

# MGMT 4980

## Power, Influence & Politics in Organizations

### Spring 2020 Course Syllabus



#### Instructor

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#### Contact Info

Office: BLB 325.A  
Office hours: In person Friday 2-4pm  
Virtually Wed. 1130pm-1230pm  
And by appointment

**MGMT 4980-001** is a new course offered on a trial basis as a Blended Course\* running from **01/13/2020 to 05/08/2020** \*Please note: this is a blended course alternating weeks with face to face and online lectures. Like any other course, there are specific requirements, attendance, activities and deliverables that must be completed and submitted at specific times throughout the semester either in Person or via Canvas (see Course schedule and Canvas for detail).

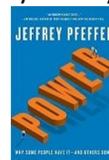
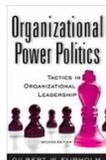
**Prerequisites:** PBUS/BUND/DBUND and PACC/DPACC students may not enroll in this course unless assigned to BFND/DBFND or AFND/DAFND subplan

#### **Course Description:**

Power and politics are ever-present and necessary features of organizational life. Without them, much of what gets done in organizations could never be accomplished, and getting things done requires developing and exercising power and influence. Therefore, being able to understand power and politics, and to act on that knowledge is crucial for career success. In short, in today's world, not only employees must be competent technically, but also understand organizational politics along with power and influence to sustain a successful career over a lifetime. However, power can also be abused, and personal or political goals can overshadow organizational ones. This course provides a framework for intelligently analyzing the sources of power in organizations, and the circumstances that lead to its attainment and effective ethical use. The course covers the social science concepts useful for appreciating power and ways of analyzing power dynamics in organizations. The course structure encourage students to think about and build their own personal path to power, influence and politics. *"Power is the ability to get people to do something they did not want to do and make them happy that they did it."* — Winston Churchill

#### **Required Course Materials:**

1. **Organizational Power Politics: Tactic in Organizational Leadership\*** by Gilbert Fairholm ISBN: 978-0-313-37976-5 \*Please note: you may access this book as a free ebook for download here: <https://www.mobt3ath.com/uplode/book/book-56766.pdf>
2. **Power: Why Some People Have It and Others Don't** by Jeffrey Pfeffer ISBN-10: 9780061789083.



3. **VLeader Business Simulation Software** by SimuLearn inc. <http://www.simulearn.net/>. Please note: Detailed direction on how to purchase & register for this product will be available on Canvas.

*Please note: each week additional articles, cases, videos, etc. are assigned via Canvas and/or Covered during our Face to Face lectures. Further, relevant resources for all assignments can be found on Canvas. The course website is located on Canvas.*

### **Announcements / Communication:**

The Announcements section provides official announcements by the instructor. Since Announcements is an "official site" within Canvas and part of the course, you are responsible for knowing the information there. As always, the instructor accepts and replies to regular (on and off-Canvas) e-mail

([virginie.kidwell@unt.edu](mailto:virginie.kidwell@unt.edu)) on any course-related matter. I typically respond to all emails within 24 hours.

***Please note: emails to the class announcements and all notifications will be sent through Canvas. The default email address in the notification system is your UNT account. Please change your email address to ensure that you receive all class communications.***

### **Course Objectives:**

The main course objectives of MGMT 4980 are:

- *Understand* the nature and sources of power in organizations: power and political processes - where power comes from, the conditions under which it is used, strategies for power and influence. This is the paramount objective because core issues of power and political process are ambiguous and often do not have "right" answers. There are no set of "winning" formulas that will maximize your effectiveness, but there are tools and tactics for effectively and ethically attaining and using power.
- *Increase* your ability to diagnose, think through and apply central concepts of power and influence: social exchange perspectives on power, network structures and their consequences, the bases of interpersonal influence, and diagnostic tools and techniques to identify the "rules of the game." These concepts are the building blocks that can systematically be recognized to evaluate power and influence strategies.
- *Develop* confidence and increased skills in: dealing with power situations, managing conflict, and using political strategies in ethical and pragmatic ways to get things done in the workplace and organizations, especially recognizing ethical issues associated with the use of power. Additionally, students reflecting on their own views of power and influence, including what strategies and tactics they are comfortable with; and learning how they can exercise power effectively (or not) to accomplish managerial objectives and advance career; in part by developing their level of emotional intelligence, a key ability to navigate one's social dynamics within organizations.

