



POWER AND INFLUENCE – SUMMER 2009

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Course Rationale

Power is the ability to get people to do something they did not want to do and make them happy that they did it. Power and politics are pervasive and important in organizations, so you need to be able to understand power and to act on that knowledge. Organizations are fundamentally political entities, and power and influence are key mechanisms by which *things get done*. Therefore, this course has three objectives: 1) to enhance your ability to diagnose and analyze power, understand why some have more power than others and grasp the strategies and tactics by which power is employed; 2) to demonstrate effective and appropriate methods of influence; 3) to practice developing and executing political strategies for accomplishing specific goals in your professional lives.

Course Overview

The course is divided into three sections. The first section is an introduction to the concept of power and to political diagnosis. Here we explore the circumstances under which power and politics will be more prominent as features of organizational life and learn how to map the political landscape surrounding your goals. The second section focuses on sources of power, exploring why some organizational members have more power than others (aside from their formal authority) and learning how to develop those informal bases of power. Here we also consider some specific tactics by which power and influence are exercised in organizations, such as analysis and presentation of information, agenda setting, coalition politics, strategic timing, and framing. The third section applies all of the above lessons in a series of complex real-world cases and simulations.

Method of Evaluation

You will be evaluated on three types of work: 1) your performance on a final examination (50% of the grade); 2) the *quality* of your contributions to class discussion of the course material (20% of the grade); and on 3) two self-reflective short papers (each is 15% of the grade).

Final examination (Thursday, August 13, 9am)

The final examination will give you the opportunity to review and consolidate your learning. You will be presented with a case, similar to the ones we discuss in class. I will expect you to use knowledge and insights gained from this class to analyze and diagnose the situation described in the case, and to come up with some specific recommendations concerning how to proceed. You must *master* the material so you are able to use it to cope with a real-world situation, not simply memorize concepts and frameworks.

Class participation

Class participation is a crucial part of the learning process in this course, so it is also an important part of your evaluation. A valuable contribution to class discussion: 1) offers a relevant and novel perspective on the issue; 2) builds on the preceding discussion and moves the analysis forward to generate new insights; 3) if it includes a personal anecdote or experience, it does so in a way that helps to illuminate the ideas being discussed; and 4) uses logic, evidence, and creativity, and is more than merely an expression of an opinion or feeling.

Reflective writing assignments ('memos')

These two reflective writing assignments are for your own benefit. They are short memos intended to help you learn from your past and current work experience, and to apply lessons from this class to your career. They will also help you prepare for the final exam. Both memos are *Assignment Type B* (individual-preparation, individual-grade), as described at the start of your course pack.

Students will submit memos via Angel, which records the date and time of submissions. As a policy, I do not accept late assignments. I very occasionally make exceptions for tardy assignments if I am notified ahead of time and tardiness is due to circumstances outside a student's control. I expect such students to tell me when they will be able to turn in the assignment at their earliest opportunity, and to meet that revised deadline.

Course Materials

- Case pack
- (Optional) Jeffrey Pfeffer's, *Managing With Power: Politics and Influence in Organizations*. Harvard Business School Press.

Student Norms of Classroom Conduct

I think that you will find me to be a generally easy-going professor. However, I articulate some mutual expectations that will facilitate a better learning environment for everyone.

Class attendance

I expect you to attend every class, to arrive on time, and to be prepared to discuss the material listed in the syllabus for that class. I will not reprimand students for missing class, but I can't reward you for class participation if you are not present either physically or mentally.

I understand that occasionally, because of factors outside of your control, you may be late to class, or you may have to miss a class entirely. I expect you to notify me by email of your lateness or absence as soon as you become aware of these circumstances. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please do so quietly and discreetly to avoid distracting your classmates.

Name Plates

Please display your name plate in every class, to help me and your classmates learn your name.

Use of electronic devices in class

On rare occasions, I may ask you to gain access to the World Wide Web during class time for the purpose of an assignment. Other than these occasions, I expect you to turn off all laptops, cell phones, blackberries, and any other electronic devices during class time. Such devices distract you and your classmates, and interfere with the flow of class discussion.

Feedback

I love teaching, especially when the class is going well. I am disappointed if there is a problem in the classroom, but nobody has shared it with me. Please give me feedback on your learning experience in this class *before* the end of the semester. If there is some aspect of the class that you think could be improved or that you appreciate (and would like to see more of), please bring this issue to my attention as soon as possible, either directly or by relaying through a class representative. I will be very grateful to you for bringing the issue to my attention. I cannot guarantee that I will satisfy all of your suggestions, as I have learned that responding to certain suggestions to satisfy a few students can end up frustrating many more. I will make every effort to take your concern seriously, and to do whatever I can to resolve it. If you wish, use <http://www.anonymousfeedback.net/> to send me a quick message anonymously.

Descriptions of Classes

PART 1: *Introduction to Political Diagnosis*

Class 1. (Wednesday, June 24) Case (Read it before the First Class): Matt Leeds (A)

Please come to class ready to discuss the following questions.

1. What are the ‘political’ problems facing Matt Leeds?
2. What are the underlying causes of these problems?
3. What *specific* actions should Leeds take to pursue his goal (promotion in 2-3 years)?

Reading: Managing with Power (MWP), Ch. 1, “Decisions and Implementation.”

(All readings from the book, *Managing with Power*, are highly recommended, but optional.)

