COURSE OBJECTIVES & FORMAT

Negotiation is a means of meeting your interests (e.g., getting what you want) when doing so depends on others. Negotiation is effective when you get more or lose less than you would have if you did not negotiate, and getting more of what you want is always the objective when negotiating. Any situation which involves multiple parties, apparent conflict, and interdependence has negotiation potential.

This course will teach you how to be a better negotiator by

- Learning to identify opportunities for negotiation
- Understanding how to analyze a situation for negotiation potential
- Understanding how to plan for behavior during the negotiation

Your ability to do the above skills will depend greatly on some more general skills which we will also practice, specifically:

- Knowing how to analyze
- Knowing how to think efficiently
- Knowing how to think critically
- Knowing how to adapt and deal with ambiguity

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All reading material will be distributed by me. This includes -

Negotiation, Matthew A. Cronin, Kevin W. Rockmann, Claus W. Langfred

Two cases from the DRRC (these cost $3.50 each, make the check out to me. You MUST pay by check before the 7th class period).
HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY STUDY AND LEARN IN THIS CLASS

There are three basic processes:

1) **READ:** Read and reproduce the material – You need to read the book, but this class requires FAR more than memorizing. It is also important that you can understand and explain the material in your own words. Do whatever you need to ensure you understand the material including highlighting, tabbing, writing down any questions you have to discuss in class etc.

2) **PRACTICE:** Use what you have learned – Go beyond the book. Look for cases on line. Try things you have learned in class on your friends/family/coworkers. Take advantage of the opportunities inside the classroom as well to practice your skills.

3) **PARTICIPATE:** A lot of what you will read you will think you understand until I press you. I do this in class. In fact 90% of your evaluation feedback happens in class.
   a. **It is imperative you attend every class ready to participate.** This means you walk into class: a) having done the reading that is due, b) having read and prepared for any exercises, c) having completed any assignments. While you are in class you a) are paying attention to what is going on, even if you are not center stage, b) are trying to give feedback that moves class discussion forward, rather than simply trying to talk, and c) are not looking at your cell phone.
   b. **IMPORTANT,** I will give everyone public feedback because if one person is making a mistake, I am 100% certain others are as well. You must think about what you can learn from others when they are on the hot seat.
   c. Note: If I call on you and you are not paying attention, I may repeat the question but I will not accept “uh” as an answer. As a professional I am expecting you to come prepared to discuss the topic for the day with the team. I would prefer a wrong answer then “I don’t know”. If you answer “I don’t know” be prepared to support your claim. I need to know why you don’t know.

**The importance of failure.**
You should be prepared to make a lot of mistakes and often be wrong as you are answering questions about the material. This is expected and it is okay to be wrong. People don’t seem to be used to this, so they are timid about suggesting answers that will be criticized, and they get freaked out by my open criticism. But both of these are by design. You cannot learn if you do not push yourself to the point of failure. From your mistakes you learn to adapt and fix your weaknesses. Alternately, if you give me an answer and I say “Yes, that is correct.” What have you learned? What has anyone listening learned?

**The importance of professionalism.**
I consider being a student your job. You need to think of me as your boss. Our workplace is the classroom, a learning environment. Growth in the workplace is about learning with and from others. We learn to collaborate, influence, motivate and negotiate through our interaction with our peers. This is most effective when communication is open, direct, and respectful. So tell me what you think, I will tell you what I think. Don’t try to guess what I want, ask what I want. Although we will joke around in class, I am still your professor, so when you communicate with me via e-mail or writing, do so formally. **Do not tiptoe around me.** When class starts we are all
part of the same team and our mission is to learn how to become better negotiators, creating better thinkers and students.

**As professionals I expect every student to create an environment conducive to learning.**

This means:
- You are respectful to me and to your fellow students
- You are prepared for class, paying attention and participating
- You encourage learning inside and outside the classroom from yourself and your peers

**Throughout the semester I will meet with you one on one to discuss your performance.** As your boss it is important that I discuss your individual performance and provide you with specific feedback. This could happen only once, or could be several times. Dates and times will be posted on Blackboard.

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**EVALUATION**

Here are the big picture things I value:

1) **Sophistication and professionalism** – Acting like a serious student who puts time and attention into all aspects of the class, and tries to contribute in a positive way to the classroom experience. Treating assignments and tasks with attention and care. If you have a reputation as being a yahoo, people will not take you seriously and give little thought to your ideas.

2) **Competence** – this is simply a measure of “do you know your stuff,” but it pertains to both your ability to apply knowledge correctly, and (as is often overlooked) your ability to know which kind of knowledge is most appropriate in ambiguous situations. Negotiations are always ambiguous situations.

