

**B792**  
**Field Surveys: Human Resources Management and Industrial  
Relations**  
**Fall 2023 Course Outline**

**Human Resources & Management Area**  
**DeGroote School of Business**  
**McMaster University**

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***COURSE OBJECTIVES***

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The overall objective of this seminar is to provide students with a fundamental understanding of the fields and theories of employment relations and HRM, with an emphasis on the latter.

This course will be conducted as a seminar over twelve 3-hour meetings. This course aims to:

1. Develop your understanding of theories and concepts presented in the readings.
2. Enhance your skills in communicating ideas, developing and presenting arguments, listening to, understanding, and constructively challenging others' views in a respectful way that advances understanding and generates novel and promising research ideas.
3. Learn to think independently and critically through analyzing the theoretical and methodological contributions and gaps in the assigned readings.

In this course my role will be to stimulate and guide student discussion.

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***INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION***

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**Mon 2:30pm – 5:20pm**  
**Dr. Sean O'Brady**  
Instructor  
obradys@mcmaster.ca  
Office: DSB 406  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Tel: (905) 905-525-9140 ext. 24250

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## **COURSE ELEMENTS**

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Credit Value: 3	Leadership: Yes	IT skills: No	Global view: Yes
Avenue: Yes	Ethics: No	Numeracy: Yes	Written skills: No
Participation: Yes	Innovation: Yes	Group work: Yes	Oral skills: Yes
Evidence-based: Yes	Experiential: No	Final Exam: No	Guest speaker(s): Yes

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar focuses on building theoretical foundations and cumulative knowledge necessary for advanced research in each of several core topic areas of industrial relations (IR) and human resources management (HRM). Key theories, issues and models will be discussed and contrasted, and empirical support examined. Students will undertake in-depth and critical analyses of the relevant literature, focusing in particular on recent reviews and primary studies published in key outlets in the field.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

A **critical** review and in-depth analysis of the IR and HRM literatures will provide a “state-of-the-art” knowledge of research issues in these fields and assist in identifying a dissertation topic. Further, this seminar will build skills in critically evaluating research and theories in the two related fields.

### **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS:**

**SEE READINGS LIST BELOW. READINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

### **EVALUATION**

There are two graded components to the course. Your grades will be derived as follows:

Review Paper	50%
Seminar Participation (five presentations/summaries – 10% each)	50%
<i>Total</i>	100%

### **Conversion**

At the end of the course your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in

accordance with the following conversion scheme.

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT
A+	90 - 100
A	85 - 89
A-	80 - 84
B+	75 - 79
B	70 - 74
B-	65 - 69
F	00 - 64

### **Seminar Participation (50%)**

Participation will be assessed in terms of your preparation for, and discussion, within each seminar where a presentation/summary has been assigned. You will be assigned for your ability 1) abide by the instructions for each assignment, 2) provide an in-depth analysis of the literature, and 3) clearly articulate the arguments that you have made for the assignment. This will be done five times ( $5 * 10\% = 50\%$ ).

The written component is to be submitted to me no later than 7:00 p.m. on the day before each seminar where a presentation has been assigned. I have kept readings to 3-4 articles per week expecting that you will read all of them. Limiting the readings in this way allows for a “deeper dive” into them and ideally leaves time for progressing your term paper.

Once the presentation is over, we will proceed with a broader discussion of the literature pertaining to the assignment.

### **Review Paper (50%)**

Pick a topic among those covered in this seminar and write a comprehensive review of the theoretical literature on that topic. The aim of the assignment is to review relevant literature on one or multiple concepts or theories covered in class, provide a critical appraisal of the concept(s) or theory(ies), and advance some arguments based on what your review has found. You must discuss your chosen topic with the professor before proceeding. The work on the paper should serve as the basis for a potentially more developed paper on the topic suited for a peer-reviewed journal. The paper should be double spaced, 1” margins, 12-point Times New Roman font, title page with your name, within 12-15 pages of text (not including references, figures, or other supporting documents). The introduction must adhere to the structure for writing an introduction as contained in the publication guidelines of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

