

MANA 7334 - Learning Systems and Management Development

Fall Session 2021 Course Syllabus

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I. Course Description

The primary emphasis of MANA 7334 is on how organizations can best prepare and equip employees to perform well on the job through training and development practices. A secondary emphasis is on how organizations might assist employees in managing and developing their careers and how organizations deal with special issues as well as future concerns with respect to the training and development function. Please read over this syllabus carefully to gain a sense of what is involved in the course and how it will unfold. It's actually pretty simple, and I hope to have covered all possible questions here in the syllabus, but email me as necessary if there is something that is not clear to you.

II. Course Textbooks

Required

Noe, Raymond E. **Employee Training and Development, 7th Edition/ISBN# 978-0-07-811285-0, McGraw Hill – Irwin Publishing (2017). (Required)***

- I have provided a picture of the textbook cover in Blackboard; be sure to use this exact, specific 7th edition with the exact, specific ISBN#. I will not assist with 'translating' content differences between this edition and other earlier or later editions -> if you buy a different edition, you are on your own. Note: for the same reason, do not get the 'international version' of this text, even if it is of the correct 7th edition. You should get the 7th edition, domestic/US version only. (*I am aware that a newer 8th edition of this text exists, but I have assigned the 7th edition... for the last time*).
- Students should easily be able to find a *used* copy of this book available and at a very reasonable price. Of course, electronic copies and rental copies of the text are also possibilities. Given that the publication date is nearing five years old – and that a newer 2020 edition was released last year - I would suggest that you avoid buying a 'new' hardcopy version of the 2017/7th edition of the book (these 2017 books are still sometimes sold as 'new' despite the publication date).
- Each text chapter as assigned is accompanied by power-point slides and topical outlines that are provided in Blackboard. Students should find these as very helpful resources in synthesizing the key points from each chapter. Along with the key terms presented at the end of each chapter and defined in the glossary at the back of the text, these tools will be extremely important for helping students to synthesize the information covered in this short and very compressed winter session. I'll add more about this via announcements or other information, but, I will again stress how important these two preparatory tools will be for performing well in the course.

Optional

Kirkpatrick, J.D, and Kirkpatrick, W.K. **Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation, 1st Edition/ISBN#978-1607280088, Association for Talent Development (2016). (Optional)***

- If the student so chooses, an *optional* 5th Course Exam may be taken based on the material from this text. See the following section for details.

III. Evaluation of Student Course Performance *(Note: The Grading Scale runs to **105**, which is a 'true' 105%, i.e., not 105/105 or 1.0/100%, - but rather 105/100 or 1.05/105%)

Exams Only Course Models (105%)

Exams I – IV (75%) / Quiz Assignments I – IV (25%) / Extra Credit (5%) - the standard or minimum course requirements
 Exams I – V (75%) / Quiz Assignments I – V (25%) / Extra Credit (5%)

Exams with Course Paper or Article Reviews Options (105%)

Exams I – IV (50%) / Quiz Assignments I – IV (25%) / Paper or Article Reviews (25%) / Extra Credit (5%)
 Exams I – V (50%) / Quiz Assignments I – V (25%) / Paper or Article Reviews (25%) / Extra Credit (5%)

A. Course Exams (75%) *(or **50%** if Writing Course Paper or Article Reviews – see the relevant section that follows)

Testing Format - Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice and true-false questions with a time limit of 60 minutes. All exams are given via the *Blackboard* testing function. Essay exams by request.

Testing and Scoring Advantages

1. Open Materials Testing. Tests are 'open' meaning that students are allowed to use any and all *official* course materials at their disposal during the exams as time allows (basically, the course textbook plus any materials that I have directly provided to students).

2. Automatic Partial Credit for Certain Answers. I provide partial credit for certain 'all of the above' type questions where 'all of the above' is the best answer but where other individual answers are correct (see the Overview of Exams document for details on how this works).