3) **Creativity** – The ability to come up with novel and useful ideas that can be applied to what you are doing. Creativity is one thing American Education still has a huge competitive advantage in. You need to learn to develop those skills, for to make creative agreements in a negotiation (or to get around roadblocks), you need to be able to think flexibly and insightfully.

What follows are the specific activities you will be engaged in where you can demonstrate sophistication, professionalism, and creativity. All phases involve knowing (where you show me you understand the abstract knowledge), seeing (where you show me you can identify the abstract knowledge in context), and doing (where you show me you can put the lessons learned to use) activity.

**PHASE 1: Learning the concepts and how to think effectively**

In this phase, you read the book and make sure you know how to use the technical language that we will use to study negotiations. Classes will have the following activities where you will sharpen your learning.

**Cold calls** - I call on you to see whether or not you know what a concept means. You tell me what the concept means in your own words. I tell you how good your answer was.
Clip analysis - I show you video clips that illustrate concepts and you tell me what concepts are being illustrated. You also provide evidence that your inferences are reasonable. I tell you how good your answer was.

Concept application - You will be assigned (by me) to use a class concept in your real life. You will do this activity outside of class, but you will then report back to class on what you learned about the concept. You will report to the class
1) What you did
2) How it used the concept
3) What you learned
You will give a short (four (4) minute – hard deadline) presentation to the class to communicate this. I will ask questions during the presentation if I don’t understand things.

- Sophistication and professionalism is about a good presentation.
- Competence is about doing what the assignment asks for.
- Creativity is about taking an interesting approach to the problem.

Common mistakes to avoid:
1) Not answering the question – if I ask you to “change someone’s mind” and you tell me a great story about negotiating for a car, you are not answering the question. If I tell you to negotiate for something odd and you negotiate for something obvious, you are not answering the question.
2) Only telling a story of what happened – no matter how entertaining the story, what I am grading you on is what you learned and what you teach the class. You must also provide evidence for why and how you learned that.
3) Mindlessly throwing out concepts – I don’t want to hear “my BATNA was..., I used and aspiration frame..., I used a highball....” I only want you to tell me what you learned about the particular concept you used. Go deep, not wide.

At the culmination of this phase is the concepts test – you are given a case and will be asked to identify concepts from class in the case. It is closed book and short answer. This is a test to see that you can understand and apply the scientific language we use to understand negotiation.

PHASE 2: Learning to analyze negotiation situations
In this phase, you take what you have learned in phase 1 but apply them together to more complex situations. You will also improve your ability to make intelligent inferences about ambiguous situations, and to think efficiently. You will also further learn to ANALYZE and SUMMARIZE a situation.

Student selected clips – In teams of 3-5 (you may choose these yourself), you will find a negotiation clip for class that demonstrates some lesson about negotiation. Once the course is underway and you pick your teams, I will assign due dates (but these will be in the second 3rd of the class). The clip should demonstrate the synthesis of concepts that you have learned in a setting that is not specifically negotiation. In essence, this is like the clip analyses we did in phase 1 except you are finding the clip, and you are teaching the class what insightful lesson we can take from it. Each team should give a short (about ten minutes, give or take) lesson to the
class using their clip to communicate what the lesson is. I will ask questions during the presentation if I don’t understand things.

- Sophistication and professionalism is about a good presentation.
- Competence is about seeing the main gist of the clip, and not an ancillary detail.
- Creativity is about finding a situation that is very different from a typical negotiation, and being creative in how you teach your insight to the class.

So, for example, a great clip is short but pithy, you analyze it correctly and specifically, and you help the class understand the deeper lesson related to the synthesis of the ideas. The big picture lesson you teach is about how concepts work TOGETHER. I can’t stress that enough.

Common mistakes to avoid:

1) *Giving me a negotiations clip* – see the above requirements
2) *Missing the point* – Clips can sometimes demonstrate lots of things; tell me something insightful that the clip illustrates, not something obvious or trivial.
3) *Blathering on and on about details when you should be justifying your claim* – Provide good evidence for your insight, don’t just name 15 concepts that you can see in the clip
4) *Putting little thought into the clip selection* - “Hey, I got you a copy of ‘The negotiator’ – it shows negotiation” is bad. “I went into Google and typed ‘negotiation,’ here is a link to a clip on distributive bargaining from MIT” is an F.

Class exercises: We will do role plays where you have to act as though you are a particular party in a negotiation. You will do your negotiations in front of class, and use that time to show you know how to apply the lessons. Meanwhile the class will watch and analyze what you are doing well and poorly.

