



**The University of Texas at Dallas  
Naveen Jindal School of Management  
COURSE SYLLABUS**

**OBHR 4335  
Wed 7-9:45 in JSOM 2.112 2.803  
Training and Development  
Fall 2025**



# SYLLABUS

## OBHR 4335 – Training and Development

August to December, 2025

### INSTRUCTOR

---

Professor Dr. Mark A. Morris  
Email address mark.morris@utdallas.edu

Office Hours JSOM 3.205 | Tues/Thurs. 2:30-4 PM  
Appointments during office hours are not necessary, but it's still useful to give me a heads-up if you're planning to stop by in case I already have others coming. Other days & times available via appointment, both virtually and in-person depending on student needs.

#### Communication Guidance

For all communications, please start with your name and when our class meets (e.g., "Hi Dr. Morris, my name is Hannah Brown, and I am in your Wed night Recruiting class"). This type of intro will enable a faster response. You can email me any day/time of the week and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

---

This course focuses on the effective development of talent within organizations. It covers needs analysis, training design and delivery, leadership development, learning in a skills-based organization, knowledge transfer, learning technology, and the impact and evaluation of training and development initiatives. The course will equip the student to determine when training is appropriate, what type of training (content and delivery) is needed, when alternatives to training are better suited to meet the organization's objectives, and how to determine the return on investment in training.  
Prerequisites: OBHR 3310 and OBHR 3330.

### COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

---

This course is an introduction to Training and Development in the HR function and will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate how training and development can be applied to manage talent
- Design training programs to solve business problems
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training and development programs
- Be able to explain multiple training and development methods
- Be able to ensure training and development programs drive a positive employee experience

- Explore technology driving employee learning

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

---

**Books:** Noe, R.A (2022). Employee Training and Development: 9th Ed. McGraw-Hill

**Note:** The publisher's "Connect" subscription is NOT required

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE (may vary based on professor's discretion and speaker availability)

---

Dates	Topic	Prep
Aug 27	Introductions / group assignments	Noe: Chapter 1 + 2 Team Project Launch
Sept 3	Needs Analysis and Learning Objectives	Noe: Chapter 3
Sep 10	Designing Training	Noe: Chapter 5 / <b>Quiz 1 available online</b>
Sep 17	Delivering Training	Noe: Ch. 7
Sept 24	Learning technology	Noe: Ch. 8 / <b>Quiz 2 available online</b>
Oct 1	IDPs and employee development	Exercise
Oct 8	Training evaluation and Metrics	Noe. Ch.6 <b>REQUIRED TEAM PROJECT CHECK IN</b>
Oct 15	Mid Term Exam	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>
Oct 22	Onboarding and Career Development	Noe: Ch.9
Oct 29	Leadership Development	Noe: Ch. 10, <b>Quiz 3 available online</b>
Nov 5	Knowledge Transfer	Noe: Ch.4 / <b>REQUIRED TEAM PROJECT CHECK IN</b>
Nov 12	Future Trends	Noe: Ch. 10 / <b>Quiz 4 available online</b>
Nov 19	Team Presentations	
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Holiday	Noe: Ch. 15
Dec 3	Team Presentations and Paper Due	
Dec 11-16	Final Exam Period	Date TBD - Final Exam

## ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

---

### General Notes on Grading Areas:

**Assessment:** It is common in HR to do testing for development purposes. You will get some exposure to standard tools and instruments, but you will not be graded on these test results; they are for your own development and insight.

**Team Project:**

While lectures and readings will expose you to knowledge, concepts and solutions, the Team Project is where you will apply them and really integrate them into your own personal skill set. Teams are expected to present at the end of the semester. See Appendices for more.

**Classwork:**

During some classes student teams will complete short exercises (e.g., write a performance goal). These will be submitted by the end of each class and a grade assigned to the entire team. Classwork is intended to encourage teamwork, reinforce learning, provide feedback, and aid progress on the term paper / presentation. Classwork cannot be made up, so if you miss a class with an exercise you will lose classwork points as well as participation/attendance points.

**Quizzes:**

There will be 4 quizzes, spaced throughout the course. These will be short, usually <5 multiple choice questions and will be done through e-learning. They will be used to assess learning progress, provide feedback and calibration, and identify areas requiring more coverage.

