



**CLASSROOM:** Web-Based Course  
**MEETING TIME:** See Course Schedule for Assignment Due Dates  
**NOTE ABOUT TIMES:** All times and deadlines for this course are listed as Central Standard Time (CST) Zone (Commerce, TX) times.

**Instructor:** Dr. Alex Williams  
**E-mail:** Alex.Williams@tamuc.edu  
**Office:** CBE 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs 10am – 12:00pm and by Appointment (or send me an email anytime!)

### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Gatewood, R. D., Feild, H. S., & Barrick, M. (2008). *Human Resource Selection* (6th ed.). Mason, OH: Thomson-Southwestern. ISBN: 0538469943

In addition, I will provide other readings and materials as the course progresses.

You will also need Scantron forms (green) and No. 2 pencils for exams.  
You also should bring a calculator to every class.

### COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

This course focuses on a specific area in Human Resources Management, namely personnel selection and placement. In seeking to improve the performance and retention of employees, organizations recognize the importance of hiring as an important means to this end. This course is designed to provide a conceptual understanding of personnel selection practices, and how these practices contribute as a human resource (HR) function to job performance, organizational efficiency, and organizational effectiveness. This course will examine important concepts in personnel selection such as reliability and validity, as well as provide an understanding of various types of selection tests and assessments in current practice. Thus, part of this course will provide the background necessary for the future *practice and application* of personnel selection activities. As the course progresses, continually ask yourself, "How can I improve selection and placement processes in organizations?"

While necessarily applied in nature, this course will also provide a theoretical perspective on the issues of the field. The goal here is to provide you with the necessary tools for diagnosing, addressing, and solving selection-related problems in the workplace. An understanding of the theory that underlies selection practices enables you as practitioners to be more flexible and adaptable when facing new issues and challenges in the workplace.

Importantly, because valid personnel selection practices are founded in scientific methods, this course will also concentrate on understanding the scientific perspective. As a result of this emphasis on understanding the scientific basis of personnel selection procedures, the course also will cover the following topics:

- Assumptions of the scientific perspective (as opposed to other "ways of knowing")
- Causal reasoning and causal inference (e.g., correlations, statistical significance)

- Objectives of science (from a personnel selection perspective)
- Psychological measurement
- Individual differences from the perspective of Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology
- A new vocabulary, terminology, or industry jargon, used by the Government, the EEOC, the Supreme Court (and other Courts), and by HR Specialists

The objectives for this course include:

- To introduce the student to the selection process and its relationship to other HR areas
- To develop a basic understanding of the inherent difficulties and constraints incurred in developing any selection program
- To introduce the student to basic job analysis techniques and to incorporate them in valid selection measures
- To acquaint the student with the growing body of legislation, federal regulation, and case law which govern personnel selection
- To familiarize the student with the terminology, concepts, and procedures by which selection programs are administered
- To acquaint the student with the scientific foundations of valid selection measures
- To acquaint the student with the measurement of job relevant characteristics (i.e., individual differences in cognitive ability, personality, etc.) used for predicting the job performance of applicants and making selection decisions
- To familiarize the student with the concept of measurement, in particular the psychometric properties (i.e., reliability and validity) of selection measures
- To develop skills in data analysis for personnel selection
- To demonstrate to the student the appropriate methods of measuring and evaluating job performance, which serve as the criteria for judging the validity of selection measures
- To develop skills in decision-making in personnel selection

### **COURSE FORMAT:**

The structure of the class will include both passive (e.g., lectures, videos, handouts) and active (e.g., class discussions, in-class activities, group projects) instruction. You will be responsible for reading all materials assigned, whether we discuss them in class or not. The lectures are intended to expand on the written materials and provide a deeper understanding of the issues faced in the field. While everything in the written materials will not be highlighted in the lectures, they may be included on the exam. Please feel free to ask about any part of the written materials during the lectures.

You will find the majority of the information and materials that you will need to complete the course in this syllabus and on the eCollege course management website. PowerPoint slides and mini-lectures will be available for each of the book chapters under the Doc Sharing tab. Also, many assignments will also be posted on eCollege, under the Doc Sharing tab. You should submit all of your work in a format that is compatible with Microsoft Office and post it in the appropriate "Dropboxes" when it is due.