3. Quiz Questions are Repeated 'as is' on the Actual Course Exams. Some of the Quiz Assignment Questions will appear on each Exam, and in the very same form in which they appeared on the Quizzes. *No one should miss any of these* - especially when the answers to the questions are provided to students.

Quiz and Exam Schedule

*(Quiz Windows are *Sundays through Wednesdays*)

*(Test Windows are *Thursdays through Saturdays*)

Quiz I	Noe Chapters 1, 3, 4	<u>Opens:</u> 9/12, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 9/15, 10:00pm
Exam I	Noe Chapters 1, 3, 4	<u>Opens:</u> 9/16, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 9/18, 10:00pm
Quiz II	Noe Chapters 5, 6	<u>Opens:</u> 10/10, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 10/13, 10:00pm
Exam II	Noe Chapters 5, 6	<u>Opens:</u> 10/14, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 10/16, 10:00pm
Quiz III	Noe Chapters 7, 8	<u>Opens:</u> 11/7, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 11/10, 10:00pm
Exam III	Noe Chapters 7, 8	<u>Opens:</u> 11/11, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 11/13, 10:00pm
Quiz IV	Noe Chapters 9, 10	<u>Opens:</u> 11/28, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 12/1, 10:00pm
Exam IV	Noe Chapters 9, 10	<u>Opens:</u> 12/2, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 12/4, 10:00pm
<u>Optional</u>			
Quiz V	Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick Book	<u>Opens:</u> 12/5, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 12/8, 10:00pm
Exam V	Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick Book	<u>Opens:</u> 12/9, 8:00am	<u>Closes:</u> 12/11, 10:00pm

- Exams I, II, III, and IV are required for all students
- No exam grades are dropped; all test scores count

Make-Up Exams for Excused vs. Non-Excused Exam Absences

Given the three-day testing windows, make-up exams will be given at full credit and under normal testing conditions *only* when a student is able to provide a documented unforeseeable, unavoidable circumstance as the reason for a missed test. *** **NOTE:** No early exams

Excused Exam Absences. *Excused absences per the above* would normally involve ‘life and death’ circumstances for the student or an immediate relative (e.g., unexpected hospitalization of student; death/funeral of immediate relative) – very rare situations. Otherwise, at a somewhat lesser extreme - for severe cases of illness or injury, a student would be expected to let me know what is going on before missing a test – unless there is a specific, logical, valid reason for *why* he or she could not.

I use what I refer to as the ***'Missing a Day at Work Model'*** to determine what is and is not an excused exam absence. The rationale or logic of this model is as follows: if a person were *not* going to show up for work as expected on a particular day, an acceptable reason or explanation for the absence would generally need to involve:

- (A) a compelling or emergency circumstance
- (B) documentation of the circumstance
- (C) advance notice prior to the absence if possible
- (D) a circumstance that was unforeseeable - if only explained after-the-fact and without prior notice

A responsible person would be expected to adhere to the above *unless* doing so is not realistically possible; one does not just unexpectedly miss work...and then provide an explanation later on, *after-the-fact*...when the reason for not showing as expected could have been easily communicated *before-the-fact*.

Non-Excused Exam Absences. Students who miss a test *without* an acceptable reason will have the *choice* to make up a missed exam rather than receive a score of ‘0’. Non-excused exam absences can be made up under the following *alternative, restricted conditions*:

- 1) Students can only make up one non-excused exam absence; all others will receive a zero.
- 2) All non-excused makeup exams are given with 50 minutes allowed and with one-point-per-incorrect response penalties for wrong answers; these timing and penalty factors are included here to limit the motivation to guess in order to collect ‘garbage points.’
- 3) Students only have *48 hours* after the original closing time/date of an exam to make up a test.
- 4) Only the *makeup test Raw Score* applies to a student course average – not Quiz points, not EC points. So, for example, if a makeup test Raw Score is 78, then the Total Exam Score (TES) is *also* 78 by default.
- 5) If anyone finds the above conditions *unfair*, then I suggest not needlessly missing an exam! Please note that a student who is able to answer all questions correctly would receive a score of 100 even *after missing an exam without a justifiable reason* – that is well more than fair! *(Moreover, virtually no one else in Bauer even allows makeup exams without due cause for an exam absence... *I know -> I've checked!*).

