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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Overview

Power, Politics, and Influence is an elective course designed to demystify the concept of power and its myths. It will explore power in interpersonal relationships, in organizations and in society, how it works, and how you can use power to make a significant impact. The focus of this course is how to use power responsibly, resist its perils and traps, and think deeply about what constitutes the ethical exercise of power. You will learn how to recognize and deal effectively with the power dynamics you encounter throughout your career as well as learn tactical approaches to develop your own power and influence style. This course is designed to be interactive, discussion-based, and 'learning by doing' through experiential activities.

Although a popular elective, this course is not for everyone. It requires a high level of commitment and engagement, both inside and outside of class. It is a good fit for those who have a passion to make a difference and who are willing to explore new and challenging ideas along the way.

Learning Objectives

- Learn to see the world differently. You will be able to recognize power dynamics and assess the effectiveness of various actions that people (including yourself) make. You will be able to see the status quo power structures and how they can be disrupted.
- Learn to act differently. After the course, you will have a personal strategic plan that will help you identify and develop your own personal path to power. You will also have new skills, such as building a network, that you tried during class and can continue to hone throughout your career.
- Develop a healthy respect for power and how it can change people. You will know the benefits, as well as the costs and pitfalls, associated with the pursuit of power. This understanding will help you develop your own ethical approach to power.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites: None

Course Materials

You need the following resources for this course.

- Battilana & Casciaro (2021). *Power, for All: How it Really Works and Why it is Everyone's Business*. Simon & Schuster. (Book)

- Download readings from the HBS course site: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/964504>
- Any additional readings and/or assessments will be posted on Blackboard.

Grading and Evaluation

Individual Assignments		55%
• <i>Self-reflection memos (3)</i>	15	
• <i>Midterm</i>	20	
• <i>Final Paper</i>	20	
Team Project		30%
• <i>Paper</i>	15	
• <i>Presentation</i>	15	
Contribution & Professionalism		15%
• <i>Active class participation, ELC, case prep</i>		
• <i>Team self & peer evaluation</i>		
TOTAL		100%

Final grades for this course will reflect the weighted sum of your assignment grades and will adhere to the grading policy approved by Marshall. Three items are considered when assigning final grades:

1. Your average weighted score as a percentage of the available points for all assignments (the points you receive divided by the number of points possible).
2. The overall average percentage score within the class.
3. Your ranking among all students in the class.

Late work: Work that is not submitted on the due date noted in the course syllabus without advance notice and permission from the instructor will be graded down 1/3 of a grade for every day it is late (eg. from a B+ to a B).

Review of evaluation: Feedback and reflection are critical to learning, and especially for learning from our mistakes. I am happy to discuss how you are performing on assignments or in class participation to help you improve and/or correct your mistakes. This must happen BEFORE your final grade is posted. So, I invite you to contact me within a week of when an assignment is returned to discuss so I can clarify my comments – which I assume you have read and reflected on your own first. If you want to officially ask for a grade change after we speak, you must put your case into writing.

Course Requirements

Self-Reflection Memos (individual, 15%). You will have 3 reflection memos (1-2 pages, single-spaced) throughout the semester. These are an integral part of the course, designed to help you explore the content in the context of your own plans, objectives, values, and experiences. Previous experience suggests that, if taken seriously, these self-reflection assignments are among the most useful aspects of the course. The assignments are due before class begins. If you are absent, please submit your assignment electronically before class.

Midterm Exam (individual, 20%). The midterm will include short case-based essay questions and multiple-choice questions. Content will be covered from the readings, the cases, as well as the discussions in class.

Team Project (team, 30%). You will work together as an intact project team throughout the semester to prepare for and complete the Team Project. The goal of the project is to have you explore the ideas of the course in a real-world setting.

