Faculty Bio

Emilio J. Castilla is the NTU Professor of Management at the MIT Sloan School of Management. Castilla joined the MIT Sloan faculty in 2005, after being a faculty member in the Management Department of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a member of the Institute for Work and Employment Research at MIT, as well as a Research Fellow at the Wharton Financial Institutions Center and at the Center for Human Resources at the Wharton School. He received his post-graduate degree in Business Analysis from the Lancaster University Management School (UK) and his PhD and MA in Sociology from Stanford University.

Professor Castilla studies how social and organizational processes influence key employment outcomes over time. He tackles his research questions by examining different empirical settings with longitudinal datasets, both at the individual and company levels. His focus is on the recruitment, hiring, development, and job mobility of employees within and across organizations and locations, as well as on the impact of teamwork and social relations on performance and innovation. His work has been published in top academic journals and edited volumes, including Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Science, American Journal of Sociology, and American Sociological Review. He has also written a book on the use of longitudinal methods in social science research (Elsevier/Academic Press).

Professor Castilla has taught in various degree programs at MIT Sloan, the Wharton School, and a number of other international universities. His teaching interests include Strategic Human Resource Management, Leading Effective Organizations, Talent Management, and Organizational Behavior. In addition to teaching full-time MBA and executive courses, he has taught several PhD-level seminars.
Course Overview

People analytics is a data-driven approach to improving people-related decisions for the purpose of advancing both individual and organizational success. While people have always been critical to the success of organizations, many business leaders still make key decisions about their workforce based on intuition, experience, advice, and guesswork. However, today leaders can improve their people decision-making based on the collection and systematic analysis of data. In this new course, we will explore a number of strategies used to attract and retain top talent, and illustrate how these strategies are being designed and used at cutting-edge companies. In doing so, we will examine and discuss examples of organizations and company projects addressing key people-related issues, such as recruiting and hiring, performance evaluation, promotion and training opportunities, compensation, and organizational change. By the end of this course, you will understand how and when “big data” can be used to make key employee decisions so that you can position yourself as a strategic partner in your company’s talent management.

Our focus in this course is on the strategies that can be used to successfully design and implement people analytics in your organization. We will draw on the latest company practices, research projects, and cases studies—all with the goal of helping you deepen your understanding of how people analytics can be applied in the real world. In so doing, we will cover the most important aspects of human resource management. We will begin by covering basic tools and principles to help you learn about human resource management and people analytics. Next, we will focus on how to apply those basic tools and principles when hiring, evaluating and rewarding performance, managing careers, and implementing organizational change. By learning about strategies for people analytics, you will not only advance your company’s business objectives through the strategic management of people, but also your own career.

We will take the perspective of the general manager when examining how emerging “big data” analytical approaches applied to human resource management can be used to advance business objectives. We will cover HR theory/practice and statistical methods as they pertain to addressing people-related issues at real organizations. This course is not intended to teach you statistics or programming. Nor will this course cover the issues involved when gathering (and analyzing) data. Instead, it is intended to acquaint you with key strategies for the design and implementation of people analytics in your organization.

Course Pre-Requisite(s): Organizational Processes (15.311) or a similar course in organizational behavior/theory that provides key tools needed to understand, manage, and lead organizations. While a good background in basic statistics and/or analytics will be helpful, it is not required for this course.

This course could be complemented with other courses in advanced statistics and/or business/operations analytics (though not required).
Course Goals
The goal of this course is to prepare you to wisely collect and use data to manage people at work. Upon successful completion of this course, you will have:

1. Become familiar with the most relevant topics general managers face concerning the management of people.
2. Learnt a set of frameworks and theoretical models to help you make key employee decisions.
3. Been exposed to some of the most cutting edge techniques used by companies to analyze data about their employees in order to make their organizations and their individual employees more successful.
4. An understanding of how to apply “big data” analytics to identify, evaluate, and resolve a variety of challenges and issues relating to your workforce; also the ability to interpret (and present) the results of your analyses to make strategic people-related decisions.

Teaching Approach
While this course will include lectures, a major component of it will be classroom discussion. Interacting with me and with your peers is a vital part of your learning experience and is important for your grade (see below). You should come to class prepared to discuss the day’s readings and cases, to participate in class exercises, and to respond constructively to the ideas and comments of others. I will facilitate a dynamic dialogue and have every expectation that your interactions will be well-informed and well-reasoned. Effective discussion depends on your willingness to share your ideas and experiences and, as importantly, to be supportive of and responsive to others.

