

Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for HR Professionals
Summer 2025
Course #: 38:533:648:G1
Logistics: Online/Asynchronous

Professor: Kyra Leigh Sutton, Ph.D.

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Virtual Office Hours: Thursdays, By Appointment (Includes evening hours until 800PM).

Website: <https://tlt.rutgers.edu/canvas>

Course Dates. Our course will run for eight weeks, from Tuesday, May 27, 2025, to Friday, July 18, 2025.

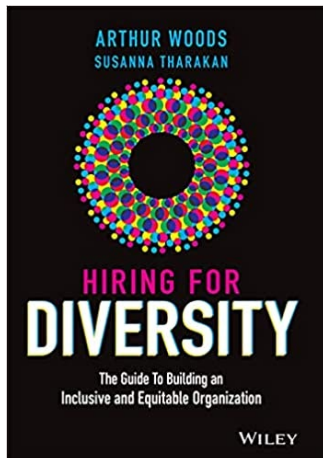
Required Textbook*

Hiring for Diversity: The Guide to Building an Inclusive and Equitable Organization 1st Edition

Arthur Woods & Susanna Tharakan

ISBN: 978-1-119-80090-3

***You are required to buy and receive the textbook during the 1st week of the semester. You can order the book [here](#) or [here](#).**



Course Description/Objectives. As workplaces evolve, our diversity, inclusion, and equity practices, policies, and initiatives must grow in tangent. Our *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for HR Professionals* course will provide a foundation for understanding diversity and inclusion in the workplace and the implications of working in diverse organizational environments in the United States.

Specifically, this course is designed to help students understand why diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential to organizations using a human resources lens. Further, students will consider how HR partners with the business to create strategies and execute various DEI initiatives (e.g., recruiting, interviewing, mentoring, managing internal talent, and training and developing employees). This course will be taught in an applied manner. We will rely on various resources (e.g., discussion posts, articles, videos, case studies, and recorded guest lectures) to provide a foundation.

My primary goal is for students to leave this class understanding HR's role in creating, leading, implementing, and measuring the success of DEI initiatives within workplaces. While some HR

employees will gravitate towards DEI roles, all HR team members are responsible for supporting and championing inclusive and equitable workplace practices.

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss the role of HR professionals in building and sustaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.
- Describe contemporary issues that affect the employment experiences of underrepresented candidates and employees.
- Discuss how to promote inclusivity in relation to four HR initiatives: employer branding, sourcing, interview practices, and internal mobility.
- Describe initiatives that assist organizations in retaining diverse talent, including mentorship programs and employee training initiatives.

Course Materials. In addition to the textbook noted above, a variety of reading materials, including articles, research papers, and reports, will be available on Canvas. The readings will be divided into two categories: **required** and **supplemental** materials. Depending on the nature of the assignment, additional readings may be included as part of the assignment instructions.

Course Topics. The following topics will be covered in this course:

Topics	Week(s)
Introduction to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	1
Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part One (Understanding Underrepresented Job Seekers)	2
Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part Two (Inclusive Branding, Corporate Landing Pages & Job Descriptions)	3
Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part Three (Strategic Sourcing & Inclusive Interview Strategies)	4
Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part Four (Inclusive Internal Talent Mobility)	5
DEI – Social Support, Part One (Mentorship)	6
Diversity Training and Its Effectiveness, Part One	7
Diversity Training and Its Effectiveness, Part Two	8

*****A description of the weekly topics is available starting on page 7 of this document.***

Inclusivity Statement. As the instructor for this class, I will promote and maintain an equitable and just learning environment. I welcome and value individuals and their differences. By fostering a willingness to hear and learn from various sources and viewpoints, we will gain competence in communication, critical thinking, and awareness of our biases and how they affect our interactions with others.

Although we are asynchronous, the course offers an interactive learning environment. Your open-minded, honest, and respectful participation is critical to creating a virtual experience in which we all feel comfortable sharing our views, experiences, and knowledge so that we can all learn from each other.

I want to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.).

