HRD 5345 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Department of Human Resource Development
Soules College of Business

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Instructor (email):	Dr. Shinhee Jeong (sjeong@uttyler.edu); Associate Professor
Class Format:	Online (Canvas)
Communication:	Canvas, email, and Zoom
Course Access:	www.uttyler.edu/canvas
Office Hours :	Email and/or by appointment via phone or Zoom
Zoom link:	https://uttyler.zoom.us/my/shinheejeong

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course explores the concept of employee engagement and its critical role in organizational success. Students will examine theoretical foundations, key drivers, and barriers to engagement while evaluating methods for assessment and measurement. The course will also cover how engagement strategies can be leveraged for competitive advantage and organizational growth. Additionally, students will explore contemporary challenges, such as cultural differences in engagement and potential downsides. Through case studies, discussions, and applied projects, students will develop practical strategies for fostering an engaged workforce in diverse organizational settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Define and differentiate employee engagement from related concepts such as job satisfaction and motivation.
2. Analyze key factors that influence employee engagement, including organizational culture, leadership, and work environment.
3. Evaluate barriers to engagement and propose strategies to overcome them.
4. Assess employee engagement using various measurement tools and frameworks.
5. Apply engagement strategies to enhance competitive advantage and organizational success.
6. Critically examine global perspectives on engagement and assess whether engagement principles apply universally.
7. Explore ethical and practical challenges associated with employee engagement, including potential negative consequences.
8. Develop actionable recommendations for improving employee engagement in real-world organizational settings.

TEXTBOOKS, MATERIALS, AND READINGS

Required
- Byrne, Z. S. (2022). *Understanding employee engagement: Theory, research, and practice*. Routledge. ISBN: 9781003171133
- McCown, N., Men, L. R., Jiang, H., & Shen, H. (Eds.). (2023). *Internal communication and employee engagement: A case study approach*. Taylor & Francis. ISBN: 1032050055

Important: Other required readings (i.e., articles, book chapters) are listed at the end of this syllabus.

Recommended

Whittington, J. L., Meskelis, S., Asare, E., & Beldona, S. (2017). *Enhancing employee engagement: An evidence-based approach.* Springer. ISBN: 3319547313

ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

Points given for each assignment for the course are as follows:

1. Class Participation	
2. Self-Introduction	**4 pts**
3. Class Discussion Postings	**16 pts**
4. Case Study Analyses	**15 pts**
5. Engagement Concept Map	**20 pts**
5. Capstone: Employee Engagement Project	**40 pts**
6. Reflection Paper	**5 pts**
Total	**100 pts**

Class Participation

Given the online nature of this course, class participation will be evaluated based on the timeliness of assignment submissions. Missing a due date will result in a deduction of 2 points per assignment. Any submission that is more than 2 days late will be considered a "no submission" and will therefore receive no grade. If you require an extension due to medical reasons, you must provide an official medical record in advance.

Self-Introduction (Due: Jan 17; 4 pts)

Please post your self-introduction on the designated discussion board on Canvas. In your introduction, be sure to include the following:

1. A background about yourself
2. The reasons you chose HRD as your major and why you selected UT Tyler
3. How HRD is relevant to employee engagement
4. A fun fact about yourself

Your post should be 150-200 words in length.

Class Discussion Postings (4 times, 4 pts/each)

For four selected weeks during the semester, one or two prompts will be posted on Canvas. Students are expected to craft written responses to these questions and submit their work by 11:59 pm on Fridays. Ensure that your answers fall within the range of 200-250 words per prompt. It is crucial to incorporate both the weekly readings and other scholarly resources you find through independent research. Furthermore, active participation in the learning community is required. Read and respond to at least two postings from your peers by 11:59 pm on Sundays. Your replies should be substantial, comprising at least a paragraph. Address different ideas, approaches, or perspectives that you gleaned from their responses, or highlight what resonated with you the most. Note that 0.5 points will be deducted for each missing reply. Additionally, only replying to peers' postings without contributing your own original posting will result in gaining no points. The formatting should be adhered to the APA 7th style.

