COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number: MGT 417
Course Title: Power & Politics

Course Support: Course support available Monday-Friday 8:30am-5pm; After hours please contact the TA or Faculty; Email somcoursesupport@yale.edu

CONTACT INFORMATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Course Staff</th>
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COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook(s): No textbook required
Readings: All required readings and other course materials will be distributed on Canvas
Software: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

“The fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics.” –Bertrand Russell (1938)

“Nearly all [people] can stand adversity; if you want to test [their] character, give them power.” –Abraham Lincoln

Organizations are fundamentally political entities, and social power, influence, and persuasion are all keys to getting things done. This course is designed for individuals interested in building skills for using power in ways that are consistent with the global mission of SOM; to facilitate your role as a leader of business and society.

This course is designed to help you build competencies and skills in three primary areas related to social power:

1. Ethically use power in ways that are consistent with your core values, and to achieve your professional and personal goals.
II. Learn, practice, and build strategies for enhancing your power and influence and for adjusting these strategies in response to the demands of the situation, team, or cultural context.

III. Understand the sources and your and others’ power and how to guard against the corrupting effects of power.

Throughout this course we will engage in experiential learning activities—interactive exercises, guided team discussions, and simulations—to foster the building of skills and strategies necessary on your pathway to ethical and effective power. Students will receive feedback from personal assessments that measure the skills and dispositions predicting effective and ethical use of power. Students will be asked to use outside class activities and assignments to develop concrete plans for your own personal path to power. All of the techniques and teaching activities we use in the course will be backed by empirical research developed in the social and economic sciences.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Requirements:

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<th>Contribution and Engagement:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-assessments of performance</td>
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<td>• Peer nominations of performance</td>
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<td>• Professor assessments</td>
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<th>Course Activities:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Completing the Power Profile</td>
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<td>• Writing your Values Statement</td>
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<td>• Networking Activity</td>
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<td>• Feedback Assignment</td>
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<td>• Change Management Simulation</td>
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<td>• Leadership Essay</td>
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<td>• The Personal Path to power Group Assignment</td>
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Please see the Yale SOM Grading Policy at [http://portal.som.yale.edu/page/grading-policy](http://portal.som.yale.edu/page/grading-policy)

Descriptions of Assignments/Projects/Problem sets
Below we describe the details of these specific course requirements:

**Contribution and Engagement**

The mission of this course is closely aligned with the mission for leadership development at SOM. In Power and Politics, we will continue the work you started in Managing Groups and Teams, assisting you in developing communication, emotional intelligence, and appreciation for the diverse and global perspectives of other team members. We will also dive into the individual contribution that you can make to your team, your cohort, and the broader SOM community, exploring your unique personal strengths and weaknesses, and the core values that make you passionate about work, and engaged at SOM. With these broad goals in mind, the participation and engagement grade involve a collection of self, peer, and instructor assessments designed to reward positive contributions to the learning environment at SOM.

- Self-Assessment
We expect students to be able to accurately assess their own contributions to the learning environment at SOM. After the course is completed, students will have the option to grade their own participation and engagement in the course specific to your involvement in group activities and assignments in class.

- **Peer Assessment**
  Your peers will have a unique perspective on your contributions to their learning during the course. At the end of the course, each student will have the opportunity to nominate one to three students who have significantly contributed to their learning in this course. These positive contributions can include but are not limited to: sharing personal stories that positively impact team dynamics, making an effort to broaden the learning of classmates, asking questions that broaden the discussion during this course or other courses, and listening or supportive behaviors that provide space for other classmates to be heard and appreciated.

- **Professor Assessments**
  At the end of the course the instructors will nominate students who, throughout the course, have demonstrated leadership skills that reflect the broad goals of SOM’s mission for building leaders for business and society. The Professors can nominate students for stretching their original beliefs about course concepts, demonstrating a capacity to build aspects of power, acknowledging their weak spots and points of improvement. In general, behaviors inside and outside of class that demonstrate the core leadership values of SOM can be rewarded by course instructors.

- **Attendance and Tardiness**
  We expect students to attend every course session or to provide a formal excused absence from the office Academic Affairs and Student Life (AASL). If students miss a session without a formal excuse, each unexcused absence will incur -5 points while each unexcused late arrival (even just 30 seconds) incurs -2 points [lateness deductions also apply to any unscheduled time outside of the classroom]. Make sure you receive formal approval for any lateness or absences from the office of AASL.