To help accomplish this: If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to contact me. Remember that you can also submit

anonymous feedback (which will lead to me making a general announcement to the class, if necessary, to address your concerns).

Finally, I (like many people) am still learning about many diverse perspectives and identities. If anything was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please contact me. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option.) As a participant in this course, you should also strive to honor the diversity of your classmates.

SMLR Learning Objectives.

The **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for HR Professionals** course is designed with the following learning objectives for the School of Management and Labor Relations.

I. Application – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance.

- Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge to understanding contemporary developments related to work.
- Understand the legal, regulatory, and ethical issues related to their field.
- Develop human resource management functional capabilities used to select, motivate, and develop workers (HRM)
- Understand the internal and external alignment and measurement of human resource practices (HRM)

II. Understanding Context - Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of and perspectives on work
- Analyze a contemporary global issue in their field from a multi-disciplinary and intersectional perspective
- Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems
- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (LSER)
- Analyze issues related to the selection, motivation, and development of talent in a local and global context (HRM)

Method of Instruction. This course is delivered *entirely online* through the Learning Management System Canvas. There will be **no** Face-to-Face classroom sessions. The course is delivered in *asynchronous* mode. This means the learning activities and communication takes place outside of real-time. You do not have to log in at any specific scheduled time; you log in at your convenience. However, the instructor will host virtual office hours to address questions.

Student Preparation and Time Commitment. You will spend an average of **three hours** a week reading and analyzing the course material (e.g., readings, recorded lectures, interviews). Additionally, you will spend another **four** hours completing assignments and participating in course discussions.

Partners are required. Given the nature of our topic, DEI, it will be important to have someone in the class with whom you can discuss the readings, lectures, and assignments. As such, you must work with a partner throughout the semester.

Prof. Sutton will randomly assign the partners during the 2nd week of class. If you know of someone within the class with whom you'd like to be partners– please reach out to Prof Sutton as soon as possible (professorkyrasutton@gmail.com)

*It will be important to ensure that both names appear on all assignments in Canvas. Also, each partner must submit a copy of the (same) assignment on Canvas. Failure of both partners to submit the assignment will result in both people receiving a zero.

Student Responsibilities.

Online learning requires a high level of discipline, dedication, and time management skills. While online learning offers you flexibility and convenience to learn from any place, anytime, you are still expected to adhere to all due dates.

Further, you are expected to:

- Have access to a reliable computer and access to the Internet
- Log in to Canvas for your course on a daily basis
- Work with your assigned partner throughout the semester
- Read the weekly email sent by Professor Sutton – each Sunday
- Check for any announcements about the assignments and/or discussions and respond accordingly
- Actively participate in the Discussion Forums
- Read the assigned materials
- Watch assigned videos
- Complete weekly assignments and adhere to all due dates
- In case of computer failure:

Make sure you have an alternative plan of access to your Canvas course if your computer crashes (it happens). An extra computer at home, your employer's computer, or a computer at your local library can be some alternatives. Additionally, back up your important documents and assignments on a flash drive or other external device.

Computer/Software/Apps/Accessories Requirement.

- [Adobe Flash – the latest version \(you will need it to view videos\)](#)
- Access to the internet
- Microsoft Word
- Webcam (recommended)
- Headphones (highly recommended)
- Reliable computer
- [Basic Computer Specifications for Canvas](#)

Contacting Professor Sutton.

If your inquiry is of a personal/private nature, including scheduling a one-on-one session, please contact Professor Sutton at professorkyrasutton@gmail.com

Special Needs Accommodations. If you have a disability and require special accommodations for your learning activities, please contact the Office of Disability Services. Should you require my assistance facilitating the process, I will be happy to do so. Just let me know.

Below is the full contact information for the office of disability services:

Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8045.

- E-mail Address: dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu
- Phone: (848) 445-6800 • Fax: (732) 445-3388 <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Student Code of Conduct. You are expected to conduct yourself professionally, responsibly, courteously, and respectfully at all times during the course. Offensive language, harassment, posting videos or other media that is not related to the course, and/or any other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will result in dire consequences, including dismissal from the course. Your responses to discussion posts or any other communication with your classmates and/or your instructor must be of the highest professional and respectable standard. Refer to [Discussion Post Guidelines](#) when communicating in your Canvas class.