*** Here, most of the *scoring advantages from testing under normal circumstances* are ‘reigned in’. Under the restricted conditions, one should show up ‘ready to go’ because these scores are ‘like a selfie without all the *blur*!’ 😊 ***Note:** there will still be some *blur* or ‘enhancement’ in these scores when responses are based on ‘looking up answers’ in the course materials and not based on preparation/knowledge. It might be surprising that this topic is included in a graduate level syllabus...well, I can assure you that it’s here based on past instances of and experiences with *needlessly missed graduate student exams* 😞

B. Quiz Assignments (25%)

A quiz assignment will be given prior to each of the exams. The primary purpose of the quizzes is to provide students a sense of the specifics that the course exams will entail; a secondary benefit of the quizzes is to provide an easy path for students to be able to enhance their course grades. As such, they function in the 'space' that assignments normally do – hence, 'quiz assignment'. Students should be mindful to pay attention to what the quizzes 'teach' about the exams – and not just focus on the 'easy points' aspect! Each quiz assignment will consist of 15 multiple-choice/true-false questions.

1. Each Quiz Assignment will CLOSE for Student Access at 10:00pm on the Wednesday prior to each Thursday-to-Saturday Exam Window and it will NOT be re-opened thereafter. Students need to access the quizzes before each exam. Given the three-day window for completion + the fact that I'm *giving students the correct answers and multiple attempts to answer the questions correctly* (see Point #2 that follows next) - the points are 'free' - "You snooze, you lose" - there are no makeup quizzes, period.

2. Each Quiz Assignment allows for THREE Attempts with Feedback/Explanations/Comments both for Correct and Incorrect responses after EACH Attempt. The 15 quiz questions will remain the same for all attempts, so everyone should earn 100% scores for the quizzes given the *can't miss setup* of having all of the answers provided. The ONE way to 'mess this up' is to FAIL to access the quizzes IN TIME, so be mindful of the TIMELINE for quizzes and understand that once the quizzes close – they're CLOSED, period. Students are better off accessing them sooner than later, and if someone waits until the last day of availability or 'last minute' and something goes wrong...then it's just too bad.

***NOTE:** Any score less than a full credit 30-point score on any quiz – whether it be a '0' or a 29.99 - will not be counted toward a Total Exam Score (TES). In such cases, for that particular TES, the Raw Exam Score will count 100% (instead of the normal 75%) and the Extra Credit 5% for that section of the course will be *forfeited*. Although this removes the *grade-damaging effect of missing a quiz* altogether (which should not happen for anyone paying any attention!), it also means that a student will needlessly miss out on receiving what is basically a guaranteed perfect score for 25% of a Total Exam Score (TES) + lose out on 5 EC points for that exam. If scores of anything less than 30 points do not count, then *'got a 28, I'm good'* will actually mean that students are leaving that 25% portion of a TES that would have been covered by the Quiz subject to how well they do on the Exam itself AND costing themselves 5 free EC points on that test as well. Finally, *both* Quiz I and Quiz II are open from the first day of the course.

3. The REAL VALUE of the QUIZZES is to MAKE CLEAR for the EXAMS:

(a) *The presentation format of the questions and sense of average response time per question*

(b) *The question structures, question content, and ranges of question difficulty*

(c) *How I write questions...* e.g., the 'behind the scenes' comments on the questions included here are somewhat similar to the 'Director's Commentary' for a Blu-Ray/DVD movie

(d) *When and where partial credit is given* for some types of multiple-choice questions/answers

(e) *How the vast majority of correct answers relate specifically to the Study/Prep Tools* that I recommend be the absolute core of each student's preparation and information-knowledge base

(f) *That studying the quizzes and taking note of the feedback/explanations/comments contributes substantially to student 'test-wisdom' on the actual exams* (signed, the author of the exams :)

D. Optional Course Paper or Article Reviews *(N/A or 25%, depending on the grading option)

1. Course Paper Option - Each student will have the *option* to write a paper on one area of training, development, or careers as covered during the course. If elected, the course paper will constitute 25% of the final course grade. Students so inclined should find a topic of interest and review articles that they find useful in researching that particular area of interest. Each paper should be at least 15 pages long and should contain a title/cover page, abstract, introduction, review, summary/conclusion, and list of references. At least 15 references should be used, and I would suggest using publications targeted to the practicing manager (I can assist with this as needed). All papers are due by Wednesday, 12/8/21.