In sum, the ultimate goals for this course are a) to have students see the world through different lens —to change what you notice and think about and how you apprehend the world around you; b) to give students tools to navigate through that world; and c) help students focus on building their own action plan and skills for attaining power and use influence. If learning is successful, students will be better able to achieve their objectives and should never have to leave an organization or a position involuntarily.

*"The key to successful leadership is influence, not authority." — Ken Blanchard*

### **My Teaching Philosophy:**

To accomplish our objectives, we need to be partners in the learning process. The very design of most classrooms subtly reminds people of settings such as theatres or auditoriums in which they are entertained while seeing some lecture or performance. One way of describing my job is that I am in the role of your "personal trainer/coach." I will do my best to make available to you the tools that I hope will motivate and encourage you to learn the material and put it into practice. But learning is your responsibility. Moreover, it is your responsibility to decide what is important for you to learn and retain, and how best to do that, as well as how much effort you should to put into the class. In life and the classroom, we tend to get out what we put in! I will create a class format for our face to face lectures as engaging as possible, while the online

only lectures will give you time to read, process the material and apply your new found knowledge through a variety of assignments, which will be a reflection of your own motivation to learn!

**Course Assignments and How They Are Evaluated:**

- The grade you earn in this course will be determined by your performance on the assignments described below. Grading of each component is subject to instructions, guidelines, and tips contained on Canvas and during Face-to Face lectures.
- Final grade ranges are: 90–100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69= D; 50-59=E; Below 50 = F. Do not expect a curve; but perfect attendance to ALL in-person lectures will earn you to round up your grade to the next integer, i.e.; 89 would be round up to 90; 79 to 80,; 69 to 70. (Please note, 88.9 would be round up to 89 and remain a B and so on, no double rounding!).
- Incomplete grade can be exceptionally requested only with documented approved university prolonged absences and require you completed 75% of the coursework.
- **I do not accept late work unless documented approved university absence.** This means once a due date has passed, the assignment submission is closed on Canvas and cannot be re-opened. I do not accept emailed assignment, only what is submitted via Canvas is considered for grading. Please refer to the class schedule for all due dates as well as any announcement on Canvas. I will post grades/feedback on the Canvas as they come available, typically within 7 days of the deadline. Your final grade will be posted the following Monday from the last day of class by 1pm.
- **IMPORTANT: All assignments listed above will be submitted to TurnItIn, a plagiarism detection software** checking for plagiarism against all material found online including Canvas, Blackboard and such university sites. You are responsible for the submission of a plagiarism free paper.

**Quizzes (50 points/50% – 4 @ 12.5 points/12.5% each):** Four Quizzes, each one 30 minutes long in length (25 questions each worth 0.5pts), will be administered during the semester via Canvas. Any material covered in the course (required readings, videos, articles, etc.) is fair game for the quizzes. Questions may be multiple choice and/or true/false format. Quizzes will open on a given date and be closed after the due date.

**Discussion Forums (10 points/10% – 5 @ 2 points/2% each):** Five graded (for completion and effort) discussion forums will be posted on Canvas as participation for online lectures. You will need to submit your answer as well as comment on another student to earn up to full credit. Discussion Forums will be closed after the due date. *Please note: there will be two practice discussions in the early part of the semester, while those won't be graded, you are still required to complete both of them in order to get a grade for the remaining of the discussions, failure to complete both of the practice discussions may result in a grade of 0 for each of the 5 graded discussions.*

**Midterm Paper (15 points/15%):** There is a midterm paper to submit on Canvas (in lieu of a midterm exam). The paper will focus on applying the course content and theory to yourself and own life. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas as well as grading criteria. The Canvas submission will be closed after the due date.