### **SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT:**

I anticipate that we will follow the schedule I've outlined in this syllabus, but I may make adjustments based on what actually happens in class. I may also change the basis for the course grade (if I need to eliminate an assignment or something of that nature). If I do so, I will so inform you in writing. Remaining in the course after reading this syllabus will signal that you accept the possibility of changes and responsibility for being aware of them.

## **STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Academic honesty is the foundation of the university community. Cheating, plagiarism, patchwriting (a form of plagiarism that includes copying or slightly modifying material from multiple sources without proper citation), or other acts of academic dishonesty compromise the integrity of the academic process and community and are subject to disciplinary action. For more information on what constitutes plagiarism, visit [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org). For this class, plagiarism will result in automatic failure (final course grade of F).

An academic honesty policy has been posted under the “Doc Sharing” tab. You should read this document, initial it, and submit it to me via its corresponding “Dropbox” (see the course schedule for the due date).

## **SPECIAL NEEDS/REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library**  
**Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

## **TENETS OF COMMON BEHAVIOR STATEMENT:**

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See current Student Handbook).

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

### ○ **General Comments**

- 1. This class will utilize the eCollege Dropbox for assignment submissions. Submitted assignments must be correctly formatted and free of grammatical and stylistic errors.** Students should have at least some skill with software for word processing, spreadsheets, databases, graphics, and presentations, and with web browsers and search engines. Spelling and grammatical errors will detract from your grade!
- 2. Assignments must be turned in on time.** Assignments are due at the **date** and **time** listed. While the syllabus designates specific dates for which work is assigned, you do not have to wait until the “assigned” date to start working on it (or to turn it in). I suggest you set a calendar of when to work on assignments based upon your schedule, how long it takes you to complete assignments, and the assignment due dates. Start working on each assignment as soon as you possibly can and make sure that you have all assignments submitted by the specified due dates. You will have until **11:59 PM CST** to submit the work that is listed in the far right, “Work Due” column of the course schedule. Some assignments can be turned in late. However, there will be a significant penalty. For each day that your assignment is late, I will deduct **10 POINTS** from your grade. If you do not meet the 11:59 PM deadline (even by one or two minutes), I will deduct 10 points. If you do not turn the assignment in by 11:59 PM CST the next day, I will deduct an additional 10 points, and so on. Saturdays and Sundays count towards the total days late.

**3. Assignments must be complete.** You must complete and submit all components at the specified due date and time to receive credit for the assignment. Please don't turn in work that is only "half-finished".

- **Make-up Exams or Late Assignments Will Only Be Accepted If You Obtain University Approved Documentation for Your Excuse:** There are no make-up assignments for poor performance on a previous assignment.

**GRADE COMPONENTS:**

Component	Type	Value
Legal Issues Exercise	Individual	25 points
Reliability Exercise	Individual	25 points
Validity Exercise	Individual	25 points
Cutscores Exercise	Individual	25 points
Case Study Exercise	Individual	50 points
Exam 1 & 2 (100 points each)	Individual	200 points
Consulting Projects	Team	100 points
Final Exam	Individual	150 points
<b>Course Total</b>		<b>600 points</b>

**GRADING SCALE:**

A	90 – 100%	540-600 points	D	60-69%	360-419 points
B	80 – 89%	480-539 points	F	Below 60%	Less than 360 points
C	70-79%	420-479 points			

Incomplete - Must be previously agreed upon by student and instructor.  
 Withdrawal - Must be initiated by the student administratively.

**EXAMS:**

Make-up exams will be given only in the event of extreme, unavoidable, and documented emergencies. If you are late or miss an exam or quiz without a valid excuse, you will not be permitted to retake it.

Exams will test your comprehension of the book material (and concepts covered in class) through multiple choice, short answer, and essay format. The final exam will be comprehensive.