Or...

2. Article Reviews Option – Similar to the above for a Course Paper, a student can elect to research and report on any variety of topics covered in the course. In this instance, 15 articles will need to be *thoroughly* and *critically* reviewed (see note below) and not just be a rewording or restatement of the bullet points of the articles. Reviews are due as a 15-article collection by Wednesday, 12/8/21.

***Note:** As indicated earlier, the *standard or default/minimal requirements option* is the typical situation with students. In fact, over several years of offering these written options, I've had zero 'takers' so far. It is my own preference to have grades based more so on more objective 'facts' such as those presented in the course materials and tested on the exams. Once one forays into the much more *subjective* prospect of something like a course paper for example, well, things change a bit. My overall experience is that most students take *offense* when their written works/efforts are critiqued basically at anything below the 'A' level, and, of course, not *all* papers or written work in general are necessarily going to be 'that good' - but it seems that most students expect an 'A' for making *any* type of effort at all and are often upset with any grade other than an 'A'. Understand that if either of these written options is elected (i.e., course paper; article reviews), then I am required to grade the works on their merits, not on the *politics* of the situation. It's a lot more direct and less trouble overall for the 25% value here for students to just to prepare and perform well on a course exam, i.e., the grade is 'much more in the student's hands' that way. These written 'dig in and get your hands dirty' options are for the student who prefers 'more' in terms of a challenge than is presented within the standard or minimum requirements. That said, I am not going to force the prospect of writing a paper or an extensive collection of reviews onto everyone – and especially not on to those who have *no* interest whatsoever in producing either type of extensive written work. *So, these are cases of 'want to', not 'have to'*. I will also offer that anyone who fails to earn an 'A' via testing is extremely unlikely to earn an 'A' on a written course paper or across 15 in-depth article reviews in light of the deeper effort *and* insight that each of the latter truly requires in excess of the former. In all, then, a student should *really* want to do these if either option is chosen. If so, then it's a 'go' for deeper learning (i.e., the *elective* option); if not, then the *standard* or 'default' minimum option is perfectly fine too – your choice.

D. Free Extra Credit* (5%)

A unique feature of this course is the provision of assigned, *free extra credit* – i.e., *extra credit without having to perform any additional student work or assignments*. The asterisk is to denote that the 5% extra credit is the 'above and beyond' grade component that takes the grade up to the 105% total.

To Be and Remain Eligible for the 5.0 Extra Credit Points, Students MUST:

1. Adhere to the **Quiz and Testing Schedule** (or have an *excused* reason for any exam absence - explained in the previous section on testing),
2. Know and Comply with the **Extra Credit Policy** in full (explained in the next section directly below)
3. Know + Respect the **IV. Final Course Grade Assignment Policy** (explained in a following section),
4. Practice Appropriate **V. Student Citizenship** in the course (explained in a following section)

Extra Credit (EC) Policy

One requirement for being able to keep or retain the assigned 5.0 Extra Credit points is that students must not attempt to *pursue any further form of grading enhancement* beyond the grading advantages that are already built into the course by design. By ‘pursue any further form of grading enhancement’, I refer to contacting me about things such as: a. ‘other extra credit opportunities’ (no), b. grading exceptions (no), c. grading modifications (no), or d. any types of grading accommodations or favors otherwise (no), etc. I essentially ‘pay’ students with these *free* 5.0 grade points added to the final course average in return for not being bothered with: 1. intimations (hints), questions, requests related to having me *do something - or* 2. comments related to the fact that I *will not do something* - to further ‘raise course grades’ for students.