**VLeader Business Simulation (10 points/10% – 4 @ 2.5 points/2.5% each):** There are 4 tasks (introduction module and 3 scenarios with respective due dates; graded for completion and effort independently to your actual simulation scores) to complete using the simulation software you are required to purchase. This simulation will allow you to experience Power, influence and politics in the workplace in a simulated environment, and give you a chance to apply what you are learning in this class! Details instructions will be given on Canvas. *Please note: we will use the simulation during some of our face to face lectures, let me know if you cannot bring a laptop to class.*

**Final Paper (15 points/15%):** There is a final paper to submit on Canvas due the last day of class (in lieu of a final exam). The paper will focus on applying the course content and theory to your experience with the simulation and allow you to showcase what you have learned in this class (regardless of how well you scored in the simulation). Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas as well as grading criteria. The Canvas submission will be closed after the due date.

**Total available points\*: 100**

**\*Face to Face lectures attendance policy:** There are only 7 face to face lectures (not including the first week), attendance will be taken via various class activities & participation from week 3 on. **I will allow one unexcused absence**, after that you will lose increasingly more points per additional unexcused absence, such that if you miss 2 classes lose 4 points; miss 3 classes lose 9 points, miss 4 lose 16 points and so on. Arriving late, leaving early or not participating during face to face lectures may result in an unexcused absence (*significant traffic or weather related issues will be taken into consideration as UNT notify instructors for such exceptional events*). *Please note: if you were to collect more than 3 unexcused absences, the chances to pass this class will be extremely low, as in order to do well in all the assignments (especially the simulation) you will need to attend the face to face lectures.*

**\*Online lecture attendance policy:** There are 7 online lectures, while you do not have to log in at a given time, it is your responsibility to check the material posted for that week online as well as any assignment due that week (i.e.; online discussion, quiz, other assignments..). Once a due date has passed, the submission via Canvas will close. I cannot re-open the window nor I accept any email submission, everything must be done via Canvas. Please read all class announcements posted on Canvas for most up to date class information. No late work is accepted, if you chose to wait the day or hour before a deadline and your computer or internet connection fail, this is your responsibility, please plan carefully ahead of deadlines!

**Technical Support:** If you experience any technical issues with Canvas please contact the UNT IT Student Help Desk by phone at 940-565-2324 or via email: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu).

**Academic Integrity:** UNT's Academic Integrity Policy will be used in the event of academic dishonesty. See this policy at <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>. Use a spell checker and keep grammatical errors to a minimum. **Plagiarism is not tolerated.** Per University guidelines your written work will be submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) or a similar electronic detection method for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. Individuals that plagiarize will be given a zero on the assignment, with possible referral to the college as outlined in the student handbook.

**Students with Disabilities:** The College of Business Administration complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with disabilities. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, are registered with the UNT Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA), and would like to request accommodation, please contact the instructor of this course as soon as possible to arrange accommodation, preferably by email ([virginie.kidwell@unt.edu](mailto:virginie.kidwell@unt.edu)). Instructor office hours, locations, phone numbers, etc., are listed in this Course Syllabus. University Policy requires that students notify their instructor(s) within the first week of class that an accommodation will be needed.

**Important Notice for F-1 Students:** There is no required on-campus experiential component for this course. To comply with immigration regulations, however, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his/her need to participate in an on-campus

experiential component for this course, he/she should contact the UNT International Students and Scholar Services Office (940-565-2195 or email: [internationaladvising@unt.edu](mailto:internationaladvising@unt.edu) ) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

**College Emergency Evacuation Procedures:**

**Severe Weather** In the event of severe weather, all building occupants should immediately seek shelter in the designated shelter-in-place area in the building. If unable to safely move to the designated shelter-in-place area, seek shelter in a windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of the building. All building occupants should take shelter in rooms 055, 077, 090, and the restrooms on the basement level. In rooms 170, 155, and the restrooms on the first floor. **Bomb Threat/Fire** In the event of a bomb threat or fire in the building, all building occupants should immediately evacuate the building using the nearest exit. Once outside, proceed to the designated assembly area. If unable to safely move to the designated assembly area, contact one or more members of your department or unit to let them know you are safe and inform them of your whereabouts. Persons with mobility impairments who are unable to safely exit the building should move to a designated area of refuge and await assistance from emergency responders. All building occupants should immediately evacuate the building and proceed to the south side of Crumley Hall in the grassy area, west of parking lot 24.