**IF YOU EVER FEEL AS IF YOU NEED TO MEET WITH ME IN ORDER TO CLARIFY ASSIGNMENTS, DISCUSS CONCERNS ABOUT THE CLASS, DISCUSS TOPICS FROM THE CLASS, ETC., SEE ME AFTER CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, OR E-MAIL ME IN ORDER TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT.**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Work Due:</b>
1/15	Introduction to Selection	Ch. 1	
1/22	Measurement	Ch. 3	Honesty Policy
1/29	Reliability	Ch. 4	Reliability Exercise
2/5	Validity - Theory and Application	Ch. 5	Validity Exercise
2/12	Strategies for Selection Decision-Making	Ch. 6	Cutscores Exercise
2/19	<b>Exam 1 (Ch. 1, 3-6) Measurement Test (Graduate; in class)</b>		
2/26	Legal Issues in Personnel Selection	Ch. 2	Legal Issues Exercise
3/5	Job Analysis in HR Selection	Ch 7	
3/12	<b><i>Spring Break</i></b>		
3/19	Recruitment of Applicants	Ch. 8	
3/26	<b>Projects Explained</b>		
3/28	<b>Project Workday</b>		
4/2	Application Forms, Interviews	Ch. 9, 10	
4/9	Ability Tests, High Stakes Testing	Ch. 11	
4/16	Personality Assessment & Integrity Tests	Ch. 12, 14	
4/23	<b>Exam 2 (Ch. 2, 7-12, 14) Essay Exams (Graduate; due this date by midnight)</b>		
4/30	<b>Consulting Projects Presentations Class Review</b>		Personality Item Exercise
<b>5/6 – 5/10</b>	<b>Final Exam Week</b>		

## **Grading Rubrics**

### **Exam**

Students will receive points for each question that they answer correctly on the exam. Points earned on the short essay and case essay items will depend upon the reasonableness of the response, the depth and quality of the rationale provided to support the response, and the reference support provided for the response.

### **Exercises**

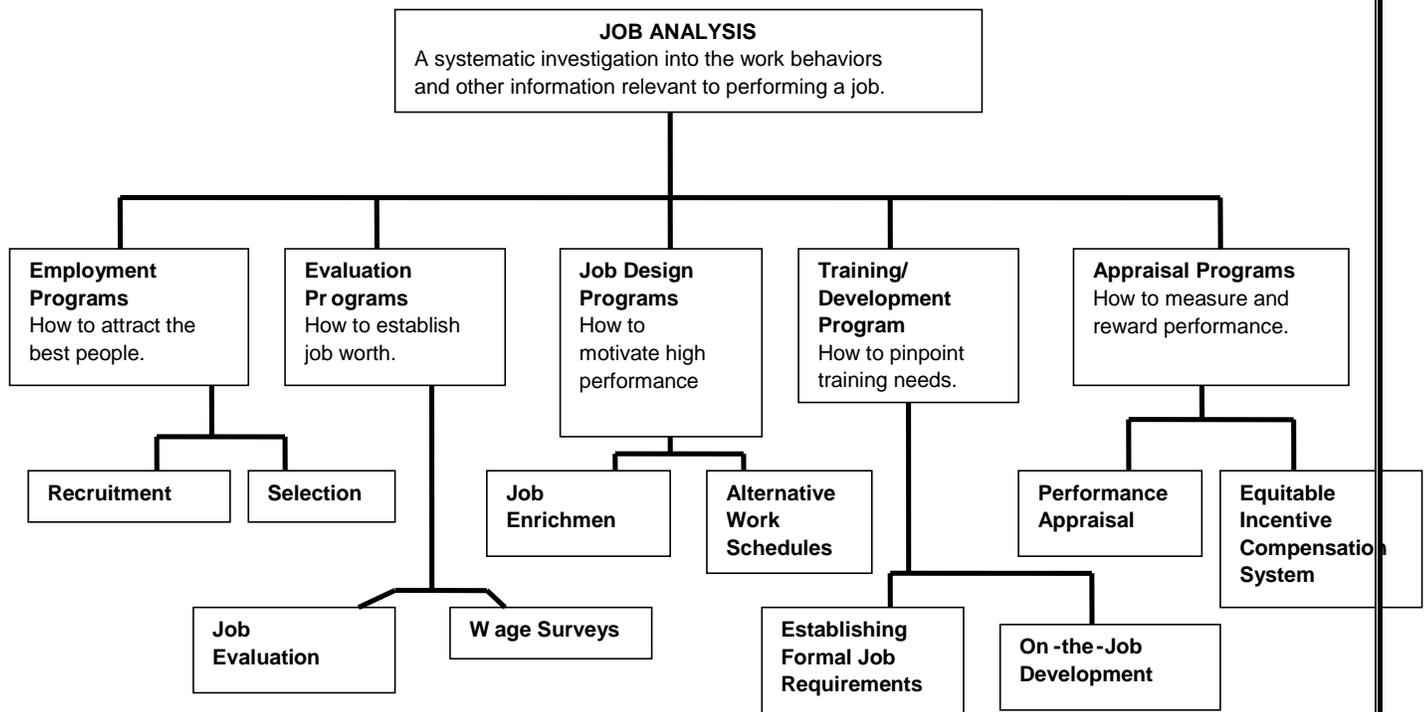
Students will receive points for each question that they answer correctly on the exam. Additional information will be provided in the instructions of the specific exercise.

