed. Test 1 (responsible for all material since first day of Class including Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 16 (pp. 669-686)) (Bring a Calculator)**

### IV-Reliability and Validity of Selection Measures

- Sept. 26, Fri. **Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures**
- Sept. 29, Mon. **Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 1, Wed. **Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 3, Fri. **Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 6, Mon. **Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 8, Wed. **Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 10, Fri. **Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 13, Mon. **Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 15, Wed. **Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures**
- Oct. 17, Fri. Holiday: Fall Break**
- Oct. 20, Mon. **Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures**

- Oct. 22, Wed.**      **Test 2 (Chapters 4 and 5) (Bring a Calculator)**
- V-Job Analysis in Personnel Selection**
- Oct. 24, Fri.**      **Chapter 7: Job Analysis in HR Selection**
- Oct. 27, Mon.**      **Chapter 8: Incorporating Job Analysis Results in Selection Measures**

### **VI-Predictor Measures Used in Employment Decision Making**

- Oct. 29, Wed.**      **Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference Checks**  
***Statements for Optional Grading Option are Due***  
***Proposals for Optional Research Projects are Due***
- Oct. 31, Fri.**      **Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference Checks**
- Nov. 3, Mon.**      **Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference Checks**
- Nov. 5, Wed.**      **Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference Checks**
- Nov. 7, Fri.**      **Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference Checks**
- Nov. 10, Mon.**      **Test 3 (Chapters 7, 8, 9)**
- Nov. 12, Wed.**      **Chapter 11: The Selection Interview**
- Nov. 14, Fri.**      **Chapter 11: The Selection Interview *Written Research Papers/Projects are Due***
- Nov. 17, Mon.**      **Chapter 11: The Selection Interview**
- Nov. 19, Wed.**      **Chapter 11: The Selection Interview**
- Nov. 21, Fri.**      **Test 4 (Chapter 11)-Option 1** (Note: you can take Test 4 on either of the 2 dates listed.)
- Nov. 22-Nov. 30**      **Holidays: Thanksgiving**

**Dec. 1, Mon.**      **Test 4 (Chapter 11)-Option 2**

**Dec. 3, Wed.**      **Chapter 10: The Weighted Application Blank**

**Dec. 5, Fri.**      **No Class**

## Extra-Credit HR Selection Article Presentations

**Each student may choose to make a 5 to 7-minute, extra-credit oral presentation to the class on an article of your choosing.** The article you choose **must** concern some aspect of **human resource selection**. It may be a professional practice or practitioner article from a magazine (for example, *HRMagazine*, *Forbes*, or *Fortune*), a research journal article (for example, *Human Resource Management*), a newspaper article (the *Wall Street Journal*), etc. Listed below are additional guidelines:

1. Only one presentation can be given during the semester; the same article may not be presented twice.

**Your grade (in points) on your presentation will be added to your exam score on Test 3.** The grading criteria and points assigned are as follows:

**6 points** = Oral presentation given on an **appropriate personnel selection** topic

Articles on personnel or employee selection can be found in many sources. You can use any of the databases available at R.B.D. Library (for example, *PsycINFO*, *ABI Inform*, or newspaper databases) to identify articles. If you need help, reference librarians on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Library can assist you.

## **Attachment: Examples of Test Items Used in HRMN 5540**

### **Short Answer Discussion:**

1. Two job applicants took the *Smith Industrial Math* test that is required of all applicants applying for a job in the Auburn Metal Fabrication shop. Salam made 90 on the *Smith Industrial Math* test. Chen made 45 on the same test. (There are 100 problems on the test; 1 point is deducted for each problem missed.) **With respect to the number of items missed on the test**, what specific, legitimate conclusions can you draw regarding the comparison of the two applicants' test scores? (Write only in the space available.) (3 points)

**With respect to the construct measured by the test** (basic mathematics ability), what legitimate conclusion can you draw in comparing the two applicants' test scores? (3 points)

2. You are working as a human resources consultant with a company wanting to examine the validity of a test used in hiring entry-level employees. Sheila, a middle-level manager in the company assigned to work with you on the project, appears to be very eager to help. As you explain the steps you plan to take and your needs, you mention the importance of finding or developing a criterion for use in the validation study. Sheila looks at you, frowns a bit, and asks, "What is a criterion?" (a) **Explain** the meaning of the term to her as used in the context of human resource selection (3 points) and (b) **List** the characteristics of a good criterion (3 points).

### **Fill-in-the-Blank:**

1. Suppose you were an employer in Eufaula, AL, and you were using a commercially available test. In making employment decisions among job applicants for job openings in your plant in Eufaula, \_\_\_\_\_ norms for the test would be more preferable to use than national norms.

### **Multiple-Choice:**

1. Which of the following are predictor variables commonly used in the practice of human resource selection?
  - A. Number of goods produced
  - B. Absenteeism on the job
  - C. Job satisfaction
  - D. Cognitive ability test
  - E. Dollar sales for a sales clerk

## **Pages to Read in Assigned Textbook Chapters**

Chapter 1: An Introduction to Selection, pp. 3-26.

Chapter 2: Legal Issues in Selection, pp. 29-67

Chapter 3: Human Resource Measurement in Selection, pp. 73-108

Chapter 4: Reliability of Selection Measures, pp. 111-149

Chapter 5: Validity of Selection Measures, pp. 153-175; 179-196; 201-204; 211-214

Chapter 7: Job Analysis in HR Selection, pp. 257-282; 286-297

Chapter 8: Incorporating Job Analysis Results in Selection Measures, pp. 321-344;  
353-356

Chapter 9: Application Forms, Training and Experience Evaluations, and Reference  
Checks, pp. 363-421

Chapter 10: Weighted Application Blanks and Biographical Data, pp. 431-442

Chapter 11: The Selection Interview, pp. 479-523

Chapter 16: Measures of Job Performance, pp. 669-686

## **Criteria for Grading Written Research Projects**

- 1. Paper's introduction gained attention and interest of the reader**
- 2. Paper's introduction gave a stated purpose/objective of the paper**
- 3. Main points were stated clearly**
- 4. Main points were supported by adequate research evidence (citations or empirical results). For term papers, no use of Web-based sources**
- 5. Paper was organized in a logical manner; made use of headings/sub-headings.**
- 6. Paper used appropriate grammar and spelling.**
- 7. Paper's conclusion summarized or restated key points or recommendations and provided a decisive closing statement.**
- 8. Where appropriate, current literature citations or research results were used to support points made in the paper.**
- 9. Paper followed appropriate format (APA style)**