Your assignment is to apply concepts and frameworks in class to a specific organization or case. Power becomes more visible and is exercised more clearly where there is opposition, where something needs to get done and resistance must be overcome. There are two options for this project:

1. Select a TV show or movie that is in an organizational setting and has significant power dynamics to unpack. Use frameworks and concepts from class to analyze how power is interacting and being used by people and groups in the video. Map the political landscape. What is effective and ineffective? What are the ethical implications? What can we learn about power from this case study? What new or interesting contexts, ideas, or insights does this help us understand?
2. Select an organization or company that is creating change or trying to influence people in the world. In this 'field study', organizations can be working in the non-profit or for-profit space. Do a deep analysis around how both sides of the issue address their specific perspective, and how they exercise influence around their viewpoint. What is their specific purpose as an organization, and are their goals? How do they go about creating support from others, and how did this organization begin? How do they create allies and coalitions to influence others? Map the power dynamics and what it would take to accomplish their objectives. How have they been successful? Failed? What should they do next?

For research you can search public press articles, do interviews with members of the organization, analyze marketing and video collateral and any other sources that might give you insight.

Length is *not* the defining characteristic of a good analysis. Try to concisely (using exhibits as needed) cover the material. Use analysis and insight, rather than lots of words, to convey what you have learned and discovered.

Your "deliverable" for this project has three components. Submitted assignments should use 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins on all sides.

1. Project paper: A 4-6 page analytical paper (single-spaced)
2. In-class presentation: A 10-15-minute presentation, 5 minutes for Q&A
3. Self & peer evaluation feedback

The team project will be evaluated according to quality of analysis, appropriate use of course concepts, logic and substantiation of conclusions, and clarity and appeal of your class presentation. Further instructions and grading rubrics will be posted on Blackboard.

Grades for individual student contributions to team projects are **assigned by your Professor**, based on my observations of the team's working dynamics, my assessment of the team project quality, and thoughtful consideration of the information provided through your peer evaluations.

Final Paper (individual, 20%). The final paper (roughly 5-10 pages, single-spaced) will be due at the time of the final exam. The paper will consist of two parts:

Part 1: During the semester, select a group, organization, or social setting and develop a goal of gaining power and influence. After selecting the group, set a measurable objective to accomplish by gaining power and influence (i.e., what will it look like if you succeed?). Next, use as many skills and tactics from the class as you can (including at least one that you *rarely use and are uncomfortable with*) to achieve your objective. In your paper, describe your objective as well as your thoughts and feelings prior to, during, and after your attempt to use these tactics to gain power and influence. Describe whether you were successful or not (either way is fine, so long as you learned from the experience). Summarize what you learned from your experience.

Part 2: Future Planning. Using both (1) your above experience and (2) the ideas and concepts from the class, write out a **strategic plan** for yourself as to how you will use the material to build your own path to power for your purpose. Some guiding thoughts: Examples could include what you will do specifically as part of your job finding process? What are you going to do as you enter your new organization? Are there places you want to build influence to change the status quo? In other words, how do you plan to put the ideas and concepts to work for you in your own life? Which ideas or concepts are you deliberately choosing NOT to put into practice, and why?

Course Requirements: Contribution & Professionalism

Class Participation: This part of your grade will be based on consistent and effective contributions to class discussions and activities. Reading assignments, cases, in-class assignments and activities, will also contribute to this score. You are expected to attend every class session having read, thought about, and prepared any assigned material. You should also be prepared to share your ideas and to actively listen to and interpret the ideas presented by others. This requires attendance in class – more than 4 absences could result in failing the course or a significant grade reduction. *This is a residential class and in-person attendance is expected. Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC OSAS requiring remote attendance, there is no option to attend class via Zoom.* Regular attendance and doing the readings will result in a B+.

For grades higher or lower, comments that are vague, repetitive, unrelated to the discussion, or disrespectful of others will be evaluated negatively. Quality comments possess one or more of the following attributes:

- Offer a relevant concept or personal experience;
- Provide careful analysis by applying theory and concepts from readings and lectures;
- Move the discussion forward by building on previous contributions with new insights;
- Ask thoughtful and challenging questions.

