

MGMT 579: Power and Status Dynamics in the Workplace

Summer Term A 2024

Tuesday & Thursday 6-930pm (PCAR 391)

Professor Information

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PACCAR 579

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I. COURSE INFORMATION

Course Overview:

Unfortunately, talented leaders who do not fully appreciate power and status dynamics in their organizations often face rejection, regardless of the quality of their initiatives and ideas. Organizations are political environments that can hinder as well as help you. This elective is designed to help you make things happen for yourself and others in the workplace, despite the obstacles of being powerless or less respected that stand in your way. In this course, we will learn and experience concepts that are central to our understanding of how power and status function in organizations. We will achieve these objectives through guided self-reflections, group activities, and skill-building exercises. Through this course, you will develop your own personal pathway to these two important social currencies in the workplace.

Course Objectives:

1. To broaden your perspectives of power and status in the workplace.
2. To develop your personal strategies to navigate issues of power and status in the workplace.
3. To appreciate the dynamics of power and status so that you can impact lives and organizations meaningfully.

Instructor Bio:

As an organizational researcher, I take a keen interest to answer important and pressing organizational issues through a scientific lens. My research interests include the study of processes that enable the implementation of creative ideas in organizations, continuous change in organizations, and factors that disrupt existing social hierarchies in dyads and teams. I received my Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior at the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland. In my role as a business professor, I consulted for organizations ranging from the World Bank, Pan Pacific Hotels Group, and FNP Printing and Publishing. My work has been featured in news outlets such as the *New York Times* and *Harvard Business Review*. Before academia, I served as an artillery officer in a field artillery battalion in the Singapore Armed Forces and as a military psychologist in the Singapore Armed Forces Center of Leadership Development. I live in Issaquah with my wife and 7-year-old daughter, who never fails to question the status quo.

Instructional Methods:

To meet our objectives, this course is designed as a workshop. In each session, we will use a variety of instructional methods – readings, exercises, case examples, and discussions – to explore new content pertaining to power and status. In preparation for each class, you are expected to:

1. Read/watch all session preparatory materials, identify key concepts that reinforce or add to the knowledge of power and status dynamics, and be prepared to share your insights and thoughts with class peers and the professor.
2. Come to each session prepared to actively engage in a discussion of session topics, ask questions, contribute to thoughtful discussion, and be fully engaged in the class conversation.
3. Produce a written reflection on readings and discussion topics.

You will have the opportunity to deeply reflect on your own experiences and help develop others' thinking about power and status in small group discussions. These small group discussions encourage a higher level of openness and reflection.

Course Communication:

- **Canvas Access.** A university id and password are required to access Canvas courses.
- **Email & Communications.** I will communicate with you in class and via announcements in Canvas. *You are required to update and maintain your current email address.* Canvas uses this address to send source-related email. Failure to update your email address may result in missing important information. Please note that you are responsible for all communications I post on Canvas, regardless of how you choose to receive them.
- **Submission of Deliverables.** Post all deliverables to the **Assignments** folder on course Canvas site unless otherwise instructed.
- **Weekly Report.** I will provide a weekly report to the class. The weekly report (called "W Report") will be posted on Canvas at the end of each week. The purpose of the weekly report is to summarize the learning highlights for the week and to address some students' comments/questions.

II. COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Teaching Philosophy:

There are two specific values I will emphasize throughout the course: **mutual respect and ownership of learning**. These two values will help us to create a learning environment that will make you successful in this course. **Mutual respect** should be observed not only between the instructor and the student, but it should also be observed among students. Mutual respect sets the nature of our interaction so that we can learn effectively from each other. While I am committed to helping you to be successful, how much you learn and take away from this course is largely dependent on you taking full **ownership of your own learning**. Taking ownership of learning means staying intellectually engaged during class discussions and being curious about learning beyond what is stipulated in the syllabus. This value of ownership is particularly important because of the online nature of this course. I strongly encourage you to reach out to me if you face any difficulties in your learning.

I am prepared to help you be successful in your learning and development. Therefore, please do not hesitate to approach me if I can assist in your development. ***In summary, I have high expectations of you and of myself, and I specify these expectations in the table below.***

Instructor Performance: Formal evaluation of the course occurs at the end of the quarter through the course evaluations. However, taking evaluations at the end of the class **does not benefit you** as it is usually too late for the instructor to make any meaningful changes to the course delivery. I will prompt you at the mid-point of the course for

your feedback. In addition, please approach me throughout the course to discuss concerns about your learning.