**Mid-Term & Final Exam:**

There will be two exams. The mid-term will cover the first half of the course and the final will cover the entire course and also questions from team presentations. Content will be drawn in part from the book and slides, but also will include a meaningful percentage from lecture and class discussions. The mid-term will typically contain 18-25 multiple-choice questions and 4-6 short answer questions and will be completed in class and the final will be twice that length. No exams will be dropped. If you cannot attend on the date of an exam, you will be expected to contact me and make arrangements one week in advance to take it prior to the rest of the class. Unacceptable excuses will receive a 0. **NOTE - Extra credit is available to add up to 10 points to the lowest exam grade based on the instructor's ongoing research.**

**Slides for Note Taking:**

The presentation slides will be shared shortly before each class session for the purposes of notetaking. Many comments in lecture and from class discussions will be relevant to exam content, but the book chapters and slides alone will not provide sufficient material to pass the class.

**Guest Speakers:**

We may have prominent local HR leaders as guest speakers and course timing may change based on their availability. It is particularly important to attend these classes as you are representing the University and gaining valuable visibility to a potential employer.

**Team Project Overview:**

The Team project integrates your learning from reading and lecture and creates an opportunity to apply and showcase your skills. Based on the number of students in a specific class, teams will be formed such that each group of students represents a Training and Development team tasked with creating a specific course. You will be provided with the results of a Needs Analysis for a fictional retailer (your internal client) and must design a training program to meet the need, delivering an oral presentation of course content by the end of the semester to the fictional HR Leadership team (to get it funded and approved) for Highe Ende Home Improvement. See appendices for more details.

Teams:

- 1) IT – this team will need to develop cybersecurity training on two tracks: Awareness for all employees (compliance) and technical training for all software engineers who touch company source code.
- 2) Supply Chain – this team will need to develop training on Lean Six Sigma methods to reduce waste and improve efficiency in warehouse and distribution facilities.
- 3) Merchandise – this team will be building training to accelerate bench development for Buyers, a high burnout job that is critical to company success
- 4) Stores A – this team will build onboarding for new hourly hires in the Stores, with a standard portion and some customized portions for customer facing and non-customer facing roles.
- 5) Stores B – this team will build 1<sup>st</sup> line leader training for new managers (former individual contributors).

You will need to select one and join a team or be assigned in the first week of class. Teams will work together each week during classwork assignments and will leverage independent work and results from these assignments to produce several deliverables that will be due at the end of the semester. Details on the deliverables are in the Appendix below. Team project grades will be partly based on peer ratings to ensure accountability on an individual's project contributions while the remaining points will be based on instructor ratings of the report and presentation and will be the same for all team members. You are one team and must learn to work together to be successful, including good communications and holding each other accountable. Select team roles accordingly.

**ORIGINAL WORK Expectation:**

For any/all assignments, it is expected that your work is originally yours. While you can and should consult external sources for inspiration and to review the literature for research support, all use of external sources should be cited appropriately according to the APA 7th edition writing style standards. This includes any/all use of ChatGPT or other AI tools. Assignments will be reviewed for usage levels of external resources, and this includes A.I. Work that is heavily based on AI per the instructor's AI Detectors will be subject to penalties up to and including zero credit. In addition, when plagiarism becomes known, there will be consequences subject to the University's Judicial Affairs.

**GRADING**

---

Assignments	Point Value
1 <sup>st</sup> half Participation / Attendance	5
2 <sup>nd</sup> half Participation / Attendance	5
1 <sup>st</sup> half Classwork	5
2 <sup>nd</sup> half Classwork	5
Quizzes (all four)	10
Mid-Term Exam	15
Final Exam	25
Team Project	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## GRADE CUTOFFS

<b>A+</b>	<b>98-100%</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>94-97%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-93%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>84-86%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>80-83%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>77-79%</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>74-76%</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>70-73%</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>67-69%</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>64-66%</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>60-63%</b>

**Participation / Attendance:** It is my expectation that students will conduct themselves professionally and earn trust with honorable behavior, following the Comet Creed. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. Class attendance is documented by faculty. Successful participation includes engaging with and respectfully contributing to class discussion and peer learning. Students can maximize their own learning in class by engaging in class activities with full attention and deeply processing the material presented. The 10 points available for Participation / Attendance will be based on absences (half) and contribution to class discussions (half). 1 point will be deducted for every 2 classes missed.

