

Strategies and Processes of Negotiations

Course Details

PPHA 33530

The University of Chicago

Harris School of Public Policy

Classroom: 289A

Times: Monday, Wednesday, 3:00pm – 5:20pm

Instructor: Nadav Klein

Email: nklein@chicagobooth.edu

Office: [location]

Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

Being able to orchestrate successful social interactions is perhaps never more important than in negotiation situations. Negotiations are a particular kind of social interactions that are explicitly designed to determine which parties get their interests and goals fulfilled or thwarted. Negotiations are necessary whenever you cannot attain your goals without the cooperation of others. They happen every day—with co-workers, customers, competitors, friends, and spouses. Some negotiations might be small, such as what movie to watch tonight or who will wash the dishes this week—and some might be involve large stakes, such as what price your client’s company will be sold for or what policy provisions will be implemented or dropped.

This course will greatly expand your understanding of negotiations in several ways. First, you will experience various negotiation situations firsthand in the classroom. Second, you will learn how to analyze your experiences using insights collected from decades of psychological research on social judgment, social cognition, and decision-making. Third, and unlike most real-life situations, you will be able to receive feedback on your performance. Life, unfortunately, does not often offer the opportunity to compare your outcomes to other people’s outcomes. This course does, thereby enabling you to identify what you did right, what you did wrong, and improve your performance by evaluating your work compared to the rest of the class.

Course Format

This course will oscillate between negotiation simulations in the classroom and learning negotiation theory through discussion of scientific articles. The goal is to teach you the theory and enable you to see the complexities involved in putting theory to practice. The course has seven components.

1. Negotiation Simulations

Every week you will do an in-class negotiation with your classmates. These exercises are the heart of the course. Preparing in advance for these negotiations will ensure that

both you and your negotiating partner/s will learn from the experience. The instructions and information for each case will be provided to you in hard copy form in class. We will record everyone's results so you can compare the outcome that you negotiated with the results obtained by other people in your same role. These results are not factored into course grades. They are meant only to give you a sense of your outcomes in a variety of negotiation settings. You will find that you are more skillful in some situations than in others. While your negotiated outcomes will not count towards grades, your preparation and participation are essential. Failure to prepare for and carry out a negotiation simulation adversely affects both your own learning and that of your classmates.

2. In-class Debriefings

After each negotiation simulation, there will be an interactive lecture in which the entire class will share their experience in a structured way. I will focus these discussions on a few “take-away” insights from each negotiation simulation. Your active and constructive participation in these discussions is encouraged and expected.

3. Readings

Some of the readings will be scientific articles published in the last 25 years. These will provide basic findings about systematic regularities in negotiations and enable you to gain expertise in how to analyze your own negotiation experiences. Another type of readings will be “how to” articles that provide prescriptive advice on how to and how not to negotiate.

4. Negotiation Preparation Worksheets

One of the best ways to learn about situations where negotiation may prove useful and to improve your negotiation techniques is from your fellow classmates. For this reason it is important for you to participate fully in class. Credit for class participation will be based on class attendance, contributing to class discussion occasionally, and completing thoughtful negotiation preparation worksheets.

On most class days, you will be asked to turn in a preparation worksheet. This worksheet is due at the beginning of class, will be graded as a "check" or "check minus", and will count towards your class participation grade.

5. Individual Reflection Reports

The reflection reports are a vehicle for you to synthesize on an ongoing basis the lessons that you want to retain from your in-class negotiation exercises. Written reflection reports are completed individually, should be 400-600 words (word count should be noted at the bottom of the report), and are due at the beginning of class on Week 4 and Week 8. Each report should focus on exactly one of the in-class negotiation exercises in which you participated. Your report should include three sections: 1) a simple description of what happened, 2) a key insight that you had/learned, and 3) implications that this insight has for how you should negotiate certain situations in the future.

6. Midterm Assignment

The midterm assignment is meant to instill a scientist's approach to learning about negotiation in particular and social psychology in general. This course lasts

approximately 3 months whereas you will negotiate throughout your professional life. Therefore, you are tasked with acquiring knowledge and insight about negotiations for a much longer period than this course. Therefore, the midterm assignment will ask you to collect several scientific articles in a psychological topic that interests you, and create a 3-page memo that summarizes and synthesizes insights from these articles. The goal is to familiarize you with searching and evaluating empirical evidence from psychological research, so that you can do this whenever you encounter gaps in your knowledge about the psychology of negotiations in particular and social interactions in general in your professional life.

7. Final Paper – Outside-of-the-Class Negotiation

For your final paper, you will perform a negotiation outside of class. Your task is to choose a situation that is of interest to you and lends itself to performing and analyzing the negotiation. This project can be done individually or in groups of up to 3 people. If done in a group, each person in the group must somehow take part in the actual negotiation, the analysis, and the write-up of the paper. You will write a final paper (1 paper per group) that is due at the beginning of class on Week 10. In some cases, an appendix with some sort of documentation may be appropriate (that does not have to count towards your total word count).

In writing the final paper, be sure to demonstrate your knowledge of relevant concepts, theories, and frameworks presented in this course. Your individual or group paper should begin with an explicit statement of the specific objective of the negotiation that you performed. The body of the text should be devoted to 1) description of the negotiation process (how did you prepare and carry out the negotiation and what was the outcome) and 2) analysis of how it went (what skills that you learned in class were helpful or unhelpful, what could you have done better, what lessons were learned that you will be able to apply in the future, etc.). Be sure that you explain the impact that selected course concepts have had on your thinking about the situation you have chosen to write about. Papers will be graded on several factors including creativity, the use of negotiation theory and class material, preparation, presentation, and identifying important lessons.

Grade Breakdown

Class Participation 25%
Reflection Reports 25%
Midterm Assignment 25%
Final Paper 25%

Pedagogical topics to be covered in the course:

Advisability of negotiating
Preparing to negotiate
Distributive negotiations
Integrative negotiations
Multi-party negotiations
Creating trust in negotiations
Advisability of deception in negotiations

Understanding your and others' propensity to behave unethically in negotiations

Cognitive biases in negotiations

Emotional biases in negotiations

Mediation

Using an agent in negotiation

Individual differences such as gender in negotiations