Workload and Grading:

Components of Student Evaluation	Percentage
Course Engagement	25%
Four reflection assignments	40%
Personal Influence Project	35%

Due Dates: Assignments are due on dates specified on the course schedule and Canvas. **The deadlines are set before the end of the day (i.e., before 1159pm) in order to be considered for full class credit.** If you have questions about the deadlines, it is your responsibility to proactively clarify the issue with me. Late work will not be accepted for full credit except for compelling reasons and when arrangements are made with me *prior to the due date*. **Please reach out to me BEFORE the deadline if you faced any difficulties so that I can be of help to you. Otherwise, 25% of the total points possible will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.**

Detailed descriptions of each assignment will be posted on Canvas and Deliverables Guideline Document with sufficient time for clarification and high-quality completion.

1. Course Engagement (25%)

This class is centered around discussion during classes, small group discussion, and participation in group activities. Therefore, it is important that you carefully prepare for each class by completing the assigned materials conscientiously (e.g., readings, video clips, activities). My expectations for course engagement included engaged and thoughtful contributions as well as demonstrated preparedness in course materials (e.g., connecting to assigned materials). I expect all students to **complete required readings/materials prior to class** and to contribute actively and meaningfully to class discussions. To do this, students must be present during the scheduled sessions to **contribute to the class discussion**. If you must miss class, please inform me by email.

2. Four Reflection Assignments (40%)

The purpose of the 4 reflection assignments is to help you apply what you learned in the class to your persona life. During the course, you will be asked to reflect on a series of questions, put your thoughts into writing, and then share them with your PG for feedback and inspiration. Each reflection assignment is expected to be around 2 pages (double spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman 12-point font, not more than 500 words). Details on the content and grading criteria for the reflection assignment can be found on Canvas.

3. Personal Influence Project (35%)

This project seeks to have you put the ideas of the course into actual practice during the quarter. Based on your current work situation, you will develop a detailed course of action to exercise influence over specific issues that you care deeply about. The goal is to use the concepts and ideas discussed in this course and apply them to your work context. In order to do this assignment meaningfully, you will first need to identify the specific goal/objective (e.g., what are you trying to change? What are you trying to accomplish?). Then, you will be able to develop and execute a plan on how you might try and influence the situation (e.g., what you did, what worked, and what didn't work, and why). Details on the content and grading criteria for the Personal Influence Project can be found on Canvas.

iii. Course Policies

Course Attendance

Attendance to all sessions is critical to your learning experience in this course. In accordance with Foster MBA Program policy, attendance is required aside from circumstances related to (1) illness or (2) unavoidable conflict with a job or internship interview that cannot be rescheduled. Regardless of the rationale for missing a class meeting, please note that you are responsible for the learning experience that takes place in your absence; please work within your LDG to address any material you may have missed, and please contact me afterward should you have questions or concerns about course content.

Grading Policies

Throughout the quarter, your assignments will be marked on a percentage scale. For the final grade, I will convert the overall percentage earned to the grade-point equivalent based on the standard grade scale. For example, an overall percentage earned between 98-100% will reflect a 4-point grade. Similarly, an overall percentage earned between 87-88% will reflect a 3.4-point grade. If you have questions about grading practices, please come speak with me. Please come prepared to listen and, if you have points of concern, address them with logic and evidence. I reserve the right to adjust the final grade for the class.

You are welcome to request a re-grade on any assignment within **one week** of the grading. This means that I will read and evaluate your assignment carefully. Your grade will have the potential to increase, decrease, or stay the same. I encourage you to carefully consider the reasons and evidence why you think your performance grading should be different before you take the potential risk of regrading.

Academic Misconduct

WAC 478-1220-020 of the University of Washington Student Conduct Code states that students are expected to “Practice high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity.” This means that students will not engage in activities like plagiarism, multiple submissions, (submitting a paper for credit to more than one class), turning in a paper that you didn’t write, cheating on exams, or collaborating on individual assignments.

In short, **academic dishonesty WILL NOT BE TOLERATED** in any form. Although you may discuss assignments outside of class, turning in identical assignments, using past assignments or tests or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a zero grade on the assignment and/or exam and could result in more severe penalties as allowed by University policy. Put even more succinctly: do your own work.

At the Foster School, we strive to promote an atmosphere that encourages “better than compliance.” You are a member of a learning community and expected to uphold the fundamental standards of honesty, respect, and integrity. It is your responsibility to model these qualities and encourage others to do the same. Towards these ends, we have developed a code of conduct designed to help you make tough decisions and do the right thing.

Student Code of Conduct

I employ the policies espoused by the Foster School of Business Honor Code to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Honor Code of the Foster School of Business expressly prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, and lying to administration or faculty as it pertains to academic work. Suspected violations will be referred to the Foster Honor Council.