<http://www.apastyle.org/manual/>

Paper due: December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

It is the student’s responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the University Senate Academic Integrity Policy at the following URL:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This policy describes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for students and faculty should a case of academic dishonesty arise. Academic dishonesty is defined as to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that result or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Please refer to the policy for a list of examples. The policy also provides faculty with procedures to follow in cases of academic dishonesty as well as general guidelines for penalties. For further information related to the policy, please refer to the Office of Academic Integrity at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

### POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### MISSED WORK

Late assignments will not be accepted. No extensions are available except under extraordinary circumstances. Please discuss any extenuating situation with your instructor at the earliest possible opportunity.

### READING LIST

SESSION AND TOPIC	TEXTS
<b>AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELDS OF ER AND HRM</b>	
<b>Session 1</b> The field of employment relations: An overview September 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	<b>Required:</b> Doellgast, V., Bidwell, M., & Colvin, A. J. (2021). New directions in employment relations theory: Understanding fragmentation, identity, and legitimacy. <i>ILR Review</i> , 74(3), 555-579.  Hyman, R. (1975). What is industrial relations?. In <i>Industrial relations: A Marxist introduction</i> (pp. 9-31). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.  Tapia, M., Ibsen, C. L., & Kochan, T. A. (2015). Mapping the frontier of theory in industrial relations: the contested role of worker

	representation. <i>Socio-Economic Review</i> , 13(1), 157-184.
<p><b>Session 2</b></p> <p>The field of human resource management: An overview</p> <p>September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <p>Boxall, P. (2018). The development of strategic HRM: reflections on a 30-year journey. <i>Labour &amp; Industry: a journal of the social and economic relations of work</i>, 28(1), 21-30.</p> <p>Kaufman, B. E. (2001). Human resources and industrial relations: Commonalities and differences. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 11(4), 339-374.</p> <p>Kaufman, B. E. (2014). The historical development of American HRM broadly viewed. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 24(3), 196-218.</p> <p>Wright, P. M., &amp; McMahan, G. C. (1992). Theoretical perspectives for strategic human resource management. <i>Journal of management</i>, 18(2), 295-320.</p> <p><b>Presentation #1 (15 minutes, accompanied by a three-page document):</b> Provide an overview of 1) the development of ER or HRM as a field of study, 2) trends in disciplinary and theoretical focus within the field, 3) a critique of the current state of the field, and 4) recommendations on where the field should go in the future.</p>
<b>Foundational Concepts</b>	
<p><b>Session 3</b></p> <p>Strategy in ER and HRM</p> <p>September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Batt, R. (2000). Strategic segmentation in front-line services: matching customers, employees and human resource systems. <i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>, 11(3), 540-561.</p> <p>Becker, B. E., &amp; Huselid, M. A. (2006). Strategic human resources management: where do we go from here?. <i>Journal of management</i>, 32(6), 898-925.</p> <p>Hyman, R. (2007). How can trade unions act strategically?. <i>Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research</i>, 13(2), 193-210.</p> <p>Liu, X., Van Jaarsveld, D. D., Batt, R., &amp; Frost, A. C. (2014). The influence of capital structure on strategic human capital: Evidence from US and Canadian firms. <i>Journal of Management</i>, 40(2), 422-448.</p>
<p><b>Session 4</b></p> <p>The HRM System</p> <p>October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Bowen, D. E., &amp; Ostroff, C. (2004). Understanding HRM–firm performance linkages: The role of the “strength” of the HRM system. <i>Academy of management review</i>, 29(2), 203-221.</p> <p>Hauff, S., Alewell, D., &amp; Katrin Hansen, N. (2017). HRM system strength and HRM target achievement—toward a broader</p>