At the culmination of this phase is the Process Test - We will watch a complex multiparty negotiation and analyze what is happening in real time. This has a test format, is short answer, and will be closed book.

PHASE 3: Putting your knowledge into action
In this phase, you show me you can apply what you have learned to actual negotiations. These activities will require advance preparation, and will be done in front of class. It is imperative that you read and prepare for these activities BEFORE coming to class. As your boss I expect you to be prepared to present and play your role well.

Class exercises: As above, the negotiations will just get more intricate.

Class guests: Several lessons involve inviting professionals to come in and having you negotiate with them. I will randomly assign students to participate in these activities as well as take volunteers. Again, the class will watch and analyze what you are doing well and poorly.

Negotiation Paper: You will plan for and execute a negotiation where you get someone or some organization to donate money to a charitable cause. This is a capstone exercise, so not only does it touch on all the objectives and ways we will try to meet them, but it also challenges you to synthesize and execute the broader skills from the course (planning, analysis, process adaptation, and analytical reflection).
It does not matter who the money or items come from, or who it goes to. The paper tells me about how you secured a donation, and focuses on the strategic and tactical choices you made in getting that donation, as well as what you would do better next time.

The focus of the paper must be on the negotiation material you have learned.

As a negotiation class, the paper needs to be about how the negotiation went. As a capstone activity, I am looking for evidence that you understood and could put into use what I have taught you. If you tell me a brilliant and complex story of a negotiation that has no connection to what you learned from class, you will not do well. You do not have to cover everything we have learned, only what is most relevant for this experience.

Outcome matters, but only inasmuch as it demonstrates how you have learned from the course. Raising $10,000 is a lot harder than raising $500, unless the $10,000 came from your rich uncle and the $500 came from donations by inner city welfare recipients. At the same time, negotiation is about being smart in your choices about whom to ask. Thus the person who chooses to try to raise money from the welfare recipients may not have made such a good strategic decision.

- The paper should include a plan (about 2 pgs.) an analysis of the negotiation process (about 2 pgs.) and an analysis of what you learned from it that you will use in your next negotiation (about 1 pg).
- Note that this severely limits your ability to get multiple donors. You may be able to raise a lot of money by asking your customers at work to contribute to some charity, but this leaves very little to plan, no process to analyze, and little to think about with respect to what you could have done better.
- The paper should be no more than 5 pages of double-spaced text in 12-point font, with one-inch margins all around. No fancy binders or folders, please; just staple the pages together. I stop reading at the end of page 5.
- As a final note, I need a receipt of the donation (or at the very least a contract for the future event/ donation).

GRADES

Generally speaking, I give three grades: A (you really impressed me, went above and beyond), B (you did what I asked competently), or C (you messed things up or put in little effort). I give + grades if you are in between or I can’t decide. D is reserved for those who really didn’t get it, and F for those who totally blow off an assignment, but these are uncommon. The overall breakdown in terms of importance to class is:

- Participation - 30%
- Concepts test - 20%
- Process test – 20%
- Paper – 30%

Each of these is fairly straightforward except participation. Participation is the culmination of your performance across all the things we do in class (e.g., cold calls, role plays)/ assigned as homework (e.g., concept application, clip analysis). While some things matter more than others
(e.g., the concept application counts the most as a single thing, cold calls probably count the least), participation is a more global estimation of how well you contributed to class. There is no “here are the exact points you get for each of these things...” The world does not work that way and neither do I. At the end of the day, all grades are a function of my expert judgment, and the fact of the matter is that you can participate well (or poorly) in many different ways. You will get feedback on how you are doing participation wise at around mid-semester.

**HONOR SYSTEM AND CODE**

The Honor System and Code adopted by George Mason University will be enforced for this class. For a full description of this code please refer to [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/acadpol.html](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/acadpol.html). In adherence with

**III. Responsibility of the Faculty**, a delineation of Honor Code Violations for this class is provided below.

III.A. Group participation is permissible during in-class small group exercises and while studying for Exams. Homework assignments in preparation for the following class period may also be discussed among classmates. Discussion with classmates in other groups with regard to the group project should be limited to format and structure and not include content. No discussion will be permitted while taking Exams.

III.B. Study aids, memoranda, books, data, and other information are not permissible to use while taking the Exams.

III.C. When using material from the textbook or other sources (including the internet), non-original thoughts, concepts, etc. should be cited in accordance with standard academic guidelines (e.g., APA or MLA).

The following is a general calendar for when class wide assignments are due. Specific assignments (e.g., specific concept applications clip analyses, etc.) will be posted after the final class roster is established. **I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus and assignments as I see fit in response to any developments that occur throughout the semester.**

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Negotiation Paper Due