INTRODUCTION

Power is “the capacity to get what you want over the resistance of others” and influence is “the act of translating power into action.” Power and Influence in Management examines the bases of subunit and individual power in organizations and the means by which subunit and individual power is translated into influence. The subject of power and influence is related to, but not identical to, the subject of leadership. Because many students are interested in the subject of leadership, it is important to make clear how Power and Influence in Management relates to the subject of leadership right from the start.

Power and Influence in Management assumes that people at all levels of the organization acquire power and exercise influence in organizations. Thus the course focuses not just on leaders but also on middle level managers and lower level employees. Power and Influence also assumes that leaders, middle managers, and lower level employees sometimes must acquire power to be effective, but recognizes that these organizational participants do not always use power in the interests of the organization. Thus, the course explores the positive and negative effects that power and its use can have on organizational effectiveness and in the process considers the ethics of power and influence. The course’s most basic premise is that managers at all levels of the organization can improve their effectiveness (both in pursuit of their own and their organization’s interests) if they better understand how power is accumulated and used in organizations.

Class sessions will be devoted to discussing theoretical arguments about power and influence advanced in readings and using theoretical arguments about power and influence to analyze case materials of various types; including standard Harvard Business School cases, book chapters about individuals (e.g., Robert Moses), corporations (e.g., Lehman Brothers) and industries (e.g., the auto industry), and in-class videos (e.g., HBS and Stanford Business School interviews with Silicon Valley venture capitalist Heidi Roizen).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students’ final course grades will be based on their performance on three in-class quizzes (worth a total of 30 points), two take-home case analyses (worth a total of 20 points), one final case analysis (worth 50 points), and on student participation in class discussions (incorporated as a “fudge factor” in the determination of final grades).
Completion of Three In-Class Quizzes (10 points each)

Each student will individually complete three in-class quizzes. The quizzes will be designed to evaluate students’ grasp of the most important concepts and theories introduced over the course of the term. They will be administered in Session #3, Session #5, and Session #7.

Completion of Three Case Analyses

Students will be randomly assigned to groups of four to five students each. Then these groups will be asked to analyze two cases discussed in class and one case assigned at the end of the 10th session, as described below.

Analysis of Two Cases that Were Discussed in Class (10 points each)

Each student group will be asked to complete analyses of two cases discussed in class. The two cases should be selected according to the following schedule:

- One case discussed in either Session 3 or 4.
- One case discussed in either Session 5 or 6.

The analyses should indicate how the case in question illustrates (provides evidence supportive of) the principles of power and influence covered in the class session for which the case was assigned. Analyses will be categorized as either: “on-target” (8-9 points), “missed-the-mark” (6-7 points), or “exemplary” (10 points). My expectation is that the vast majority of analyses will be categorized as “on target.” Analyses should be no more than 525 words in length. Analyses should be submitted no later than the beginning of the class session following the session for which the case was assigned.

Final Case Analysis (50 Points)

Each student group will be asked to analyze a case supplied by the Professor at the end of the 9th Session. Final case analyses should be written up in no more than ten double-spaced typewritten pages. Final papers must be submitted to the Professor at the beginning of session # 10.

Class Participation

The material covered in this course will be largely learned through in-class discussion. For this reason, it is absolutely imperative that all students complete all of the assigned reading before coming to class. Likely discussion questions have been provided for each class session (with the exception of the first session) that can help you prepare for class discussion. The Professor’s evaluation of the quantity and quality of a student’s class participation will factor into the determination of the student’s final letter grade if their combined performance on the three quizzes, two analyses of cases discussed in class, and the final case analysis places them on the borderline between two letter grades (e.g., between B+ and A-).
COURSE READINGS


Anthology of case materials and other readings.
SESSION OUTLINE

SESSION #1: INTRODUCTION

TOPIC 1. BASIC CONCEPTS

Readings: Donald Palmer, “Basic Concepts”*

TOPIC 2. WHY POWER IS IMPORTANT

Readings: MWP, Ch.1, “Decisions and Implementation”

MWP, Ch. 13, “The Politics of Information and Analysis.”

