

Applied Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Human Resource Management in Law Enforcement

Five-Day Intensive Class Syllabus

Nov 16th - 20th, 2026

Instructor	Jana O’Leary Sullivan	Instructor	Natalie Bauer
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Course Overview

This interdisciplinary graduate-level course combines key principles of Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Human Resource Management to address the complex personnel and organizational needs of modern law enforcement agencies. Students will explore how evidence-based psychological theories and HRM strategies can improve performance, selection, team dynamics, and overall agency effectiveness.

Emphasis is placed on applying research-based practices to real-world policing environments, with attention to legal compliance, ethical decision making, and the unique challenge of public safety work. Through case studies, applied projects, readings, panel discussions, and critical analysis, students will learn to design and implement organizational solutions that enhance employee wellbeing and operational effectiveness.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the organizational culture, structure, and challenges of law enforcement agencies using both I/O psychology and HRM frameworks.
- Design legally sound and evidence-based hiring, promotion, and selection systems tailored to policing roles and agency needs.
- Develop job descriptions that align with validated competencies and operational demands.
- Assess and improve team dynamics in high-pressure law enforcement environments.
- Address workplace stressors and develop interventions to support mental health, resilience, and long-term retention.
- Navigate labor relations, civil service constraints, and employment law to inform personnel decisions and policy development.
- Analyze organizational and personnel data to drive strategic decision-making.

Day 1 – Monday, November 16th 2026

Time	Module	Key Topics	Reading or Project Assigned	Instructor(s)
0830-0915	Welcome and orientation	Introduction to Academy. MCPA staff will guide students through Canvass, review academy structure, and talk about Metro State University graduate program pipeline.		Jeff Potts, MCPA Executive Director Stephanie Revering, MCPA Training & Operations Director

0915-0930	Break			
0930-1030	Introductions, Overview, and Ground Rules	Instructors will introduce course syllabus. Group will participate in introductory exercises and collaboratively set group norms for the academy.		Jana Sullivan Natalie Bauer
1030-1200	Module 1: Industrial-Organizational Psychology 101	Students will be introduced to basic I/O psych theories.	xxxx	Natalie Bauer
1200-1300	Lunch			
1300-1500	Panel: “A Supervisor’s Playbook”	This speaker panel will explore lessons learned as a police supervisor including what they wished they knew at the beginning.		Matt DuRose, West Hennepin PD Melissa Chiodo, Inver Grove Heights PD Other Speakers, TBD
1500-1515	Break			
1515-1630	Module 2: Professional Development	Group will learn the importance and strategy behind guided professional development through an executive coaching perspective.	xxxx	Dr. Laura Pendergrass, Martin-McAllister

Day 2 – Tuesday, November 17th 2026

Time	Module	Key Topics	Reading or Project Assigned	Instructor(s)
0830-1200	Module 3: Supervisory Skills	Communication, documentation, emotional intelligence, performance management, discipline, handling complaints and I.A.		Jana Sullivan
1200-1300	Lunch			
1300-1415	Panel: “Beyond the Bargaining Table”	Explore how to foster labor relations with unions and maintain existing relationships.		Mark Schneider, LELS General Council Sheila Huber, City of Mankato Other Speakers, TBD
1415-1430	Break			
1430-1530	Module 4: Trauma-Informed Leadership	Application of principles of safety, trust, and empowerment to support teams and handle workplace stress effectively.	xxxx	Erin Holznagel, League of MN Cities

1530-1630	Module 5: Promoting Wellness as a Police Leader		xxxx	Matt Langer, MSP (ret.)
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Day 3 – Wednesday, November 18th 2026

