
**3280F – Evidence-Based Management in Human Resources
Fall 2013**

Instructor Information

Instructor: Stelian Medianu
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Office Hours: Monday 10:00am – 12:00pm or by appointment

Course Identification

Course Number: MOS 3280F
Course Name: Evidence-Based Management in Human Resources
Course Location: University Community Centre Room 66
Class Time: Tuesdays 2:30PM – 5:30PM
Antirequisites: MOS 2280F/G
Prerequisites: One of MOS 2181A/B, Psychology 2060, Sociology 2169, MOS 2180 and enrollment in 3rd or 4th year of BMOS or Music Administrative Studies (MAS)
Extra Information: 3 lecture hours, 0.5 course

Calendar Description/Course Overview

“Application of evidence-based management principles and practices to human resource management. This course develops management problem-solving skills based on grounding in relevant theories and frameworks. It links introductory coursework in organizational behavior to effective human resource management practice in contemporary organizations.”

The focus of this course will be on Evidence-based management (EBMgt) which is a way of thinking about organizational decisions in a systematic manner. EBMgt takes into consideration stakeholder concerns, practitioner expertise and judgment, local evidence, and evidence from scientific research. The EBMgt approach has the potential to reduce the costs associated with limited and biased human information processes and to increase the productivity of organizations. This course aims to increase your understanding and use of the principles of EBMgt.

Course Promises

This course makes a set of promises to you (assuming you fulfill the expectations below). By the end of the term, you should be able:

1. To have a basic awareness of evidence and evidence-based management.
2. To learn to ask the right questions.
3. To obtain the best available evidence.
4. To critically appraise the evidence.
5. To integrate EBMgt elements in support of organizational decisions and actions.

Course Expectations

This course will only fulfill these promises if you promise the following in return:

1. **To attend class.** This course will rely largely on discussion. For this format to succeed, you must be present and on time. You will receive points for participation and attendance in this course.
2. **To read the assigned materials.** The background material we read will provide us with the common ground upon which we will base our conversations. Without that common ground, our conversations will lose some of their richness. We will have weekly in-class student presentations to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading, and to help stimulate class discussion.
3. **To be attentive and participate in class.** Participation does not simply mean speaking aloud in class, although that is essential. Students should participate by actively following the discussion, and by contributing to our conversations through the insights they present in their in-class student presentations and projects.
4. **To complete the required assignments in a timely fashion.** The assignments provide you with both formal and informal opportunities to articulate your responses to issues we will be discussing. You will get the most out of this course if you turn in your work on time.

Course Resources

Required Course Text

- Pfeffer, J. & Sutton, R. I. (2006). *Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths and Total Nonsense: Profiting from Evidence-Based Management*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Course Website(s)

- Blackboard < <https://owl.uwo.ca> >

Instructional librarian

- Jamie Goodfellow (jgoodfe5@uwo.ca)

Grading Scheme

Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following:

Requirement	Percentage of Final Grade	Date
Quiz #1	10	Tuesday, Oct 15 (in class)
Literature Search	5	Tuesday, Oct 22 (due in class, hard copy)
Quiz #2	10	Tuesday, Nov 19 (in class)
Report	40	Tuesday, Dec 03 (due in class, hard copy)
Team Presentation	15	
Research Article Critique	10	
Class Contribution	10	
Total	100	

Note: Each of these requirements will be described in greater detail in handouts and/or in class.

Quizzes (20%): There will be two in-class quizzes based on content from lecture material and assigned readings.

Note: In-class lectures are intended to complement the assigned readings. Thus, I will present some material that is not in the required readings. Class attendance will significantly increase how much you get out of this course.

Report (40%): Throughout your career you will face tough, challenging decisions. Important decisions may make it worthwhile to obtain the best available evidence in determining the proper course of action. I will give you the following **managerial challenge**: *Can virtual teams perform as well as face-to-face teams?* It is your task to evaluate relevant and best available social science research and to identify the best approach based on that evidence. The criterion for grading this assignment is how effectively you marshal the best evidence from the array of relevant research and how well you integrate this evidence across studies so that you appreciate the big picture regarding what the evidence supports and what it does not.