Case: Donna Dubinsky and Apple Computer (A) HBS case 9-486-083.

SESSION #2: DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE TWO TYPES OF POWER

TOPIC 1. CONTRASTING FORMAL AND INFORMAL POWER

Readings: MWP, Ch. 4, “Where Does Power Come From?”


TOPIC 2. THE BASIS OF INFORMAL POWER

Readings: MWP, Ch. 5, “Resources, Allies and the New Golden Rule.”


* Indicates that reading will be made available on SmartSite.
SESSION #3: DIGGING INTO INFORMAL POWER -- THE DIVISION OF LABOR

TOPIC 1. THE CRITICAL CONTINGENCY THEORY OF POWER
Readings: MWP, Ch. 8, “The Importance of Being in the Right Unit.”


TOPIC 1. BUILDING SUBUNIT POWER
Readings: MWP, Ch. 14, “Changing the Structure to Consolidate Power.”


SESSION #4: DIGGING INTO INFORMAL POWER -- SOCIAL NETWORKS

TOPIC 1. POSITION IN THE SOCIAL NETWORK: BASIC
Readings: MWP, Ch. 6, “Location in the Communication Network.”

Case: Nicole Tempest, Heidi Roizen (HBS Case 9-800-228)

TOPIC 2. POSITION IN THE SOCIAL NETWORK: ADVANCED
Readings: Donald Palmer, “Strong Ties, Weak Ties, Brokerage, and Closure.” *

Video: Heidi Roizen Interview #1 (HBSVideo)
       Heidi Roizen Interview #2 (Stanford GSB Video)

* Indicates that reading will be made available on SmartSite.
SESSION #5: FORMAL POWER AND IT’S RELATIONSHIP TO INFORMAL POWER

TOPIC 1. FORMAL POWER
Readings: MWP, Ch. 7, “Formal Authority, Reputation, and Performance.”


TOPIC 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FORMAL AND INFORMAL POWER

SESSION #6: TEMPORAL DYNAMICS

TOPIC 1. WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT
Readings: MWP, Ch. 12, “Timing is (Almost Everything)”


TOPIC 2. WHEN THE TIME IS UP
Readings: MWP, Ch. 16, “Even the Mighty Fall: How Power is Lost.”


* Indicates that reading will be made available on SmartSite.
SESSION #7: SOCIAL INFLUENCE

TOPIC 2. LIKING, SOCIAL PROOF, (SIMILARITY), AND SCARCITY


Video: Scenes from *Twelve Angry Men*.

TOPIC 2. COMMITMENT


Video: Scenes from *Remember the Titans*.

SESSION #8: POWER IN THE SERVICE OF GOOD: HOW TO WIELD IT

TOPIC 1. FROM THE TOP

Readings: *MWP*, Ch. 17, “Managing Political Dynamics Productively.”

Case: John Sculley at Apple Computer (B). HBS case 9-486-002

TOPIC 2. FROM THE MIDDLE

Readings: Donald Palmer, “Building and Using Power to Defeat Power.”*


* Indicates that reading will be made available on SmartSite.
SESSION #9: POWER IN THE SERVICE OF EVIL

TOPIC 1. THE ETHICS OF DEVELOPING AND EXERCISING POWER


Alexander, Burns, Manor, McRoberts, and Torriero, “Civil War Splits Anderson” Chicago Tribune, September 2

TOPIC 2. THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF POWER ON THOSE WHO HAVE IT

Readings: Donald Palmer, “The Effect of Power on the Powerful.” *

Audio: “Petty Tyrant,” This American Life, WBEZ, November 12, 2010.

SESSION #10 IS POWER FOR YOU?

TOPIC 1. IS POWER IN YOU?

Readings: MWP, Ch. 9, “Individual Attributes as Sources of Power.”

Video: Scenes from “David Rockefeller”

TOPIC 2. WRAP-UP

* Indicates that reading will be made available on SmartSite.