Case Study Analysis (3 times, 5 pts/each)

For three selected weeks during the semester, students are required to complete a case study analysis based on a provided reading (adapted from McCown et al.). In your analysis, you should examine the situation, identify key employee engagement challenges, and propose interventions grounded in relevant theory and research. Please organize your paper using the following structure:

1. Background/Context of the Case
2. Key Issues or Challenges in Employee Engagement
3. Main Conclusions of the Case
4. Proposed Solutions/Recommendations – Explain how theories, research, or evidence support your recommendations
5. References – Include at least seven scholarly sources

Your paper should follow APA 7th formatting (e.g., double-spaced, 12-point font) and be four pages in length, excluding references. The dues for this assignment are 11:59 pm on Feb 20 & Mar 6

Engagement Concept Map (20 pts)

Students are expected to create a visual concept map (e.g., mind map, flowchart) that organizes and links major ideas about employee engagement. Alongside the concept map, they should explain and justify the connections represented. For the concept map, students may use digital tools (e.g., Lucidchart, Canva, PowerPoint) or hand-draw it, provided it is scanned clearly. Regardless of the format or tools used, the map should include labels, arrows, and brief notes/citations to illustrate relationships.

1. Theoretical Foundations
   Examples: Kahn's psychological conditions, Schaufeli's engagement model, Byrne's framework
2. Drivers of Engagement
   Examples: leadership, job design, recognition, communication, organizational culture
3. Engagement Outcomes
   Examples: performance, retention, well-being, innovation
4. Mediating or Moderating Factors (if available)
   Examples: individual differences, team dynamics, organizational context

Along with the concept map, students are required to write a four-page paper (excluding references) that explains and justifies the connections in their map. The paper should follow this structure:

1. Introduction (½ page): Briefly introduce the importance of employee engagement; State the purpose of your concept map
2. Explanation of Key Components (2–3 pages): Describe each major concept in your map; Explain relationships among concepts (cause/effect, influences, interactions); Cite course readings and other scholarly sources to justify connections
3. Application / Implications (1 page): Discuss how this conceptual understanding could guide practice in organizations; Suggest ways managers or HR professionals could leverage the identified engagement drivers
4. References: At least 15 scholarly sources

APA 7th edition formatting is required.

Capstone – Organizational Engagement Strategy (30 pts)

Groups of 3–5 students will select a real or hypothetical organization and develop a full engagement strategy tailored to that organization's context. The strategy should include assessment, intervention, communication, and evaluation plans. The key components of the paper (20 pts) should include:

1. Organizational Profile & Context (1–2 pages): Describe the organization (size, industry, culture, workforce demographics); Identify organizational challenges related to engagement; Highlight recent changes, trends, or issues impacting engagement
2. Engagement Assessment (1–2 pages): Conduct a diagnostic assessment (using surveys, interviews, secondary data); Identify key engagement drivers and barriers
3. Proposed Engagement Interventions (3–5 pages): Design specific initiatives to improve engagement (e.g., recognition programs, leadership training, internal communication improvements, job redesign); Explain the rationale for each intervention, citing theory and research; Consider feasibility, cost, and potential impact
4. Implementation Plan & Timeline (1 page): Outline the sequence of activities and responsibilities; Include key stakeholders, roles, and accountability measures; Provide a realistic timeline for rolling out the strategy
5. Evaluation & Metrics (1 page): Identify how engagement success will be measured (e.g., surveys, retention rates, performance metrics); Include short-term and long-term indicators; Explain how findings will inform continuous improvement
6. References: Minimum of 20 scholarly sources

APA 7th edition formatting is required.

Reflection Paper (5 pts)

Write a single-spaced, one-page reflection paper. This end-of-class reflection paper should include lessons learned from accomplishing class assignments.