	<p>understanding of HRM processes. <i>Human Resource Management</i>, 56(5), 715-729.</p> <p>Lepak, D. P., Liao, H., Chung, Y., &amp; Harden, E. E. (2006). A conceptual review of human resource management systems in strategic human resource management research. <i>Research in personnel and human resources management</i>, 217-271.</p>
<p>October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p><b>Mid-term Recess</b></p>
<p><b>Session 5</b></p> <p>The role of ideology</p> <p>October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Geare, A., Edgar, F., &amp; McAndrew, I. (2006). Employment relationships: Ideology and HRM practice. <i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>, 17(7), 1190-1208.</p> <p>Greenwood, M., &amp; Van Buren, H. J. (2017). Ideology in HRM scholarship: Interrogating the ideological performativity of 'New Unitarism'. <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i>, 142, 663-678.</p> <p>Harley, B. (2015). The one best way? 'Scientific' research on HRM and the threat to critical scholarship. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>, 25(4), 399-407.</p> <p>Marchington, M., &amp; Grugulis, I. (2000). 'Best practice' human resource management: perfect opportunity or dangerous illusion?. <i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>, 11(6), 1104-1124.</p> <p><b>Presentation #2 (15 minutes, accompanied by a three-page document):</b> Discuss 1) what constitutes ideology in HRM, 2) one or more ideologies that are influencing research and practice in the field, 3) the role of ideology in the crafting of HR strategies, union strategies, and the design of HRM systems, and 4) the strengths and pitfalls of these ideologies for understanding key aspects of employment.</p>
<p><b>Approaches to HRM and Employment Relations</b></p>	
<p><b>Session 6</b></p> <p>The behavioural perspective</p> <p>October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Dries, N. (2013). The psychology of talent management: A review and research agenda. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 23(4), 272-285.</p> <p>Pfeffer, J. (2007). Human resources from an organizational behavior perspective: Some paradoxes explained. <i>Journal of Economic Perspectives</i>, 21(4), 115-134.</p> <p>Troth, A. C., &amp; Guest, D. E. (2020). The case for psychology in human resource management research. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>, 30(1), 34-48.</p> <p>Wright, P. M., &amp; Nishii, L. H. (2007). Strategic HRM and organizational behavior: Integrating multiple levels of analysis.</p>

<p><b>Session 7</b></p> <p>The resource-based view (RBV) of the firm</p> <p>October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Boxall, P. (1996). The strategic HRM debate and the resource-based view of the firm. <i>Human resource management journal</i>, 6(3), 59-75.</p> <p>Collins, C. J. (2021). Expanding the resource based view model of strategic human resource management. <i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>, 32(2), 331-358.</p> <p>Kaufman, B. E. (2015). The RBV theory foundation of strategic HRM: Critical flaws, problems for research and practice, and an alternative economics paradigm. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>, 25(4), 516-540.</p> <p>Wright, P. M., Dunford, B. B., &amp; Snell, S. A. (2001). Human resources and the resource-based view of the firm. <i>Journal of management</i>, 27(6), 701-721.</p>
<p><b>Session 8</b></p> <p>Strategic approaches</p> <p>November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Devanna, M. A., Fombrun, C., &amp; Tichy, N. (1981). Human resources management: A strategic perspective. <i>Organizational dynamics</i>, 9(3), 51-67.</p> <p>Kochan, T. A., McKersie, R. B., &amp; Cappelli, P. (1984). Strategic choice and industrial relations theory. <i>Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society</i>, 23(1), 16-39.</p> <p>Malik, A., &amp; Bebenroth, R. (2022). Strategic Choice and SHRM and ER. In <i>Strategic Human Resource Management and Employment Relations: An International Perspective</i> (pp. 57-67). Cham: Springer International Publishing.</p> <p>Walton, R. E. (1985). From control to commitment in the workplace. <i>Harvard business review</i>, 63(2), 76-84.</p> <p><b>Presentation #3 (15 minutes, accompanied by a three-page document):</b> Provide 1) an overview of what constitutes the behavioural, resource-based, and strategic approaches to ER/HRM, 2) a comparison of <u>at least 3</u> core assumptions or stipulations associated with each approach, 3) an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each, and 4) an argument on which is best suited to explaining key issues in work and employment.</p>
<p><b>Session 9</b></p> <p>Institutional Theory in HRM and Employment Relations</p> <p>November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Batt, R., &amp; Hermans, M. (2012). Global human resource management: Bridging strategic and institutional perspectives. <i>Research in personnel and human resources management</i>, 31(1), 1-52.</p> <p>Godard, J. (2002). Institutional environments, employer practices, and states in liberal market economies. <i>Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society</i>, 41(2), 249-286.</p>