***** NOTE:** If I add 5.0 full points to student course averages + include all of the other course grading advantages I’m providing to benefit student grades, then I absolutely do NOT want to hear anything from students about ‘But more though?’ concerning the grades they will or have receive(d). In that these are my discretionary free points to give, my advice is that students should avoid anything associated with ‘seeking even more’ on the Final Course Grades.

Bottom-line: It’s free, enjoy it, but *after* the extra credit is included – *that’s it*. That includes everyone with no exceptions.

IV. Final Course Grade Assignment

<u>Score/Points Range</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
90.00 - 105.00	A
87.00 - 89.99...	B+
80.00 - 86.99...	B
77.00 - 79.99...	C+
70.00 - 76.99...	C
67.00 - 69.99...	D+
60.00 - 66.99...	D
00.00 - 59.99...	F

The grading scheme that I use is ‘whole grades’ and ‘plus grades’ only – no minus grades. This practice is to the student’s benefit. I decided that because there was no A+ at our institution, there likewise should be no A-. I further decided to remove all minus grades. In particular, what would have earned a ‘minus’ grade in a ‘plus/minus’ system earns a *whole grade* here (so the down-side of minus grades is removed). This is another Grading Advantage that I incorporate as part of student evaluation in my courses, which I will summarize below prior to discussing the Final Course Grade Assignment Policy.

*Students who become ineligible for receiving the 5.0 Extra Credit Points by violating any of the above-stated EC policies will be subject to minus course grades (if applicable) after the 5.0 points are removed: A- (90.00-92.99), B- (80.00-82.99), C- (70.00-72.99), D- (60.00-62.99). In contrast, students in these lower score ranges who have complied with the course policies will receive the whole letter grades, *not* the minus grades.

Summary of Grading Advantages in MANA 7334 - Students are:

- (1) Awarded only ‘whole grades’ or ‘plus grades’ – w/o the negative effects of ‘minus grades’...*
- (2) Allowed to use the course materials to help with answering exam questions...*
- (3) Provided automatic partial credit for certain types of multiple-choice exam questions...*
- (4) Afforded an easy path to receive 25 full course grade points at ‘perfect score’ value via the quizzes...*
- (5) Given some exam questions w/ answers in advance via quiz questions appearing ‘as is’ on the tests...*
- (6) Assigned 5% of the final course grade as a full 5.0 bonus points added to their course averages...*
- (7) Graded on a total 105% - instead of the 100% found in virtually all other courses, everywhere...*

How Final Grades are Assigned

*When I've done all of those things cited above, I feel that I have 'stacked the deck' quite heavily in favor of student grades and that I have been much more than fair about it, so I 'draw a line in the sand' at that point about further grading enhancement. In my view, students are getting an exceptional 'deal' on the Final Course Grade, and once all of the benefits and opportunities above are included in the ability to earn course grades - that's it, *the shop is closed*.

In light of these *Grading Advantages* that are well above and beyond the norm, ALL Minimum Letter Grade Thresholds Must Be Achieved Without Any Rounding, for the respective course grade designations - i.e., the grade thresholds are applied directly 'as is'. Note the specification of, for example, 89.99... with the ellipsis to indicate *anything* in that range or regard that is 'short' of an *actual* 90.00 or 90%. In truth, any 'close' course averages will already be quite enhanced - see the *Quick Grade Conversion Sheet* as testimony to/evidence of this. Moreover, any 'close grade' would not be on the verge of the next highest grade 'but for' the totality of the numerous grade benefits built into the course. Therefore, The Grading Standards Shown Above Will Be Followed To-The-Letter In ALL Cases – NO Exceptions. Unless there is an error in assigning grades or calculating course averages, all assigned course letter grades are FINAL. Student intimations, questions, requests, or comments otherwise that I view as attempts to skirt the grading standards set forth here will be cause for the *withholding* or *removal* of Extra Credit Points. I DO enforce the extra credit policy by taking back the 5.0 EC points, and students who believe they are so clever as to 'ask without asking'/'thread the needle' find out otherwise.