Just as in life, you must be present to be successful. Missing class means you're missing content, and since exams are heavily based on class presentations, this will negatively affect your learning and grade. Falsifying attendance records is an ethical issue and a violation of the Comet Creed.

**Extra Credit:** There will be opportunities to earn extra credit by completing a 1 hour research project involving videogames for hiring or alternatively reading and writing article reviews.

## COURSE, PROGRAM, and UNIVERSITY POLICIES

---

**Comet Creed:** This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same: "As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

**Submitting Work & Make-up's:** All deliverables should be submitted on or before the due date/time listed. Assignments submitted after the due date are subject to rejection or reduced grades at the instructor's discretion. No makeups for exams or other assignments are built into the schedule. Extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the professor, and to the extent possible, in advance of missing any deadlines.

**Class Behavior and Citizenship:** Students should demonstrate respect when challenging other opinions, and disagreements should be handled professionally.

**Class Recordings:** Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access systems, content, and any recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

**Accommodation:** The University of Texas at Dallas is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008), you are required to register with the AccessAbility Resource Center, located in the Administration Building (AD), Suite 2.224. Their phone number is 972-883-2098, email: [accessability@utdallas.edu](mailto:accessability@utdallas.edu) and website is <https://accessability.utdallas.edu>. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper AccessAbility Resource Center letter of accommodation and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, facilitating academic dishonesty, fabrication, failure to contribute to a collaborative project and sabotage. All cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for investigation.

#### **Academic Support Resources**

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students. Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

**Course Evaluation:** The completion of a UTD course evaluation is strongly recommended. A link will be provided via eLearning for completing the course evaluation.

#### **Class Materials**

The instructor will provide some materials in class to all students registered for this class. They are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced, shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

**UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures:** The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the credit/no credit or pass/fail grading option and withdrawal from class. Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

*The content and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*

### **APPENDIX A - Team Project Grading and Needs Analysis**

The Team Project is worth 30% of the final grade. Below are guidelines.

#### **Peer Rating = 10/30 pts of the Team Project grade**

- This is intended to hold individuals accountable by the people who directly witnessed their contributions to the project. It will be based on the average of peer ratings, and will vary by individual.

- *NOTE:* I strongly encourage you to accurately rate your peers. In cases of clear collusion (e.g., everyone agrees to give everyone else 5/5 on literally everything), the Instructor rating will be 100% of the Team Project grade

**Instructor Rating = 20/30 pts. Considerations include:**

- Required Check Ins are completed, showing effort and progress
- Training Strategy identifies targeted job families, links to business strategy and makes a persuasive case that it will fix the problems described in the Needs Analysis
- All requirements are met (e.g., 5-10 page paper, 10-15 slides, etc.)
- The Training Strategy contains goals, and a plan to attain them. Include expected results and resources needed.
- Training Plan must make sense given the business and organizational context of Highe Ende
- Sections overview:
  - o Program description – what content will be covered, where, who will teach it, remote/in person, how long will it take, costs
  - o Instructors – any prep, materials needed, vendors, tech, etc
  - o Participants – criteria for selection, eligibility and pre-requisites, other requirements, number
  - o Timeline for implementation, including communications and any change management needed
  - o Evaluation plan – metrics you will use to determine if training is effective, evaluate the program and make changes
  - o Sunset or exit strategy – when will program be discontinued, and if evergreen, why?
- Conclusion section should summarize your solutions and emphasize the ROI and innovative ideas for how this program will add value to Highe Ende. This is your chance to include outside credible data and research too.
- Powerpoint flows smoothly, is well written, fully consistent with the report, and any graphics support the story
- Word doc is in APA style
- ***All work must be ORIGINAL. Anything that shows up as AI-generated will be given a zero***