Required Readings
All course readings will be available on Stellar/study.net. The readings are drawn from a number of sources, including academic research articles, excerpts from longer works in management, short articles from both popular and business presses, and case studies. Additional handouts may be distributed throughout the course.

Not all class materials will be discussed to the same extent. Most classes include a case/exercise, which will typically serve as the basis for class discussion.

Course Requirement and Grading
There are three basic requirements to help you meet your learning goals in this class:

1. Class participation. This course depends heavily on class participation, and so it is integral to receiving a satisfactory grade. Participation includes class attendance, informed involvement/active participation in class discussions and group exercises, and timely completion of readings/short assignments/exercises. Participation counts for 40% of your grade and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. While regular participation in class discussion is expected, the quality of student comments is key. Quality is judged based on your ability to contribute
substantively to class discussion and to consider others’ comments in advancing the discussion. I will occasionally call on students but will rely mostly on voluntary participation. I welcome all relevant perspectives and expect that all students will take advantage of the opportunity to actively participate in the course.

Please prepare for each session by doing the required reading. Assignments listed as “due” should be brought to class that day to be turned in and graded.

2. **People Analytics Plan:** *20%*. The third week of the semester (following session 5), an individual one-page essay will be due in which you a) briefly describe a people-related challenge to address in a real organization you are familiar with, and b) propose how you might address this issue analytically. More details will be given in class.

3. **People Analytics Mini-Project.** This group project involves helping an organization address an important people challenge. The goal of this mini-project is to give you some first-hand experience in thinking about how to design and implement people analytics in the real world. This mini-project will involve two deliverables: 1) A Power Point project proposal, and 2) A final report. This project will count toward *40%* of your final grade. More details will be given in class.

**Contact Information**

I am usually in my office (at MIT Sloan) before and after class. I am available at other times by appointment. I can also be reached by phone at 617-253-0286 and by e-mail at ecastilla@mit.edu (preferred). I encourage you to talk to me about any questions or concerns you might have about the course.

**Course Schedule and Assignment Due Dates**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Description of Part</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td>6-Apr.-2017</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to People Analytics</td>
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<td>13-Apr.-2017</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Motivation and Work</td>
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<td>20-Apr.-2017</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Staffing your Organization</td>
<td>People Analytics Plan</td>
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<td>27-Apr.-2017</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Managing Performance</td>
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<td>4-May-2017</td>
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<td>In-Class Project Coaching (Optional)</td>
<td>Power Point Project Proposal due May 9th</td>
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<td>11-May-2017</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Compensating and Developing Talent</td>
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<td>18-May-2017</td>
<td>VI</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Future of People Analytics</td>
<td>People Analytics Project Report</td>
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Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Part I. Introduction to People Analytics

Session 1. What is People Analytics?
1. **In-Class Reading:**

Session 2. Why People Analytics?

Further optional readings:

Part II. Motivation and Work

Session 3. The Employment Relationship: Some Theoretical Perspectives
3. **In-Class Exercise:** Reflecting on how you engage employees in the workplace.

Session 4. Strategic Execution of People Practices
5. **Case:**

Further optional readings:
Part III. Staffing Your Organization

Session 5. Recruiting and Selecting Talent

7. Case:

Session 6. Analyzing Promotions


Further optional readings:

- Emilio J. Castilla (2005): “Social Networks and Employee Performance in a Call Center.” American Journal of Sociology 110 (5): 1243-1283. (PDF on Stellar)

Part IV. Managing Performance

Session 7. Performance Evaluation

9. Case:

Session 8. Rewarding Performance

11. Case:
Further optional readings:


**In-Class Project Coaching** (Optional Class)

**Part V. Compensating and Developing Talent**

**Session 9. Compensation**

12. Case:


**Session 10. Training and Development**

14. Case:

Further optional readings:


Part VI. Current Issues in People Analytics

Sessions 11 and 12.

Required Reading(s) to be decided

Optional readings to learn about Networks and Collaboration:

Optional readings to learn about Future Opportunities in People Analytics:

Readings may change as we go along. Additional readings may be assigned by the instructor.
Additional Optional Readings

There are several other books/articles that you may find useful. They are not required, but should you desire to pursue a topic in greater depth, they might provide a useful starting point for further research. I list these only for your future information.

**Books**


**Articles about People Analytics**


**Academic Examples of People Analytics Studies**