Time	Module	Key Topics	Reading or Project Assigned	Instructor(s)
0830-0930	Module 6: Recruitment and Hiring	Discuss hiring strategies from both an HRM and I/O perspective. Focus on I/O concepts in pre-employment assessments.		Jana Sullivan Natalie Bauer
0930-1015	Module 7: Job Design	Fundamentals of job design and analysis.	xxxx	Natalie Bauer
1015-1030	Break			
1030-1100	Module 8: Background Checks & Pre-employment (and return to work) Physical Agility Test	Overview of requirements and best practices for background checks and physical requirements including medical exams and physical ability testing.		Jana Sullivan
1100-1145	Module 9: Psychological Testing	Learn about psych testing for pre-employment, promotions, and fitness for duty.	xxxx	Dr. Laura Pendergrass, Martin- McAllister
1145-1245	Lunch			
1245-1445	Module 10: HRM and Legal Issues	Discuss hot topics in employment First Amendment & social media, employee medical issues, Brady Giglio, and Data Practices Act.		Jana Sullivan
1445-1545	Module 11: Data- Driven Strategy	Learn to gather, analyze, and interpret data to inform strategic decision-making.	xxxx	Natalie Bauer
1545-1630	Project Work Time	See grading rubric for capstone project.	Capstone Project	

Day 4 – Thursday, November 19th 2026

Time	Module	Key Topics	Reading or Project Assigned	Instructor(s)
0830-1015	Module 12: Respectful Workplace Training	Examine how to how to recognize bias & discrimination, prevent harassment, and communicate with mutual respect.	xxxx	Jana Sullivan

1015-1030	Break			
1030-1200	Panel: “Workplace Culture”	Panel discussion to explore how modern organizations create positive environments, and foster inclusivity.		Kelly McCarthy, Mendota Heights PD Todd Millburn, Edina PD Carson Thomas, Rosemount PD
1200-1300	Lunch			
1300-1415	Module 13: Sexual Assault in the Workplace	Learning about hostile work environments through the lens of sexual harassment and assault.		Nancy Lang, Special Agent BCA
1415-1430	Break			
1430-1530	Module 14: League of MN Cities Overview	Explore the League of Minnesota Cities' role in supporting local governments through HR assistance, advocacy, policy analysis, and training.		Joyce Hottinger, League of MN Cities Garrett Johnson, League of MN Cities
1530-1630	Module 15: Workplace Violence	Identifying workplace violence issues including threats, intimidation, or harassment.		Michelle Frascone, Special Agent BCA/ BTAM

Day 5 – Friday, November 20th 2026

Time	Module	Key Topics	Reading or Project Assigned	Instructor(s)
0830-1200	Capstone Presentations			
1200-1300	Lunch			
1300-1430	Capstone Presentations			
1430-1600	Panel: “Preview of Future Courses”	Class will facilitate thoughtful questions to the panel and have a chance to meet future instructors. See grading rubric for facilitated questions.	Facilitated Questions	Erika Scheider, Roseville PD Neil Bauer, Wyoming PD Jay Henthorne, Richfield PD Dr. Lisa Sorenson, Sorenson Consulting Sean Zauhar, Apple Valley PD Blair Anderson, St. Cloud PD (ret.)

Assessment and Completion Criteria

Category	Overview	Weight
Final capstone	A completed presentation that demonstrates integrated use of course concepts or methods. See grading rubric for specific requirements.	40%
Participation	Students are expected to participate in class discussions, question asking, and collaborate with classmates. Contributions to class should be thoughtful, introspective, and serve to forward the learning of course objectives.	30%
Facilitated Questions	Students will ask questions to the final panel that incorporate at least three concepts learned in class. See grading rubric for specific requirements.	20%
Reading Completion	Students display knowledge of provided material, referencing content when appropriate.	10%
Total		100%

Citation and A.I. Statement

Work completed for this course is expected to have an element of academically researched content and sources. Any idea, quote, fact, or theory that is sourced from somewhere outside the student’s own thinking or experience is expected to be properly cited. While the instructors will not be adhering to a strict APA standard for citation, it is expected that proper credit will be given to the author and where the information was found.

The instructors acknowledge that responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) can be used as a supporting tool for brainstorming and idea generation. The expectation is that the student shall maintain personal authorship for content delivery and remain transparent in their use of AI, citing as necessary. Students should take care in verifying all facts and maintain their critical thinking skills when using AI.

Work that is found to be unoriginal and uncited, or any work that is generated purely by AI and not by the students’ ultimate authorship will be discounted from the course and the student will be graded accordingly or receive an incomplete for the course.

For guidance with APA citation style, see:

🌐 [APA Formatting and Style Guide \(7th Edition\) - Purdue OWL® - Purdue University](#)