Academic Integrity. Be sure to read and adhere to Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy. Academic integrity goes directly to the question of are you an individual of character and honesty? It also affects the reputation of Rutgers University. So, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Principles of academic integrity require that every Rutgers University student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress
- uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that:

- everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments
- all student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered
- the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.
- Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

– The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy

Course Structure. The course is structured by weekly modules. Each week is comprised of a combination of activities, including:

- Recorded Lectures (You are **required** to listen to the lectures included in the modules)
- Readings (articles, research reports)

- Multimedia (videos, interviews, podcasts, or other)
- Discussion Posts
- Quizzes
- Assignments (exercises, case studies)

Course Grades.

Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

Performance Opportunities	Max Points	Percentage (Approx.)
Partner Assignments	260 pts	52%
Quizzes	180 pts	36%
Discussions	60 pts	12%
Total	500 pts	

Final grades will be determined by the scales shown below:

Grade	Total Points	Range (%)
A	450 – 500	90 – 100
B+	425 – 449	85 – 89
B	400 – 424	80 – 84
C+	375 – 399	75 – 79
C	350 – 374	70 – 74
D	300 – 349	60 – 69
F	348 or below	59 and below

Extra Credit. Extra credit will **not** be offered for this course.

Applied Assignments (worth up to 260 points).

This course includes **TWO graded assignments**, both of which must be completed with your partner(s). These assignments are designed to help you explore how HR professionals can **initiate or support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts** in the workplace. Assignments may take a variety of forms. Examples include:

- **Research and Reflection**
 - Research summaries with accompanying memos
 - Papers on current workplace events related to workplace inclusion and belonging
 - Proposals for launching new employee resource groups (ERGs)
 - Papers analyzing the impact of company policy changes on employees and consumers
- **Tools & Resources**
 - Workplace inclusion toolkits for HR professionals or managers
 - Inclusive communication guides
- **Training & Education**
 - Training decks on recruiting and retaining diverse talent
 - Training modules for building inclusive learning environments (e.g., for employees with disabilities)
- **Experiential & Cultural Engagement**
 - Exercises focused on fostering inclusion through **cultural experiences** (e.g., visiting places outside of the office to learn about and celebrate cultures different from your own)

- Community partnership proposals (e.g., working with local organizations to enhance workplace inclusion)

Additional details about the assignments are included on Canvas.

Late Assignments.

You are expected to submit your assignments on the specified due dates. Refer to your Canvas classroom for the weekly assignment due dates.

Late assignments grading policy is as follows:

- 1 day late – 15% will be deducted from your total grade.
- 2 days late – 25% will be deducted from your total grade.
- 3 days late – 35% will be deducted from your total grade.

Assignments over 4 days late will NOT be accepted, and your grade for that specific assignment will be zero.

Quizzes (worth up to 180 points). This course includes **SIX graded quizzes**, each worth up to **30 points**. These quizzes are designed to encourage students to engage with the recorded lectures and to assess their knowledge and understanding of the material.

Discussions (worth up to 60 points). This course includes **THREE graded discussion posts**, each worth up to **20 points**. Some discussions will require you to conduct an information search, while others may be connected to your partner assignments. Because of the asynchronous format of this course, these discussions are designed to encourage meaningful interaction with your peers. **Please note that discussion posts cannot be made up**, so it's important to participate by the posted deadlines.

Grading Criteria.

Discussions will be graded based on the following criteria:

- **Guidelines** – Follow guidelines related to the length of the post, submission date, and answers to the discussion prompt.
- **Analysis** – Ability to think logically about the topic and incorporate themes from the readings/personal and work experiences/research into the discussion post.
- **Peer Responses** – Meets the required number of peer responses; stimulates further discussion about the topic; Demonstrates respect for other people's views and opinions. Avoids statements such as "I disagree..."
- **Writing Mechanics** – Posts are clearly written, easy to follow, and free of grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors.

