

WWS 596

Fall Term, 2002-2003

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The course has two objectives: (i) to teach negotiation skills, and to provide the conceptual tools for analyzing negotiations, whether as a participant or as an observer; (ii) to provide a general introduction to what may be called "social influence" techniques. Social science researchers have made important discoveries about the ways in which persons are caused to alter their opinions and behaviors by social interaction with others, and it will be valuable for the Woodrow Wilson Students to have a conceptual understanding of these processes, especially as they relate to negotiation and public management issues. Approximately one hour of course time per week will be devoted to these general topics.

The other two hours of each week and most of the work done between meetings will be devoted largely to in-class bargaining exercises, and to discussions of those bargaining exercises as well as some others carried out as homework. Experience with this course makes it quite clear that students learn the most from their personal role-playing experiences of negotiating, and from opportunities to discuss these experiences in detailed debriefing sessions. This experiential learning must be supplemented by a set of conceptual and analytic tools, which will be provided by brief lectures and focused readings.

Homework will consist of the following:

1. Preparation and execution of bargaining exercises.
2. Readings from the text and class packet.
3. Maintenance of a negotiations journal

The journal has been found to be a very useful learning tool. It is used for several purposes: (i) to make notes in preparation for bargaining exercises; (ii) to make a record of personal and general lessons that have been drawn from the exercises; (iii) to identify especially useful 'pearls of wisdom' about negotiations, from the readings, and from the comments on social influence. The journals will be read periodically by the instructor, and the quality of the thinking and learning they reflect will be an important element in the grading of the course. To permit candid reflection, the journals will be treated as confidential communications between each student and the faculty teaching the course.

There will be a final paper, in which students will be asked to relate their particular areas of interest (e.g., international affairs, urban planning, developing countries) to lessons learned in the two components of the class.

Bargaining exercises will be conducted in pairs or in small groups. The assignment of roles will be determined in advance, with the intention of allowing each student to interact in bargaining with many other students. Smooth running of the class requires regular participation in both in-class and out-of-class exercises. Students who suspect they may not be able to participate regularly should not take the course. If one student is absent, the scheduled exercise becomes impossible for two to four other students. **For this reason, attendance at every class is required.**

Texts:

Roger Fisher , William Ury and Bruce Patton. Getting to Yes, 2nd edition. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. (Paperback). We assume most of you have encountered this book before.

Howard Raiffa, The Art and Science of Negotiating. Belknap/Harvard, 1982.

Avinash Dixit and Barry Nalebuff, Thinking Strategically, Norton, 1991.

A reading packet will be available, with excerpts from several texts and shorter articles, primarily focusing on the analysis underlying negotiation.

Sequence of negotiation topics:

The cases and discussions of negotiations will deal with four main topics, in the following sequence:

1. Distributive negotiations over fixed “pies.” Often called “zero sum” negotiations.
2. Integrative negotiations, where joint gains are possible
3. Multi-party negotiations, coalitions
4. Varieties of third-party interventions, especially mediation
5. To the extent that time permits, we will consider issues that arise in negotiations across different cultures.

Grading components:

Participation in all negotiations is required

Journal of negotiations analyses: 40%

Final interest area paper: 30%

Contributions to class discussions of cases: 20%

Performance on exercises: 10%

Notice that there is not a final exam. The final paper substitutes for it.

Other evaluations:

The outcomes of bargaining exercises will often be scaled in numerical form, permitting a comparison of the outcomes achieved by all the students who had a particular role. This information necessarily will be public, and will have a modest effect on course grades, as noted above.

After some of the negotiations, the parties will meet briefly and provide feedback to each other. This informal feedback should focus on the efficacy of the tactics used and on the negotiator's style.