Course Schedule of Topics and Assignments:

Topics Covered	Assignments <i>(Due on Canvas Sunday 11:59pm of that week)</i>
<b>Week 1: 01/14 Face to Face lecture</b>	
Class Introduction	Familiarize yourself with all course materials Student Information Survey
<b>Week 2: 01/20–01/26 Online Lecture</b>	
Part 1: Definition Power Chapter 1-4 Pfeffer-Chapter 1-3	Online Discussion Practice 1
<b>Week 3: 01/28 Face to Face lecture</b>	
Chapter 1-4 (cont.) Pfeffer-Chapter 1-3	Read material ahead of class!
<b>Week 4: 02/03–02/09 Online Lecture</b>	
Review material for Quiz 1 (Week 1-3)	Quiz 1 (opens Friday 02/07 8am) Online Discussion Practice 2 Recommended: Work on part 1 of midterm paper
<b>Week 5: 02/11 Face to Face lecture</b>	
Part 2: Power Use Chapter 5-7 Pfeffer-Chapter 4-6	Read material ahead of class!
<b>Week 6: 02/17–02/23 Online Lecture</b>	
Chapter 5-7 (cont.) Pfeffer-Chapter 4-6	Online Discussion 1 Recommended: Work on part 2 of midterm paper
<b>Week 7: 02/25 Face to Face lecture*</b>	
Chapter 5-7 (cont.) Pfeffer-Chapter 4-6	Read material ahead of class! Simulation to be installed and running on your laptop *BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS
<b>Week 8: 03/02–03/08 Online Lecture</b>	
Review material for Quiz 2 (Week 5-7)	Quiz 2 (opens Friday 03/06 8am) Mid-term paper Simulation to be installed and running on your laptop
<b>Week 9: 03/09–03/15 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK</b>	
<b>Week 10: 03/17 Face to Face lecture*</b>	
Part 3: Power Intervention Chapter 8-10 Pfeffer-Chapter 7-9 Introduction to Simulation & Prep scenario 1	Verify Simulation installed and running on your laptop before to come to class! *BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS Simulation Introduction (Due Sunday end of week)

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Topics Covered	Assignments <i>(Due on Canvas Sunday 11:59pm of that week**)</i>
<b>Week 11: 03/23–03/29 Online Lecture</b>	
Chapter 8-10 (cont.) Pfeffer-Chapter 7-9	<b>Simulation Scenario 1</b> <b>Online Discussion 2</b> <b>Recommended: Work on Final paper</b>
<b>Week 12: 03/31 Face to Face lecture*</b>	
Chapter 8-10 (cont.) Pfeffer-Chapter 7-9 Debrief Simulation scenario 1 & Prep scenario 2	Read material ahead of class! <b>*BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>
<b>Week 13: 04/06-04/12 Online Lecture</b>	
<b>Review material for Quiz 3 (Week 10-12)</b>	<b>Quiz 3 (opens Friday 03/27 8am)</b> <b>Simulation Scenario 2</b> <b>Online Discussion 3</b> <b>Recommended: Work on Final paper</b>
<b>Week 14: 04/14 Face to Face lecture*</b>	
<b>Part 4: Power Intervention</b> Chapter 11-13 Debrief Simulation scenario 2 & Prep scenario 3	Read material ahead of class! <b>*BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b> <b>Simulation scenario 3 (Due Sunday end of week)</b> <b>Online Discussion 4 (Due Sunday end of week)</b>
<b>Week 15: 04/20-04/26 Online Lecture</b>	
<b>Review material for Quiz 4 (Week 14)</b>	<b>Quiz 4 (opens Friday 04/24 8am)</b> <b>Recommended: Work on Final paper</b>
<b>Week 16: 04/28 Face to Face lecture*</b>	
Pfeffer-Chapter 9-13 Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace Debrief Simulation scenario 3 & Top Scores Prize!	Read material ahead of class! <b>*BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b> <b>Online Discussion 5 (Due Sunday end of week)</b>  <b>**Final paper due Tuesday 05/05 11:59pm</b> <i>(No in-class final)</i>

**Note: Dates and topics are subject to change:** While I do not plan to deviate from the above schedule, unforeseen events may require adjustments.