V. Student Citizenship

Although student citizenship is not explicitly included as part of the core course grade, poor citizenship *can* cost a student in terms of the Extra Credit opportunity. Poor citizenship includes things such as: (1) *unethical behaviors* such as cheating on exams, sharing or attempting to sell exam information to other students (students do report other students about this sometimes), etc., (2) *nuisance behaviors* such as repeated or nagging requests for re-scheduling or policy exceptions (newsflash: not going to happen), and (3) *critical/rude/confrontational communications* (e.g., *emails*). I am going to behave professionally toward students and give due attention to the propriety that this relationship entails; I do expect the same from students in return. I will not try to list all that would constitute poor citizenship here – rather, just a simple *rule-of-thumb*: Students should: (1) *behave ethically*, (2) *avoid trying to impose upon me for idiosyncratic course policy exceptions*, and (3) *be civil, polite, and professional in terms of communications* or messaging. This is usually *not* a problem, but it needs to be said. I am not looking to 'ding' anyone on the Extra Credit based on poor citizenship.

VI. A Few Other Things...

As I hope you can see from the details of this syllabus, I have made a substantial effort to enable students to 'put their best foot forward' in terms of Total Exam Scores (TESs) and give everyone the *benefit-of-the-doubt* grade-wise. A few other things:

A. I am unable to post the questions with correct answers online – This is the case because if I do poste questions and answers online, then I must assume that those items are 'gone forever' - that's a nicer way of saying *stolen and shared*. I do not assume that about *every* student, but, at the same time, in having had tests/questions stolen from before when I had a more 'non-cynical'/naive view on this, I ultimately learned that to protect the integrity of the testing process, I need to be ever-vigilant and dare I say 'on-guard' against ethical lapses by *some* test takers. Having that position is simply part of being responsible in the job that the university pays me to do.

B. There is No Forfeiture of the Extra Credit for: (1) asking about which test questions were missed/asking to have one's incorrect answers verified as truly incorrect or (2) bringing to light a possible grading error. Students who want to check on 'what was missed and why' can email me, and I will share up to four items per student that were missed and why. That said, I cannot - for example - share 15 missed questions; for students who miss more than four items, I will list the question numbers for those missed items and ask the student to randomly choose the four question numbers for the ones to be reviewed – just to avoid any appearance of or suspicion that I would try to bias the process in any way.

Anyone who contacts me about a Grading Error on the Final Course Grade needs to cite the specific error that he or she believes to be the case:

(1) Grade Calculation Error – if this is the issue, then the student citing a grading error needs to 'show the math' on where the perceived calculation error is believed to have occurred.

(The Total Course Points Average and Course Letter Grade are based on the average of the Total Exam Scores (TES) I – III, the calculations for the TESs are shown on the *Grade Conversion Sheet*).

(2) Grade Assignment Error - e.g., the course average is 89.99 and I incorrectly assigned a 'B' instead of the correct letter grade for 89.99 – a 'B+'.

C. The Exam V Schedule – Yes, optional Exam V is given during the *UH Final Exams Period*, but we do not, of course, truly have a Final Exam. Nonetheless, we are able to use that set-aside course time for other things, so as long as those other things are by student choice and do not involve any other course-related requirements. Again - Exam V is simply an *option* that students might exercise to improve their course averages and thus their overall course grades, but it is not required for anyone.

VII. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The C. T. Bauer College of Business would like to help students who have disabilities achieve their highest potential. In order to receive academic accommodations, students are required to have first registered with the University of Houston Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) (713-743-5400).

Yeah, that's a *lot* of information. Yeah, a '*standard*' syllabus is quite a bit shorter.... *but a standard syllabus also does not contain nearly the number of grade-favorable components that are included in this course/syllabus.* It is my view that the extra few minutes it takes to read through the additional information in this regard is well worth the grade-favorable benefits received 😊