Our learning community operates in an environment of openness, respect, encouragement and engagement. Discussions will be richer if you share your unique perspective. It may take courage or patience or imagination to engage with the course material, our classmates and our experiences. In our classroom, I aim to develop a psychologically safe space where we can all learn together and benefit from the diversity that leads to increased innovation, better problem solving and, in our case, what I hope will be new friends and a great semester!

Case Analysis Preparation: To actively engage in case discussions, you will need to complete an analysis of the assigned case before attending class. Case analysis allows us to explore how what we learn applies to real world situations. This goes beyond simply reading the case. You will use the frameworks from class to identify critical problems or issues, understand the power dynamics at play, and what solutions or takeaways are important.

POLICIES

Course Policies

Statement on Technology Use in Class

You may use comm technology to enhance your learning, but be mindful of practices that distract you and others from learning. It is far more important to participate than to take detailed notes. Course PPT slides will be posted on Bb. After each class session, you may want to take some time to reflect on the learning experience and type up whatever notes seem useful. Participation/Contribution points will be deducted for students misusing technology during class. We invite you to “Be Here, Be Present!” to create an engaging learning community.

Use of Recordings

Pursuant to the USC Student Handbook (www.usc.edu/scampus, Part B, 11.12), students may not record a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class. In addition, students may not distribute or use notes or recordings based on University classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than personal or class-related group study by students registered for the class. This restriction on unauthorized use applies to all information that is distributed or displayed for use in relationship to the class.

Marshall/University Policies

Academic Integrity & Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty, students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review. The Review process can be found at: <https://sjacs.usc.edu/students/academic-integrity/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

Statement of Open Expression

An important goal of the educational experience at USC Marshall is to be exposed to and discuss diverse, thought-provoking, and sometimes controversial ideas that challenge one’s beliefs. This is an important part of the training business students must receive to address and solve major issues that confront businesses in a critical and thoughtful manner. These values are reflected in the USC Marshall statement on open communication:
<https://www.marshall.usc.edu/about/open-expression-statement>

Religious/Cultural Observance

Persons who have religious or cultural observances that coincide with class should let me know by email as soon as possible so we can make accommodations for any missed work or participation. I strongly encourage you to honor your cultural and religious holidays! However, if I do not hear from you before the holiday, I will assume that you plan to attend all class meetings.

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Well-being Support Systems

Please reach out to appropriate offices if you need support. See document with that title posted on Bb under Syllabus.

PRELIMINARY WEEKLY SCHEDULE – MOR 472 – HEINO - Fall 2022

Some adjustments might be necessary throughout the semester.

Updated: September 18, 2022

DATE	TOPICS	READING/PREWORK/DELIVERABLES
Aug 23	Welcome and introduction	Read: Syllabus; Battilana & Casciaro, <i>Power, for All</i> Intro (Book)
Aug 25	Uncovering the fundamentals of power	Read: Caro, <i>Lessons in Power: Lyndon Johnson Revealed</i> (HBS) <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 1 (Book)
Aug 30	Uncovering the fundamentals of power: Is power dirty?	Read: <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 2 (Book) Pfeffer, <i>Power Play</i> (HBS)
Sept 1	Finding your mission: Power for what?	Case: John W. Dean III, <i>Blind Ambition: The White House Years</i> , Ch1 (Bb) Read: Christensen, <i>How Will You Measure Your Life?</i> (HBS) Class Guest: Raymond Perrier
Sept 6	Power “Treasure Hunt”	In class Due: Reflection Paper #1 (Bb)
Sept 8	Analyzing your sources of power	Read: Hill, <i>Exercising Influence without Authority</i> (HBS) <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 3 (Book) Pfeffer, <i>Power</i> , Ch 5 Making Something out of Nothing (Bb)
Sept 13	Mapping the political landscape	Case: Hill, <i>Matt Leeds</i> (HBS) Read: <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 4 (Book) Optional: Pfeffer, <i>Power</i> , Ch 3 Choosing where to Start (Bb) Due: Topic/Org/Situation for final paper (Bb)
Sept 15	STAR Power (ELC)	Meet in JFF Experiential Learning Center (Lower Level)
Sept 20	Building and maintaining a network	Read: Pfeffer, <i>Note on Social Networks</i> (HBS)
Sept 23	Networks and influence	Read: Uzzi & Dunlap, <i>How to Build your Network</i> (HBS) Class Guest: David Belasco Team Meetings for topics
Sept 27	Building a reputation	Read: Pfeffer, <i>Power</i> , Ch. 8 Building a Reputation (Bb) Class Guest: Rob Jekielek Due: Reflection Paper #2 (Bb)
Sept 29	Earning trust and exercising influence: Communication	Case: Cuddy & Sharma, <i>Dan Silver & KNP Communications</i> (HBS) Read: Cialdini, <i>Harnassing the Science of Persuasion</i> (HBS)
Oct 4	Earning trust and exercising influence: Influence style	Assessment: Influencing Styles Questionnaire debrief