**HIGHE ENDE Needs Analysis by Team**

I. IT – Cybersecurity

Surveys indicate there is a need for all employees to be more aware of hacking and ransomware attacks, and within IT, more technical acumen is needed to increase security of company systems. As the company’s digital complexity increases, there are more avenues of attack for Black Hat hackers, including customer loyalty programs, point of sale devices (insider threat), inventory and merchandise systems. IT will need to work with the Loss Prevention team and Legal. Last year we saw a 24% uptick in attacks and 2% more merchandise than in previous years was unaccounted for somewhere in the supply chain. It has not yet been tracked down. Executive leadership team reports sharp increases in phishing attempts, especially in District staff administrative computers and the Highe Ende website was down for an entire weekend during Fathers Day. As a result, the ELT has authorized budget to increase security team headcount and add more training in addition to a new auditing team to avoid a customer data breach. Learning objectives include: Reduce risk of downtime in critical systems, Increase phishing detection rates, Reduce loss of inventory to internal accounting errors or theft, Improve data security awareness and practices of all employees, and Ensure regulatory compliance without sacrificing innovation.

## II. Supply Chain – Lean Six Sigma

High End's distribution centers, procurement process, inventory management software and fulfillment operations have not changed since 2010 and according to a senior new external hire from Amazon who has agreed to fund better tech, training and dashboards, we have many opportunities. Supply Chain Directors at individual centers have committed to empowering more front-line employees and map processes to identify waste and defects. Learning objectives include: Improve knowledge of Lean/Six Sigma methodologies and apply to reduce waste, Improve cost per unit, Increase delivery times, Improve forecasting accuracy to reduce stockouts and excess inventory, Plug holes to reduce missing and lost merchandise which improves customer satisfaction and enhances profit.

## III. Merchandise – Build bench

The Merchandise team at High End is an elite group, drawn to work with one of the most respected Chief Merchandise Officers in all of retail (Kent Spix). Turnover data show low attrition and high engagement and they are paid at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile. However, new hires at the Assistant Buyer job who are still learning the business and the Buyer job are struggling and burning out, with much higher exit rates. Their exit surveys show frustration with Kent's high standards and "old school" approach re: tech. Kent is determined to turn this around, and wants to see training programs and job designs that have noticeable impact on the bench for Buyer and Sr Buyer jobs. Learning objectives for Abs include: Improve vendor management and Negotiation skills (#1 by far), Increase ability to spot patterns and trends to make in-season adjustments to pricing and inventory, Increase skills at assortment planning, for Sr Buyers – Identify and develop talent, Improve retention and engagement.

## IV. Stores A – Onboarding

During a recent walk through with regional leaders, the CEO held a town hall in San Antonio and heard from several newly hired employees who felt unprepared to answer customer question about products. The CEO felt that this was not consistent with a good shopping experience and directed Store HR and operational leaders to address this across the chain. Learning objectives include: Improve project and job knowledge, Accelerate acculturation into the High End way, Reduce variance in onboarding experiences but offer a customer facing and back-office support track to keep onboarding relevant to work, Ensure better retention of hourly workers, Improve customer satisfaction.

## V. Stores B – Commissioned Sales

Headquarters has detected a recent drop off in sales productivity in commissioned departments at High End. While In-Home Consultants are selling more per hour than ever before, the In Store commissioned sales staff in Furniture, Window Coverings and Lighting are all seeing drops in sales per hour, which began when we had a large wave of turnover during the pandemic of very experienced people. The CHRO has decided that we need to rebuild sales skills in our current incumbents to enhance sales productivity, as they have current tech tools, competitive pay, and attractive merchandise. Learning Objectives include: Improve active listening skills, Handling objections, Closing, Add ons, Long term relationship building, Product / Need matching, Knowledge of marketing and promotions, and Managing rejection.

## APPENDIX B - Team Project Roles

Your team will be expected to find data from credible sources (e.g., ATD, industry groups, competitors, etc.) to integrate into the ppt and report.

<i>Deliverable</i>	<i>Includes</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Expect to talk for 15-20 minutes with an additional 10 minutes for questions. Shoot for 10-12 slides. At least 2 slides should visually represent sample content from the program you are building. Start by describing the business problem to be solved, including level of urgency and then get into the training program in detail, taking the HRLT through it from the perspective of the participant's experience and why this will help to address the problems identified in the needs analysis. Your goal is to anticipate objections and get approval to proceed.</i>
<i>Final report</i>	<i>5-7 pages in Word or pdf plus any figures and references. In addition, the Appendix should include a 2-4 page Facilitator's Guide</i>
<i>Peer ratings form</i>	<i>Will be provided</i>

Pick roles early. While each of you should contribute in multiple areas it is useful to have role clarity for accountability and efficiency.