### **Consulting Project**

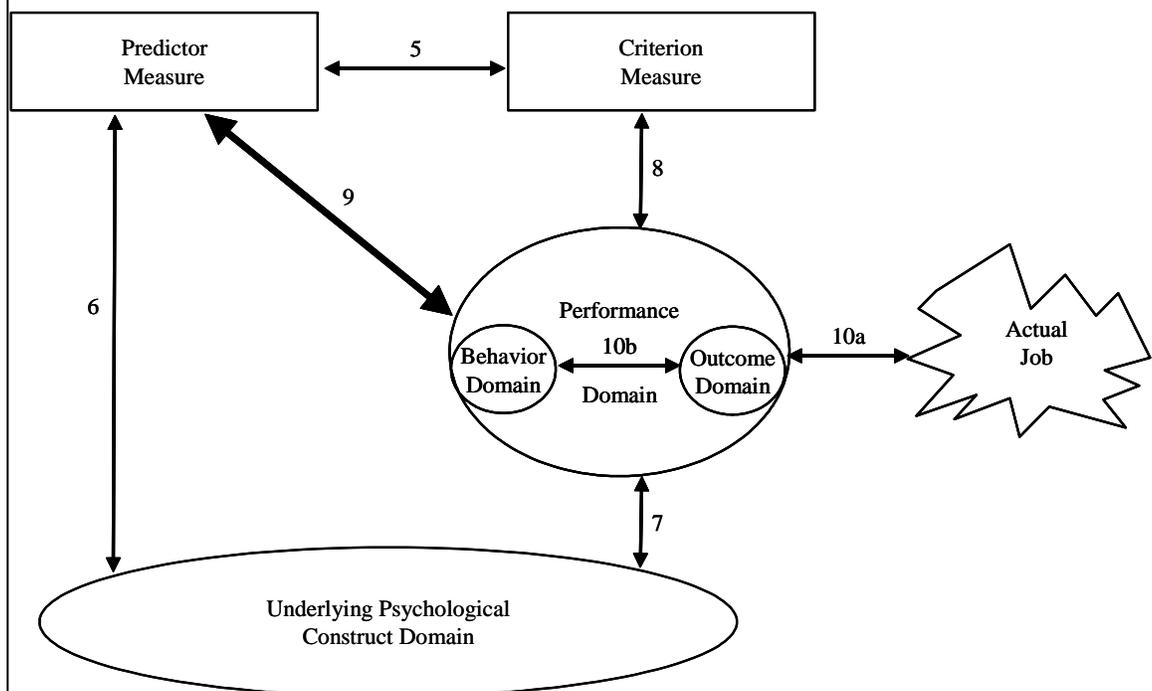
This rubric will be provided once the projects are explained during class.

## APPENDIX A

Job Analysis serves as a foundation for all Human Resource functions, including Personnel Selection.



This 2<sup>nd</sup> figure is an advanced organizer. It will help you to remember and understand the chronological and conceptual steps of selection test development and validation. It comes from the Binning and Barrett (1989) article. Arrow 10a represents an inference obtained from a **job analysis**.



