Instructor: Dr. Ralph Katerberg

Office: 503 Lindner Hall

Office Hours: By Appointment

Telephone: 513.556.7011

Email: Ralph.katerberg@uc.edu

Course Background and Rationale:

A MAHR capstone experience fulfills a requirement for all Masters degrees awarded by the University of Cincinnati. The purpose of the capstone is to provide every MAHR student an opportunity to demonstrate their facility with applying the concepts and tools developed though the program to an actual organizational challenge in the student’s workplace or another organization in the area. It also is a final opportunity for Lindner College of Business faculty to assess the competence of its Masters students for graduation. Your report on your project will be judged on both content and presentation. This is an opportunity to show you best work as it represents your skill and competence in understanding and applying human resources concepts. Because of the “last hurdle” nature of this assignment, expect that it will be fairly, but very critically, judged.

Capstone Assignment

Prior to the beginning of the semester, I will contact each student about the capstone plan. If you are working in an organization that has projects within the Human Resources domain that they would like you to take on, I will need to know that before the beginning of the semester. If you do not have a preplanned project, I will ask members of our advisory board for projects that they would like someone to take on. My goal is that when we have our week 1 meeting, every student will have a high potential project to describe. Every project will require instructor approval prior to work being initiated.

Following our week 1 class meeting, you will refine your project plan, send me your updates and get to work on your project. We will meet for brief update on all projects two times during the middle of the semester. You will be expected to attend and provide a brief progress report (oral only) and describe some of your initial learnings. In the final week of the semester, we will have one final class session in which you will offer a
formal presentation on your project and submit your final written report. This will require a longer class session in order to complete all presentations.

Specific Guidelines

The capstone project report must be submitted as a Word document, single sided, double spaced, in 12 point font. Submit it as an email attachment to me at: Ralph.katerberg@uc.ecu. The main text of the paper should not exceed 30 pages, including an executive summary and references.

Suggested Format:

- Title Page- This page should include the student’s name, your student ID number, email and phone number
- Executive summary/recommendations (1-2 pages)
- Appendices containing exhibits, tables, and figures that are referred to in the text of the paper. These appendices will not count toward the page limitation; however, they must be relevant to the argument developed in the text.
- Bibliography/References

Project Consultations

I will be available to discuss any questions that arise throughout the semester. Use email or phone, or in person during office hours or by appointment from the beginning of the semester and throughout. After reports are submitted, I will contact you via email if I find any serious deficiencies or limitations that require revision. This will allow maximum time to revise the report as needed.

Client Validation

With every project having a “client”, I will require that the client provide some form of validation of your project from the perspective of an HR professional. The variety of projects makes any standard evaluation problematic, so I will simply ask that, when you submit your report to the client, you request that they review it and send a short memo (email) to me with their feedback on your work. I will need to receive it before grades are submitted at the end of exam week.

Evaluation and Expectation

Because of the importance of this assignment to the integrity of the Master’s degree, the expectations will be set high. I expect that your project report will reflect the highest level of professionalism in terms of clear and persuasive language without spelling or grammatical errors, displays clear and consistent logic, and is complete and thorough.
Some Additional Points

- **Utilize appendices** to show details and back-up of all analyses. Refer to them and provide analysis and interpretation of the results in the text. **Do not include material in the appendix that is not referred to in the text.**
- **Utilize Headings and Subheadings** to aid organization and readability.
- **Proofread your work, then have someone else proofread it.**
- **Clearly label** all charts, figures or tables used in the appendices with citations indicating sources of the information.
- **All information referenced should be properly acknowledged with footnotes and citations in a bibliography.**

Semester Schedule

All meetings will be in late afternoon:

**Initial Class meeting:** Week of Aug. 28

**Interim reporting 1:** Week of Sept 11

**Interim reporting 2:** Week of Oct. 9

**Interim reporting 3:** Week of Nov 6

**Final project presentations:** Week of Nov. 27