Discussion Ground Rules. *Your core values and identities influence your views on diversity, equity, and inclusion. And it can be a sensitive and emotional topic. Please help promote a safe environment for others to share their views and learn about your views. If you have trouble understanding another person's views, try asking a question such as: 'That's interesting... tell me more about why you think X.'*

Important Note! *The instructor will remove any post that is deemed to include insensitive or inappropriate language. The student will have an opportunity to re-do the discussion post should the instructor remove it*

USE OF GEN AI TOOLS. This course requires you to complete various assignments that assess your understanding and application of the course content. You are expected to do your own work and properly cite any sources you use. Unless a statement is included in the directions for an assignment or discussion post, you are NOT PERMITTED to use any artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as chatbots, text generators, paraphrasers, summarizers, or solvers to complete any part of your assignments. Any attempt to use these tools will be considered academic misconduct. Students are expected to complete all work independently and without the assistance of AI-generated content. If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable use of AI tools, please consult with the instructor before submitting your work.

Description of Weekly Modules

The course is divided into **8 weeks** and includes:

Weekly Overviews

Below, a high-level overview of each week is provided.

Week 1: Introduction to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

- **Topic Overview** – Companies whose leaders welcome diverse talent and include multiple perspectives outperform those organizations not focused on diversity, inclusion, and equity. Companies will not reap benefits from diversity unless they build a culture that insists on inclusion & equity. Innovation, creativity, and teamwork flourish when women and people of color are encouraged to bring their different backgrounds and perspectives to the table. They must be seen, heard, and valued. And leaders must be held accountable for keeping a pulse on employee experiences.
- **Learning Objectives**
 - Define and discuss the differences between diversity, inclusion, and equity (DEI).
 - Describe the top DEI priorities on which organizations are focused on improving
 - Explain why diversity programs fail.
 - Discuss the DEI initiatives that leading companies are implementing

Week 2: Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part One (Understanding Underrepresented Job Seekers)

- **Topic Overview** – “Research shows that understanding diverse applicants' cultural backgrounds will help interviewers eliminate barriers caused by bias, prejudice, and stereotypes. A lack of understanding can lead to unintentional or intentional discrimination in the hiring process. If this results in the loss of qualified diverse applicants, it can harm applicants and employers.” (Lila Kelly - Integrate Diversity into Recruiting, Interviewing, and Hiring). Therefore, this topic focuses on understanding the experiences of underrepresented job applicants. We'll explore the challenges candidates experience, including stereotypes members of this group have experienced. Drawing from Arthur Woods' and Susan Tharakan's *Hiring for Diversity – The Guide to Building an Inclusive and Equitable Organization*, we will explore the experiences of the following underrepresented job seekers:
 - Working Parents
 - Older and experienced workers
 - Refugees and immigrants
 - LGBTQ+ community
 - People with Disabilities
 - Veterans
 - Justice impacted individuals

- Black Community
- Hispanic and Latinx community
- Indigenous and Native American community
- Women
- Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community

Notably – this is not intended to be an exhaustive list of underrepresented job seekers.

- **Learning Objectives**

- Discuss the experiences of underrepresented job seekers
- Describe the most common biases and challenges underrepresented job seekers and employees experience
- Explain how HR professionals can advocate for underrepresented job seekers

Week 3: Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part Two (Inclusive Branding, Corporate Landing Pages & Job Descriptions)

- **Topic Overview** – Research shows a history of widespread bias in corporate recruitment activities. Meanwhile, data shows that over 50% of new entrants to the workforce are people of color, and women constitute more than 60% of all new applicants. And yet, unconscious racism, ageism, and sexism play a significant role in who gets hired. However, there are steps organizations can take to reduce bias and attract diverse candidates to the organization. This module will explore improvements that can be made during recruitment. Examples include:
 - Writing gender-neutral job descriptions and postings.
 - Removing racial bias from job descriptions.
 - Creating inclusive corporate (recruitment) landing pages.

Further, we'll discuss where job advertisements are placed and the sources used to attract diverse candidates.