## APPENDIX B

1. One Major Course Objective: The course will transfer practical knowledge and skills to you, and will provide you with an understanding of the scientific foundation of valid selection procedures. Also, the course will teach you to understand and use a new industry jargon, the jargon of personnel selection practices.
  - a. Practical Knowledge and Skills: A new vocabulary and jargon must be learned to practice HR Selection because this jargon is used by...
    - i. HR Selection Specialists
    - ii. U.S. Government in terms of Federal Guidelines and Regulations
    - iii. All of our Courts, especially
    - iv. *The Supreme Court***
  - b. This new jargon may be **difficult** for some of you to learn, but it is essential for the understanding of the concepts presented in this course.

Adverse Impact  
Coefficient of Determination  
Construct Validity  
Content Validity  
Correlation Coefficient  
Criterion (Criteria)  
Criterion-Related Validity  
Cutoff Score  
Cutpoint Score  
Disparate Impact  
Disparate Treatment  
Empirical Data  
Interrater Reliability  
Job-Related  
Job-Relevant  
KSAs  
Linear Relationship  
Multiple Hurdle  
Multiple Regression  
Predictor (Predictors)  
Reliability  
Theoretical Constructs  
Theoretical Hypotheses  
Validity  
Validity Coefficient

*See Appendix C for an example of how the Federal Government uses this jargon.*

## APPENDIX C

### UNIFORM GUIDELINES ON EMPLOYEE SELECTION PROCEDURES (1978), *Excerpts*

#### **Section 5: General standards for validity studies.**

##### **A. Acceptable types of validity studies.**

For the purposes of satisfying these guidelines, users may rely upon criterion-related validity studies, content validity studies or construct validity studies, in accordance with the standards set forth in the technical standards of these guidelines, section 14 of this part. New strategies for showing the validity of selection procedures will be evaluated as they become accepted by the psychological profession.

##### **B. Criterion-related, content, and construct validity.**

Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure by a criterion-related validity study should consist of empirical data demonstrating that the selection procedure is predictive of or significantly correlated with important elements of job performance. See 14B of this part. Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure by a content validity study should consist of data showing that the content of the selection procedure is representative of important aspects of performance on the job for which the candidates are to be evaluated. See 14C of this part. Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure through a construct validity study should consist of data showing that the procedure measures the degree to which candidates have identifiable characteristics which have been determined to be important in successful performance in the job for which the candidates are to be evaluated. See section 14D of this part.

C. . . . D. . . .

Etc. . . .

#### **Section 14: Technical standards for validity studies.**

**A.** Validity studies should be based on review of information about the job.

Any validity study should be based upon a review of information about the job for which the selection procedure is to be used. The review should include a job analysis except as provided in section 14B(3) of this section with respect to criterion-related validity. Any method of job analysis may be used if it provides the information required for the specific validation strategy used.

**B. . . . C. . . .**

**D.** Technical standards for construct validity studies

##### **(1) Appropriateness of construct validity studies.**

Construct validity is a more complex strategy than either criterion-related or content validity. Construct validation is a relatively new and developing procedure in the employment field, and there is at present a lack of substantial literature extending the concept to employment practices. The user should be aware that the effort to obtain sufficient empirical support for construct validity is both an extensive and arduous effort involving a series of research studies, which include criterion related validity studies and which may include content validity studies.

**Instructor Notes:** The Uniform Guidelines (1978) indicate that construct validity basically subsumes content and criterion-related validity. Recall (from Binning & Barrett, 1989) that criterion-related validity can be thought of as belonging to the 3<sup>rd</sup> type of convergent validity, and convergent validity studies (3 types) provide one form of empirical evidence for construct validity. According to the Guidelines, in order to conclude you have demonstrated construct validity for your selection device, you generally have to have already conducted extensive empirical studies on the device, at least one of which would be a criterion-related validity study. At the very least, this criterion-related validity study, if it is to be used to provide evidence of construct validity, would have to have been performed on another job or on jobs which require exceedingly similar types of behaviors for performance in comparison to the job in question for which the selection device is to be used.