FINAL GRADES

Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Range	over 90%	80% - 90%	70% - 80%	60% - 70%	below 60%

GRADING GUIDELINES

See Assignment Guidelines on Canvas to ensure that you understand evaluation criteria before beginning an assignment. No incompletes will be awarded unless there is an emergency. **In case of a late submission, there will be one point subtracted from your grade per day.** To receive no penalty for late submission, you must inform me of the reasons why you need an extension or incomplete **in advance**.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Dishonesty Statement

The faculty expects from students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment of the award of a degree, and/or the submission, as one's own work of material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

University regulations require the instructor to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. In the event that disciplinary measures are imposed on the student, it becomes part of the students' official school records. Also, please note that the handbook obligates you to report all observed cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor.

<mark>Plagiarism will not be tolerated,</mark> and learners should be aware that all written course assignments will be checked by plagiarism detection software. Violations of academic integrity will be reported and processed according to the guidelines established by the University.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS STATEMENT OF ETHICS

The ethical problems facing local, national and global business communities are an ever-increasing challenge. It is essential the Soules College of Business help students prepare for lives of personal integrity, responsible citizenship, and public service. In order to accomplish these goals, both students and faculty of the College of Business at UT Tyler will:

- Ensure honesty in all behavior, never cheating or knowingly giving false information.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect for all students and faculty regardless of race, creed, gender, age or religion.
- Develop an environment conducive to learning.
- Encourage and support student organizations and activities.
- Protect property and personal information from theft, damage, and misuse.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner both on and off campus.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to

honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. For this course, AI is permitted only for specific assignments or situations, and appropriate acknowledgment is required. In this course, we may use AI tools (such as ChatGPT and Copilot) to examine how these tools may inform our exploration of the class topics. You will be notified as to when and how these tools will be used, along with guidance for attribution. Using AI tools outside of these parameters violates UT Tyler's Honor Code, constitutes plagiarism, and will be treated as such.

RESOURCES

APA Formatting Guidelines
In this course as in other courses in HRD and the College of Business, you must follow the APA (2020):

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: The official guide to APA style* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

Follow the basics of APA on Canvas Files and see how I referenced publications in this syllabus. You will learn how to write well in a compact and pointed way at the end, as APA is not just about formatting guidelines but also about organizing ideas.

HRD Masterclass Podcast Series (hrdmasterclass.com)
The Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD), which is the premier organization in HRD, has published several podcast series that explore the fundamentals and different aspects of HRD. Each episode includes a one-to-one interview with a guest, as well as a group discussion where two to three guests discuss their shared interest in the episode topic. This is an outstanding resource to understand the most current topics and foundations of HRD.

HRD 5345 COURSE SCHEDULE[1]

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1 (Jan 12-)	Introduction to Employee Engagement	Byrne Ch. 1, 2, & 3	- Class Discussion # 1 - Self-introduction
2	Leadership and Trust	Byrne Ch. 4 McCown et al. Ch 1	- Case Study Analysis #1
3	Leadership and Trust	McCown et al. Ch 2	- Group Project: Employee Engagement Project Part 1
4	Organizational Change	Byrne Ch. 5 McCown et al. Ch 4	- Class Discussion #2
5	Organizational Change	McCown et al. Ch 5	- Case Study Analysis #2
6	Internal Issues and Crises	Byrne Ch. 6 McCown et al. Ch 6	- Engagement Concept Map (in-progress)
7	Employee Activism	Byrne Ch. 7 McCown et al. Ch 10	- Class Discussion #3
8	Internal Communication and Emerging Technologies	Byrne Ch. 8 McCown et al. Ch 11	- Engagement Concept Map - Final - Peer Evaluation #1

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[1] All due dates and assignments are subject to change depending on the circumstances throughout the semester.

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignment
9 (March 9-13)		Spring Break	
10	Internal Communication and Emerging Technologies	McCown et al. Ch 12	- Group Project: Employee Engagement Project Part 2
11	Internal Communication and Engagement in a Global Context	Byrne Ch. 9 McCown et al. Ch 20	- Class Discussion #4
12	Internal Communication and Engagement in a Global Context	McCown et al. Ch 21	- Case Study Analysis #3
13	Internal CSR/CSA	Byrne Ch. 10 McCown et al. Ch 15	- Group Project: Employee Engagement Project Final
14	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Byrne Ch. 11 McCown et al. Ch 17	- Group Project: Employee Engagement Project Presentation
15 (-May 2)	Remote Work, Flexible work, and Work-life Integration	McCown et al. Ch 18	- Peer Evaluation #2 - Reflection Paper

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS
All additional readings, except books and the textbook chapters, will be posted on Canvas.