**Course Assignments**

Power and Politics provides an opportunity to build skills to enhance your power and influence. Throughout the course you will have opportunities inside and outside of class to develop these capabilities and launch toward your personal path to power. The course activities involve behaviors you will engage in throughout the semester that build the two dimensions of power: strength and connection. All assignments turned in late without an excuse from AASL are subject to penalty deductions ranging between -1 to -5 points and are at the discretion of the instructors. Below you will find a brief overview of the assignments. You can find additional details on CANVAS.

- **Power Profiles Survey**
  You will be asked to fill out psychological assessments that will help us provide you with a power profile, a picture of what you are like with respect to your use and application of power.

- **Values Statement Essay**
  You will complete a short description of your own core values, your guiding principles for your goals and behavior in your work life and career. After this, you will be asked to expand on these values, to more substantively reflect on and define your core values and articulate how these values guided you to SOM, and how they will guide your decisions in the future.

- **Leadership Essay**
  In this essay we would like you to write a short report (2-3 pages, double spaced) that accomplishes two things: The report should (1) describe your goal(s) that will require power in the future, and (2) how your unique interpersonal and relational profile will help you use power to achieve this goal. In your essay, we would like you to be specific and detailed with your responses to each of these parts of the report. In particular, think about how prior lessons from earlier parts of the course inform your assessment of your goal and your interpersonal profile. This might include how you will leverage your network, how you might
approach change, your style of providing feedback, or even the information provided in the power profile (which we will go over during the class session).

- **Change Management Simulation**
  In the change management simulation, student’s role play as an employee of a sunglasses manufacturing company attempting to reduce their carbon footprint. The overarching goal of this simulation is to convince others of adopting changes to their accepted work practices. The Change Management simulation records a change- efficiency score reflecting your speed and efficiency at changing company policy. The simulation can be played up to four times in four different scenarios. Your highest change-efficiency score will be used for this assignment grade. The assignment requires a computer or other electronic device and must be completed outside of class using the Harvard Business School Publishing website.

- **Feedback Assignment**
  Helping others grow and perform well is a fundamental role and responsibility of every manager. Following the session on feedback, you will analyze examples from your experience of feedback given and received using the material reviewed during this segment. This assignment gives you a chance to reflect on the impact and effectiveness of how power is used in feedback exchanges that you have personally experienced.

- **Networking Activity**
  Given the importance of network maintenance to your career and development, complete the following activity following the 1/24 course discussion on Networks to deepen or revive parts of your professional network: Reconnect in person, over the phone or through videoconferencing with a dormant tie, such as an old boss, colleague or client from a prior job or other meaningful activity. The reconnection should occur with someone whom you haven’t had contact with for two years (or longer). In one paragraph, describe who you reconnected with and how it went.

- **Group Project, The Personal Path to Power**
  Armed with the materials we have discussed throughout the course, think about charting a personal path to power for one of your learning team members. In this assignment, students will complete a brief PowerPoint presentation where they create a concrete plan for attaining power, with specific goals and objectives, for one member of their learning team. The presentations will be graded by peers as well as faculty.

More specific details about each assignment will be posted on CANVAS. CANVAS is also where you will upload written assignments.

**YALE SOM POLICIES**

Please see the Yale School of Management Bulletin at [http://www.yale.edu/print/bulletin/htmlfiles/som/rights-and-responsibilities-of-students.html](http://www.yale.edu/print/bulletin/htmlfiles/som/rights-and-responsibilities-of-students.html) for Rights and Responsibilities of students and for information on requesting a course recording.

**Laptop/Device Policy**
Usage not allowed without the express permission of the instructor.

**OUTLINE OF CLASS SESSIONS**

Detailed outline of class sessions will be posted on Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Cases/Media</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is Power?</td>
<td>“Promises aren’t enough”</td>
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<td>“People Think Companies Can’t Do Good and Make Money”</td>
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<td>Class activities: Course objectives, definitions, discussion of values</td>
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| **The Power Profile**  
Class activities: Power profile feedback, Best Self, Power in context | “How to play to your strengths”  
Everest case |
| **Networks**  
Class activities: Claude Grunitzky case discussion, Multi-party negotiation | “How to Build Your Network”  
“The Power of Reconnection”  
Claude Grunitzky case  
Coalitions and Alliances exercise |
| **Powerful Feedback**  
Class activities: Listening with empathy, Framework for giving powerful feedback, Feedback practice | “Feedback that works”  
“Giving and receiving powerful feedback” |
| **Managing Change**  
Class activities: Managing change effectively, Hannah Jones at Nike | “Leading change”  
Hannah Hones A and B |
| **Ability vs. Outcomes**  
Class activities: Donna Dubinsky case, Group presentations | Donna Dubinsky case |

*The instructor reserves the right to modify and/or change the course syllabus as needed during the course.*