Oct 6	Psychological effects of power/price of power	Read: Pfeffer, <i>Power</i> , Ch. 10 Price of Power (Bb) Fast & Chen, When the Boss Feels Inadequate, <i>Psychological Science</i> , 20 (Bb) Fast et al., Power and Overconfident Decision-making, <i>Org Behavior & Human Decision Processes</i> (Bb) Class Guest: Katie Brownell
Oct 11	Rebounding from setbacks (via zoom)	Read: Sonnenfeld & Ward, <i>How Great Leaders Rebound after Career Disasters</i> (HBS) Case: Chang et al., <i>Sonnenfeld: The Fall from Grace</i> (HBS) Due: Reflection Paper #3 (Bb)
Oct 13	NO CLASS: Fall Break	No Class Today
Oct 18	ELC: Power Relations	Meet in JFF Experiential Learning Center (Lower Level)
Oct 20	MIDTERM	
Oct 25	Encountering entrenched power in orgs & society	Read: <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 5 (Book) Pfeffer, <i>A Note on Women and Power</i> (HBS) Case: Peterson et al., <i>The Maestro: Marin Alsop</i> (HBS) Class Guest: Lioba Gierke
Oct 27	Encountering entrenched power in orgs & society	Read: Malaku et al., <i>Be a Better Ally</i> (HBS) Hecht, <i>Moving Beyond Diversity to Racial Equity</i> (Bb) Case: Khambati & Raz, <i>Masai Ujiri: "Because I'm Black"</i> (HBS)
Nov 1	Worldview: Cultural approaches to power	Read: Javidian et al, <i>Leadership and Cultural Context</i> , pp. 1-13 (HBS) Nussbaum, <i>Tight and Loose Cultures</i> (Bb) Class Guest: Tiziana Casciaro
Nov 3	Becoming effective change agents	Change Management simulation (In Class)
Nov 8	Navigating the politics of change	Case: Battilana et al., <i>Echoing Green</i> (HBS) Read: <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 6 (Book) Class Guest: KC Santos
Nov 10	Navigating the politics of change	Read: <i>Power, for All</i> Ch. 7 & 8 (Book) Case: Scheepers et al., <i>Old Mutual Limited</i> (HBS)
Nov 15	Presentations	In-class: Project team presentations Due: Team papers
Nov 17	Presentations	In-class: Project team presentations
Nov 22	Final paper appointment	Due: Project self & peer evaluations
Nov 25	NO CLASS - HOLIDAY	Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov 29	Topic: TBD	TBD
Dec 1	Final Class Reflection	Updates on individual papers Course evaluations will be completed in class
	FINAL PAPER DUE	Due: Final paper at time of scheduled final exam - Thurs, December 13 th , before 11:59PM