APPENDIX: Rubrics

Class Discussion Postings

Criteria	Description	Points
Content & Critical Thinking	Clearly addresses the prompt; shows insight and analysis (not just summary); ideas are coherent and well supported.	1
Use of Readings & Scholarly Sources	Appropriately integrates weekly readings and at least one additional scholarly source, with citations where relevant.	1
Writing Quality, Word Count, & Organization	200–250 words; clear, organized, and mostly error-free; follows APA 7th for citations and reference list.	1
Peer Engagement	At least two substantial replies (at least a paragraph each) that add value (new ideas, questions, perspectives, or thoughtful reflection).	1

Case Study Analysis

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Points
Understanding of Case & Context	Demonstrates a strong grasp of the case; clearly explains context and situational factors.	Explains most relevant context with minor gaps.	Context is incomplete, vague, or inaccurate.	1
Identification of Engagement Issues	Clearly identifies key engagement challenges and explains why they matter.	Identifies issues but provides limited explanation or depth.	Issues are unclear, superficial, or misinterpreted.	1
Recommendations & Theoretical Grounding	Provides thoughtful, feasible interventions clearly grounded in theory and research; excellent justification.	Recommendations are reasonable but partially justified or only loosely tied to theory.	Recommendations lack feasibility or theoretical support.	1.5
Use of Scholarly Evidence (≥7 sources)	Effectively integrates required readings and scholarly sources to support arguments.	Uses some relevant scholarly sources but limited integration.	Minimal or poor use of scholarly evidence.	0.5
Organization, Writing Quality, APA & Formatting	Well organized; clear writing; follows structure; APA largely correct; meets length expectations.	Some organization or APA issues, but generally clear.	Disorganized, unclear writing; frequent APA/formatting problems.	0.5
Adherence to Assignment Guidelines	Fully follows required structure and submission guidelines.	Minor deviations.	Significant deviations from format, structure, or instructions.	0.5

Engagement Concept Map

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Points
1. Quality of Concept Map & Organization of Ideas (visual structure, clarity, labels, arrows, relationships)	Map is clear, logical, and visually cohesive; relationships are easy to follow; labels/arrows effectively explain links.	Mostly clear with minor gaps or clutter; most relationships understandable.	Disorganized or difficult to interpret; relationships unclear or missing.	4

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Points
2. Theoretical Foundations & Concept Coverage (inclusion of models, drivers, outcomes, mediators)	Accurately represents key theories and components; integrates foundations, drivers, outcomes, and mediators thoughtfully.	Includes most key components with minor omissions or inaccuracies.	Missing major elements or using theories incorrectly.	4
3. Explanation & Justification in Paper (logic of connections, cause/effect, reasoning)	Clearly explains how concepts connect; strong rationale grounded in theory and research; excellent coherence.	Explains most connections with some justification; reasoning occasionally thin.	Explanations are superficial, unclear, or unsupported.	5
4. Evidence & Scholarship (≥ 15 scholarly sources; integration of readings)	Effectively integrates course readings and additional scholarly sources to support arguments.	Uses several relevant sources but integration is uneven.	Minimal scholarship or weak integration.	3
5. Application / Practical Implications (organizational relevance, HR use)	Provides meaningful, realistic insights for practice; clearly connects concepts to organizational strategy.	Some practical implications but not fully developed.	Limited or unclear application.	2
6. Writing Quality, Structure & APA 7th (organization, clarity, accuracy, formatting)	Well organized, clear, and polished; APA largely correct; meets length and structure requirements.	Generally clear with some organization or APA errors.	Disorganized, unclear, or frequent APA problems.	2