Literature Search (5%): The literature search will consist in finding relevant articles to your **managerial challenge**. References from this literature search will appear in your final report.

Team Presentation (15%): The use of teams is very prevalent in organizations today, and developing your ability to work effectively in a team setting is invaluable. For the team presentation, the class will form groups of 4 students and each group will be assigned a reading from the course outline. The presentation will require the group to present the assigned reading to the class according to the following format. The **first** part of the presentation will be a restatement of the text's argument in your own words. You can present a summary, make an outline, draw a flowchart or diagram of the reading. The purpose of this part of the presentation is to help you understand as fully as possible the structure and details of the author's argument. This should help you recall the reading in some detail in the future. The **second** part of the presentation will consist in your own personal reflections on or reactions to the reading. Analyze it, illustrate it through your own experience or additional empirical research, refute it, get mad at it, question it, believe it, doubt it, and go beyond it. In grading your presentations, I will look for evidence of serious effort and engaged thought. Presentations should include class involvement and will not last longer than 45 minutes. Each member of the team will receive the same grade. Teams will operate under principles of self-managing teams, including the expectation that members will hold each other accountable for contribution and performance.

Research Article Critique (10%): There will be 6 in-class written exercises over the course of the term. These assignments will give you practice in critical reading of peer-reviewed journal articles, an essential skill for evidence-based management. Your grade will be based on your best performance on 5 out of these 6 assignments.

Class Contribution (10%): People learn best when they are active (not passive). Your active participation is essential to this class. Participation is more than just attending class and asking an occasional question. Full participation consists of demonstrating that you are prepared for each class, asking thoughtful questions that help you and your peers learn, responding respectfully to your peers and engaging productively in all class activities. **Grading** will be based on the **thoughtfulness of your three short reflections on or questions** to the content of the team presentations.

Grading System

No grade is final until approved by the department. The University of Western Ontario grading guidelines are as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Rating
A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	0-49	Fail

The DAN Program has a grade policy which states that for courses in the 3000-4000 range, the class average must fall between 70% and 75% for all sections of a course taught by the same instructor. In very exceptional circumstances only, class averages outside this range may be approved by the Assistant Director or Director. Class averages are not grounds for appeal.

Submitting Assignments

Students must submit an electronic copy of their **report** using Sakai. In the case of technical difficulties with Sakai (which happens occasionally), students must email a copy of the report to their instructor prior to the deadline in order to receive full credit. The report must still be submitted to Sakai in order to be graded. The report is due at 11:59 p.m. the night before class. Students must submit a draft of their **class presentation** to their instructor at least 48 hours before the day of the presentation.

Late Penalties

The late penalty is 3% per day (weekends count as 2 days), up to a maximum of 30%. Assignments more than 10 days late will not be accepted.

Illness

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that

medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, **in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities.**

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean's office (the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student's file, and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy [<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/general/privacy.pdf>].

Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty.

Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities. (Note: it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student was seen for a medical reason or was ill.)

A form to be completed by off-campus physicians is available at:

<http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/forms/medicalNote.pdf>

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation **in advance of due dates, examinations**, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, you should contact your instructor and the Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. In general, retroactive requests for grade revisions on medical or compassionate grounds will not be considered.

Procedures for Appealing Academic Evaluations

In the first instance, all appeals of a grade must be made to the course instructor (informal consultation). Please note that after receiving a graded assignment back, you **must wait overnight** before approaching the instructor to discuss any marking questions. You should look at the comments carefully and form a cogent and specific question before asking the instructor about a mark.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal must be sent to the Assistant Program Director or Designate of the BMOS program. If the response of the Assistant Director is considered unsatisfactory to the student, he/she may then appeal to the Dean of the Faculty in which the course of program was taken. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean, may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office.