- **Learning Objectives**

- Discuss why inclusive employer branding is important to attract candidates
- Design an inclusive and accessible candidate experience through landing pages and job descriptions
- Discuss how organizations can use proofing tools such as Textio and Datapeople to identify the biased language in job descriptions and posts

Week 4: Reducing Bias in Hiring, Part Three (Strategic Sourcing & Inclusive Interview Strategies)

- **Topic Overview**—In this second part of reducing hiring bias, we explore how to lead inclusive and equitable interviews. Specifically, the following actions align with inclusive interview practices: diversifying interview panel members, leveraging structured behavioral interview questions, encouraging candidates to utilize virtual backgrounds, and surveying all candidates post-interview.
- **Learning Objectives**
 - Explain how to attract diverse talent through strategic sourcing methods
 - Discuss the implications of introducing bias into the interview process
 - Describe the barriers underrepresented candidates experience during the hiring process
 - Discuss why candidate scorecards and diverse interview panels contribute to an inclusive hiring process

Week 5: Inclusive Internal Talent Mobility

- **Topic Overview** – Recent research conducted by Deloitte found that Diversity & Inclusion and Global Mobility are natural partners. When aligned, diversity and inclusion and global mobility goals can help the organization identify employees for critical assignments. However, these initiatives are often disconnected. Although this is an emerging area of Talent Acquisition, we will consider the extent to which DEI goals can and should influence internal talent mobility decisions. Here’s why – based on insights published by Mercer: “Having international experience is a pre-condition to reach top managerial levels within many multinational companies. International assignments allow employees to develop essential skills and network to boost their careers. The low participation of women and minorities in the assignee talent pool can put a brake on diversity at leadership levels.”
- **Learning Objectives**
 - Explain and define internal talent mobility; and discuss the differences between domestic and global talent mobility
 - Describe the challenges of managing an internal talent mobility strategy and explain the resources that support an internal talent mobility strategy
 - Explain the barriers underrepresented talent may experience during global mobility assignments
 - Discuss the steps HR professionals can initiate to foster an alignment between internal mobility opportunities and diversity and inclusion goals

Week 6: DEI – Social Support, Part Two (Mentorship)

- **Topic Overview** – Mentoring benefits all employees. For people of color, it’s often the difference between being ignored to being heard and valued. There are many forms of mentoring, including work buddies, reverse mentoring, and group mentoring. Mentoring is most effective when aligned with DEI and business strategies. Therefore, we’ll explore the history of mentoring, evaluate effective mentoring programs, and discuss the challenges of sustaining mentoring programs.

Further, research conducted by Catalyst found that women are often over-mentored and under-sponsored. Women of color have fewer sponsors. And yet, sponsorship is directly linked with promotion opportunities, higher pay, and movement into executive positions. Consequently, all employees must have access to sponsorship, which is different from support provided through mentorship.

- **Learning Objectives**
 - Describe how mentoring can foster an inclusive environment (e.g., retention, engagement)
 - Discuss the benefits of employees participating in mentoring programs
 - Explain the different types of mentoring employees can receive

Week(s) 7-8: Diversity Training and Its Effectiveness

- **Topic Overview** – Approximately 1/3 of organizations offer diversity training to their employees and leaders. And unconscious bias training is one of the most popular programs offered. However, diversity training often fails to meet its stated goals. There are several reasons that diversity training doesn’t work, including it is not consistently aligned with: “reducing expressions of bias and discrimination, fostering greater collaboration across groups, retaining employees from historically marginalized or underrepresented groups, reducing conflicts in the workplace.” This module aims to understand why diversity training began, review examples of current diversity training programs, and analyze why the programs do not consistently result in workplace improvements.

Learning Objectives

Diversity Training and Its Effectiveness, Part One

- Explain the history of DEI training, including when it started and what organizations wanted to achieve by offering it
- Discuss why (some) diversity and inclusion training programs fail

Diversity Training and Its Effectiveness, Part Two

- Describe the most common diversity and inclusion training courses offered in organizations
- Explain how to improve diversity and inclusion training programs