Capstone: Organizational Engagement Strategy
Part 1: Paper

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement	Points
1. Organizational Profile & Context	Provides rich, specific description of organization and engagement challenges; integrates trends and context thoughtfully	Describes organization and challenges clearly; some contextual detail	Basic description; limited discussion of challenges or trends	Minimal or unclear description; lacks relevance	3
2. Engagement Assessment	Uses multiple sources of data; clearly identifies drivers/barriers with strong interpretation	Uses appropriate data; identifies main drivers/barriers	Limited data; drivers/barriers only partially explained	Weak or missing assessment; conclusions unsupported	3
3. Proposed Interventions	Interventions are concrete, theory-driven, feasible, and clearly linked to assessment	Interventions mostly clear and research-supported; links to assessment are evident	Interventions somewhat vague; limited theory or feasibility discussion	Interventions unrealistic, unsupported, or disconnected from findings	5

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement	Points
	findings; considers cost/impact				
4. Implementation Plan & Timeline	Detailed plan with roles, milestones, accountability, and realistic sequencing	Clear plan with most responsibilities/timeline elements defined	General plan; timeline or roles underdeveloped	Plan unclear, missing, or unrealistic	2
5. Evaluation & Metrics	Thoughtful metrics; short- and long-term indicators; clear feedback loop for improvement	Appropriate metrics and indicators; improvement plan mentioned	Limited metrics; unclear link to outcomes	Metrics missing or inappropriate	3
6. Use of Scholarship & APA	Integrates ≥20 scholarly sources persuasively; APA nearly perfect	Uses required sources; minor APA issues	Fewer than required sources OR several APA errors	Weak integration of research; major APA or citation issues	2
7. Organization, Writing Quality	Clear, logical, polished; few or no errors	Mostly clear with minor issues	Organization or clarity sometimes unclear	Hard to follow; frequent errors	2

Part 2: Presentation

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Developing	Needs Improvement	Points
1. Visual Presentation of Slides (3 pts)	Professional, consistent design; strong visuals; minimal text; enhances understanding	Clear and readable; minor clutter; visuals mostly helpful	Sometimes hard to read; too much text; visuals limited	Distracting, cluttered, or poorly formatted	/3
2. Delivery Effectiveness (tone, volume, confidence, professionalism) (4 pts)	Engaging, confident, well-paced; clear voice; strong presence; highly professional	Mostly confident; minor pacing or volume issues	Uneven delivery (monotone, rushed, or quiet); limited engagement	Hard to follow; unprofessional or disengaged	/4
3. Clarity & Organization of Content (3 pts)	Logical flow; smooth transitions; key points easy to follow and remember	Generally organized; minor gaps or transitions missing	Some confusing sections; organization inconsistent	Disorganized; ideas unclear or poorly sequenced	/3

APPENDIX 2: Peer Evaluation Form

Evaluate each member (including you) by circling the number that best reflects the extent to which he/she participated, prepared, helped the group excel and was a team player. Use the following ratings:

4 Usually (over 90% of the time)   2 Sometimes (less than half the time)
3 Frequently (more often than not)   1 Rarely (never or once in a great while)

Preparation Prepared for team meetings; has read course material and understands the issues and subject matter; completes team assignments on time; attends and is on time to team meetings				
Participation & Communication Articulates ideas effectively when speaking or writing; submits papers without grammatical errors; listens to others; encourages others to talk; persuasive when appropriate				
Helps Group Excel Expresses great interest in group success by evaluating ideas and suggestions; initiates problem solving; influences and encourages others to set high standards; doesn't accept just any idea but looks for the best ideas; stays motivated from beginning to end of projects				
Team Player (Cooperation) Knows when to be a leader and a follower; keeps an open mind; compromises when appropriate; can take criticism; respects others				
Member Name	**Team Player**	**Helps Group Excel**	**Participation & Communication**	**Preparation**
	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely
	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely
	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely
	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely
	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely
(yourself)	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely	4 usually 3 frequently 2 sometimes 1 rarely

(Source: Adapted from Baker (2008), p. 205)

Please use this space for any additional comments.

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Honor Pledge: To the best of my recollection and ability, the above ratings accurately reflect the performance of my peers as well as mine.

Signature: _____   Date: _____