Class 2. (Monday, June 29) Case: Kristen Peters (A)

1. What would be your short-term political goals in this summer internship?
2. How politicized would you expect the environment of the internship to be? Why?
3. If you were Peters, how would you have managed your relationships differently?

Reading: MWP, Ch. 2, “When is Power Used?”

Wednesday July 1 Independence Day holiday.

Class 3. (Monday, July 6) Case: Peter Browning at Continental White Cap (A)

1. Who should be on Peter Browning’s map? Why?
2. Think of a political strategy for Browning; how should he deal with these people?
3. Consider the culture at Continental White Cap. How might this culture play into Browning’s strategy?

Reading: MWP, Ch. 3, “Diagnosing Power and Dependence”

PART 2: Using and Developing Bases of Power

Class 4. (Wednesday, July 8) **Case:** Rob Parson at Morgan Stanley (A)

1. What bases of power is Parson developing, and how do these fit with the culture at Morgan Stanley?
2. What political considerations should play into Nasr's decision to recommend Parson for promotion to MD?
3. If you were Nasr, what would you choose and how specifically would you execute your choice?

Reading: MWP, Ch. 4, "Where Power Comes From"; Ch. 7, "Formal Authority, Reputation, and Performance."

Sunday July 12 Memo A Due (Download instructions and submit to ANGEL by 11:59pm)

Class 5. (Monday, July 13) **Case:** None, but take a quick look at [The Tricks of E*Trade](#) (brief article by Louise Lee, in *BusinessWeek* Feb 7, 2000; see link on Angel) and think about these specific issues:

1. Consider the style of tactics like the 'initiation rites' and 'pop quizzes' used by Christos Cotsakos at E*Trade, which he acknowledges may humiliate or even 'demoralize' employees.
2. Going beyond the quoted professors' account, consider some objectives that Cotsakos may have had for such tactics. Where do you think he learned them?
3. What do you think will be some consequences of using such tactics for the CEO's *power*, and when do you think they are most likely to be successful (or backfire)?

Video: Hell Camp (watched in class)

Reading: MWP, Ch. 10, "Framing." MWP, Ch. 13, "The Politics of Information and Analysis."

Class 6. (Wednesday, July 15) **Case:** Karen Leary (A)

1. What is the problem at the Elmsville branch office?
2. Why is Chung behaving as he is? What factors are you considering in reaching your conclusion?
3. If you were Karen Leary, how would you respond to Chung's demands? What specific actions would you take?

Reading: MWP, Ch. 5, "Resources, Allies, and the New Golden Rule."
MWP, Ch. 6, "Location in the Communication Network."

Friday July 17: 12 Angry Men Showing

See Angel for assignment details and to download the 12 Angry Men Viewing Guide

Uris Hall 301 – 11:30am-1:00pm; 2:30pm-4:00pm

Also available on Amazon Video on Demand, on Netflix, and at Butler Library.

Class 7. (Monday, July 20) Movie Viewed Outside of Class: *12 Angry Men* (see Angel for details)

In class, we will discuss a movie about the deliberations of a jury. As you watch the movie (at the public showing above or on your own), use the *Viewing Guide* to take organized notes on the particular tactics that jurors use to influence each other.

Reading: MWP, Ch. 11, “Interpersonal Influence,” Ch. 12, “Timing.”

Class 8. (Wednesday, July 22) Case: Managing Xerox’s Multinational Development Center

1. What were Clendenin’s political goals at Xerox? Consider his broader political strategy for achieving those goals.
2. Download the diagram of Clendenin’s network on Angel. How did Clendenin build his network and use it to achieve his goals?
3. Consider the detailed political tactics that Clendenin employed, in light of his overall strategy.

Reading: MWP, Ch. 8, “The Importance of Being in the Right Unit.”

Sunday July 26: Memo B Due (Download instructions and submit to ANGEL by 11:59pm)

PART 3: *Designing and Implementing Political Strategies*

Class 9. (Monday, July 27) Case: No case, but read the exercise instructions *before class* (which will be posted on Angel).

Today you will participate in a fixed-time, group negotiation exercise. This will be an opportunity to apply the political tactics we have studied, including diagnosing the perspectives of other players and developing a political strategy to pursue your goals.

Reading: MWP, Ch. 14, “Changing the Structure to Consolidate Power,” Ch. 15, “Symbolic Action: Language, Ceremonies, and Settings.”

Class 10. (Wednesday, July 29) Case: Elizabeth Parker (A) and (B)

1. Consider the process by which Parker develops a political strategy in her new position as Delaware undersecretary of Environmental Affairs, in the (A) case.
2. Consider the political situation that Parker faces in her next position, as deputy secretary of the Environmental Standards Division, in the (B) case.
3. Design a political strategy to pursue Parker's goals in the (B) case.

Reading: MWP, Ch. 17, "Managing Political Dynamics Productively," Ch. 18, "Managing With Power."

Class 11. (Monday, August 3) Case: Jean Spire at Teleswitches Ltd.

1. How would you describe the culture in this organization?
2. How might this culture affect your overall political strategy and specific tactics?
3. Develop a strategy for overcoming resistance to implementing the roll-out.

Group Assignment: Computer simulations are growing in popularity as practice fields for learning. During class 11 your entire group must carry out an interactive simulation.

Reading: *Instructions for Simulation (on Angel).*

Class 12. (Wednesday, August 5) Case: None.

In this class, we will discuss and debrief the simulation, which will serve as a vehicle to review the content of the class in preparation for the final exam.

Reading: None.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, August 13, 9am

4 Hour Case Analysis

Open Book, Open Note