- Agree on how and when to meet and contact each other
- 1. **Project Coordinator** – sets up Google Docs/Dropbox/Slack channel etc. for file sharing. Sends out comms/sets up meetings and team organizing protocols. Ensures everyone is on board with the plans, coordinates information sharing and alignment/agreement. Team touchpoint to Dr. Morris, and keeps everyone in the loop.
- 2. **Technology** – primary responsibility for determining how learning content will work with the LMS, including any web playable development, data collection, videos, etc. This person will write sections on tech methods and provide screenshots for slides, answering any technical questions from the HRLT.
- 3. **Writers** – primary owner for creating the final report, including pulling together sections written by others into “one voice”. Should have 1 just for Facilitator’s Guide and one for rest of report. Coordinate with ppt author.
- 4. **Presenter/Graphics** – primary responsibility for drafting the ppt and creating any visualizations. May also be lead presenter.

TIPS:

BE SPECIFIC. Describe the training program as if you were actually planning to implement it, thinking through costs, and how it would work in an actual company (would people do it after work, broken up over time, etc.).

## SCENARIO – High End Home Improvement

### OVERVIEW / MARKET

Highe’s runs about 680 premium home improvement stores located primarily in urban and suburban areas often near college campuses in the United States and Canada. These stores target a more affluent new money consumer (median income \$110k) and enjoy a high net sales rate per square foot of selling space. Merchants and commissioned salespeople need to be very on trend to appeal to this fickle customer group or the company will drop back to a \$4b business, as it was from 1971-1994. Store traffic was down more than competition during and after the pandemic but has increased steadily since 2022 and jumped during the holiday season in late 2024. Their customers are less affected by gas prices or inflation than WMT customers.

### FINANCIALS

In 2024, Highe’s total revenue was \$19.7b (up 9% from 2023) with a solid EBIT of \$2.8b (up 160% vs. 2023) across all stores. The six new Canadian stores saw their own sales grow 12% and earned an EBIT of 7.2% - while they are only 1% of total revenue, they look promising. The company sales plan is to grow same store sales by 4% in 2025 on top of a fantastic 15% same store sales increase in 2024 and get new Stores up to full productivity faster. An average store does about \$29m in sales but Store footprints range from smaller stores of \$10m in San Jose CA and New York City markets to large \$40m stores in Houston, Phoenix, Vancouver, and Atlanta.

### PRODUCTS & PEOPLE

Highe’s targets 75<sup>th</sup> percentile compensation to all 142,000 employees (only 50% are part-time), and has dedicated, full-time benefits eligible commissioned sales teams on the floor in Furnishings, Window Coverings, and Lighting departments that offer in-home consultations. The average headcount per store is about 200, plus there are people in regional and headquarters locations. Top selling items in 2024 include earth-toned silks, vintage design elements, antiques and art. Fashion jewelry, meme-based tops, eccentric beanies and berets were big sellers in 2023. The Chief Merchant, Kent Spix, is known around the industry as a thought leader and brought a large following of skilled merchants to the company when he joined as heir apparent to the CEO in 2020.

Headcount as of Aug 2025

Level	Merchandise	Stores NE	Stores South	Stores Central	Stores West	Marketing	Tech	Finance	Supply Chain	International (Canada)
Entry level	70	7231	7095	6822	8664	72	50	70	9158	373
Mid-level	158	9917	9730	9356	11882	135	468	152	10709	390
Sr level	323	7874	7725	7428	9399	561	362	130	1464	412
Managers	95	2970	2901	2802	3559	132	120	78	225	147
Sr Mgt level	20	204	200	192	244	30	14	12	36	11

Center Directors, Store Managers, VPs and Directors are Sr Mgr level and their directs are Managers. Hourly will be in entry level and mid level (more experienced hourly), with supervisors in Stores located in Senior level. Non-Stores will find new college grads in entry level job category, 5 yrs exp in mid level, 10 yrs in Senior.