	<p>Lewis, A. C., Cardy, R. L., &amp; Huang, L. S. (2019). Institutional theory and HRM: A new look. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 29(3), 316-335., 60(1), 205-227.</p> <p>Morgan, G., &amp; Hauptmeier, M. (2014). Varieties of institutional theory in comparative employment relations.</p>
<p><b>Session 10</b></p> <p>Critical Theory in HRM and Employment Relations</p> <p>November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Giles, A., &amp; Murray, G. (1997). Industrial relations theory and critical political economy. <i>Theorizing in Industrial Relations: Approaches and Applications</i>. Sydney: Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Teaching, 77-120.</p> <p>Omidi, A., Dal Zotto, C., &amp; Gandini, A. (2023). Labor process theory and critical HRM: A systematic review and agenda for future research. <i>European Management Journal</i>.</p> <p>Thompson, P., &amp; Smith, C. (2009). Labour power and labour process: contesting the marginality of the sociology of work. <i>Sociology</i>, 43(5), 913-930.</p> <p>Thompson, P. (2011). The trouble with HRM. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>, 21(4), 355-367.</p> <p><b>Presentation #4 (15 minutes, accompanied by a three-page document):</b> Provide 1) an overview of what constitutes the institutional and critical approaches to ER/HRM, 2) a comparison of <u>at least 3</u> core assumptions or stipulations associated with each approach, 3) an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each, and 4) an argument on which is best suited to explaining key issues in work and employment.</p>
<p><b>Key Areas of Inquiry</b></p>	
<p><b>Session 11</b></p> <p>High-performance work systems</p> <p>November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p>Boxall, P., &amp; Winterton, J. (2018). Which conditions foster high-involvement work processes? A synthesis of the literature and agenda for research. <i>Economic and Industrial Democracy</i>, 39(1), 27-47.</p> <p>Krachler, N. (2023). Getting to what works: How frontline HRM relationality facilitates high-performance work practice implementation. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>.</p> <p>Godard, J. (2004). A critical assessment of the high-performance paradigm. <i>British journal of industrial relations</i>, 42(2), 349-378.</p> <p>Shin, D., &amp; Konrad, A. M. (2017). Causality between high-performance work systems and organizational performance. <i>Journal of management</i>, 43(4), 973-997.</p>
<p><b>Session 12</b></p> <p>International and</p>	<p>Cooke, F. L., Wood, G., Wang, M., &amp; Veen, A. (2019). How far has international HRM travelled? A systematic review of literature on multinational corporations (2000–2014). <i>Human Resource</i></p>



<p>comparative ER/HRM</p> <p>December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023</p>	<p><i>Management Review</i>, 29(1), 59-75.</p> <p>Doellgast, V. (2008). Collective bargaining and high-involvement management in comparative perspective: Evidence from US and German call centers. <i>Industrial relations: a journal of economy and society</i>, 47(2), 284-319.</p> <p>Edwards, T., Almond, P., Murray, G., &amp; Tregaskis, O. (2022). International human resource management in multinational companies: Global norm making within strategic action fields. <i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>, 32(3), 683-697.</p> <p>Howell, C. (2021). Rethinking the role of the state in employment relations for a neoliberal era. <i>ILR Review</i>, 74(3), 739-772.</p> <p><b>Presentation #5 (15 minutes, accompanied by a three-page document):</b> Provide 1) an overview of what constitutes a high-performance work system, 2) analysis of what factors lead some firms to adopt it but not others, and 3) an assessment of its goals and effectiveness, and 4) discussion of how country effects and the MNC structures influence its adoption in firms.</p>
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