Plagiarism Rules

Cheating on exams will not be tolerated; students are referred to the university policy on scholastic offenses (see section 9.0 below). Looking at the test of another student, allowing another student to view your exam, or obtaining information about a test in advance are all examples of cheating. Students found cheating will receive a zero (0%) on that exam. A number of safeguards will be employed to discourage cheating. For example, examination supervisors (proctors) of the tests may ask students to move to another seat during the exam, cover their paper, avert their eyes from other students' papers, remove baseball caps, etc. This is not meant as a personal affront nor as an accusation of cheating, rather as vigilant attempts at proctoring. A copy of guidelines about how to avoid cheating can be obtained from the office of the Ombudsperson, Room 251 University Community Centre, (519) 661-3573.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offenses. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offenses in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offenses include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate, consult your instructor. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" will not be accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offense include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Electronic Analysis of Assignments for Plagiarism

Recall that students must submit electronic copies of their assignments via Sakai. These electronic copies will be analyzed using the Turnitin.com service to check for plagiarism. Besides making it easier to catch plagiarism, this service is intended to help students identify and correct any unintentional plagiarism before it becomes official (as part of a submitted assignment). Students will have the opportunity to view the plagiarism report that their TAs will see, and to resubmit the assignment before the due date if corrections are necessary. **While the plagiarism reports are produced instantly after submission, only 1 can be produced every 24 hours. It is absolutely necessary that students view the plagiarism report generated for each assignment and make any corrections necessary before submitting a final copy for grading purposes.**

Email Policies

The following policies apply to all emails between students and the Professor. Please respect the fact that the Professor receives many emails from students and must deal with those emails in a fair and organized manner. Non-acceptable emails will receive a reply saying only "Please see Email Policies on the course outline".

UWO.CA Email Addresses Only

For privacy reasons, students must use their Western email accounts to contact the Professor. The Professor will not respond to emails from non-uwo.ca addresses (e.g. hotmail.com, gmail.com, etc.).

Subject Line Must Include Course and Section Number

The subject line of emails must contain the name or number of the course, and the section number in which the student is enrolled. The Professor teaches different courses and sections and cannot properly respond to questions if he does not know which course or section you are enrolled in.

Acceptable Emails

- questions about the course content or materials
- asking to set up an appointment to ask questions or review an exam
- notification of illness or other special circumstances
- providing constructive comments or feedback about the course

Non-Acceptable Emails

- questions that may be answered on Sakai or on this course outline
- asking when grades will be posted
- asking what grade a student received
- asking where or when an exam is scheduled or the material covered on an exam
- requests for grade increases, extra assignments, or reweighting of course components

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings	Presentations
September 10	What is Evidence-Based Management?		
September 17	Introduction to Scientific Studies Stanford Executive Briefings Video Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, and Total Nonsense: Profiting from Evidence-Based Management Robert I. Sutton		
September 24	Contributions of Organizational Behaviour to Evidence-Based Management	Chapter 1 Article 1	Team 1
October 1	The Role of Systematic Reviews in Evidence-Based Management	Chapter 2 Article 2	Team 2
October 8	Lab session with librarian on performing literature searches	Chapter 3	Team 3
October 15	Quiz # 1	Chapter 4	Team 4
October 22	Why Do Practitioners Resist Scientific Evidence? Literature Search Due	Chapter 5 Article 3	Team 5
October 29	Evidence-Based Management Using Organizational Facts	Chapter 6 Article 4	Team 6
November 5	Culture and Evidence-Based Management	Chapter 7 Article 5	Team 7
November 12	The Politics of Evidence-Based Decision Making	Chapter 8 Article 6	Team 8
November 19	Quiz # 2	Chapter 9	Team 9
November 26	Critical Reflections on Evidence-Based Management	TBA	Team 10
December 03	Report Due		