Disability Statement

Access and Accommodations: Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established

accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

If you have a letter from the office of Disability Resources for Students indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, **please present the letter to me in the first week of class** so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for this class.

Religious Accommodations

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy \(https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form \(https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/\)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/)

Copyright and Confidentiality Notice

My lectures and course materials, including Keynote presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials that I create. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use. You may not and may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly whether or not a fee is charged without my express consent. Similarly, you own copyright in your original papers and exam essays. If I am interested in posting your answers or papers on the course web site, I will ask for your written permission.

In addition, I will also post recordings of the session after each class to help you in your review of the class discussion and materials. To ensure student confidentiality, please do not share any of the course videos with anyone outside of the class.

iii. Course Content & Schedule (Tentative and subject to change)

Date	Topic	Learning Objectives	Readings/Activities	Deliverable(s)
<p>Individual Perspective – What is power and status? This first part of the course encourages you to set development objectives for yourself – thinking about the individual qualities, mindset that might limit what you think about power and status in the workplace</p>				
<p>Module 1 06/18</p>	<p>What is Power? And why is it important?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand what power means in the workplace. 2. Understand the consequences of power in the workplace. 	<p>Read "Power dynamics in organizations" by Linda Hill Read "The power paradox" by Dacher Keltner</p>	
<p>Module 2 06/20</p>	<p>What is Status? And why is it important?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand what status means in the workplace. 2. Understand the consequences of status in the workplace. 3. Appreciate the differences/similarities between power and status. 	<p>Read: "The psychology of social status" by Adam Waytz Read "For monkeys, lower status affects immune system" By Erica Goode</p>	<p>Submit: Reflection 1 (6/23)</p>
<p>Personal Strategies – How to Create My Own Path? The second part of the course encourages you to establish your pathway to power/status.</p>				
<p>Module 3 06/25</p>	<p>Breaking Rules</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss what rule breaking means and how it relates to social currencies. 2. Appreciate the boundaries of rule breaking in the workplace. 	<p>Read: "Are these rules worth breaking" By Jena Pincott Read: "How David Beats Goliath" by Malcolm Gladwell</p>	
<p>Module 4 06/27</p>	<p>Building Effective Networks</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss tactics for building and leveraging networks. 2. Appreciate the factors that contribute to effective networks 	<p>Read "How to network with powerful people" by Michael Wenderoth Read "How to create and capture value from collaboration" by Heidi Gardner & Herminia Ibarra</p>	<p>Submit: Reflection 2 (6/30) Sign up for Simulation</p>

Date	Topic	Learning Objectives	Readings/Activities	Deliverable(s)
Common Good – How to Use My Influence for Greater Good?				
The third part of the course encourages you to think about how you can use your social currencies for others				
Module 5 & 6 07/02	Getting Others on Your Side Idea Sponsorship	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop strategies for building trust and credibility. 2. Discuss the ethical implications of using influence in the workplace. 3. Understand the role of idea sponsorship and why they matter in the workplace. 4. Apply tactics to support sponsorship. 	Read " You remind me of me " by Benedict Carey Read " Use power effectively to influence people " by Gary Yukl Read " Bring your breakthrough ideas to life " by Cyril Bouquet et al. Read " What great sponsors do differently " by Herminia Ibarra & Rachel Simmons	
07/04	Independence Day (No class)			<i>Submit: Reflection 3 (07/07)</i>
Coping With Conflict				
The final part of the course leads you to explore different ways of managing rejection and/or conflict in the workplace				
Module 7 07/09	Dealing with Stereotype and Minority Status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze the nature and impact of stereotypes on influence. 2. Develop awareness and capabilities to address the impact of minority status on social currencies 	Read " Asian Americans are still caught in the trap of the 'model minority' stereotype. And it creates inequality for all " Listen to " Women@work 2024 " podcast	
Module 8 07/11	Simulation Exercise (Asynchronous)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice diagnostic and action-planning skills with regards to leading organization-wide strategic change 2. Apply knowledge about power and status dynamics to organizational change 	Complete Change Management Simulation	<i>Submit: Reflection 4 (07/14)</i>
Module 9 07/16	Building Resilience and Moving Forward	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop personal psychological resources to maintain focus on your goals. 2. Review key lessons 	Read " A breast cancer surgeon who keeps challenging the status quo " by Katie Hafner Read " How to hardwire resilience into your brain " By Rick Hanson, Forrest Hanson Watch " How to deal with rejection "	<i>Submit: Personal Influence Project (07/21)</i>