

## **MGT 4803F — Special Topic: Negotiations, 3 credits Fall, 2026**

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Office hours: By appointment (via email) and/or after class

### **Course Overview**

We negotiate every day with prospective employers, teammates, roommates, landlords, service providers, and many others. We negotiate what prices we want to pay, how much we want in compensation, how assignments are divided, and how credit will be allocated. All these events are examples of negotiations. Yet, while we negotiate routinely, many of us know little about the strategy and psychology of effective negotiations. Why do we sometimes get our way while other times we walk away feeling frustrated by our inability to achieve the agreement we want?

Negotiation is the art and science of securing an agreement between two or more interdependent parties. A person without a developed understanding of the social psychology and economics of effective negotiations cannot be an effective leader. We will discuss theories and principles to guide our negotiations (the science). In addition, by negotiating with other students in experiential exercises, you will develop and hone your bargaining skills (the art). Furthermore, given that negotiations occur in so many aspects of life, your experience in this course should not only develop your professional skills but also facilitate your effectiveness in other life domains.

The learning method is experiential. The course introduces a real-world toolkit for a strategic approach from pre-negotiation planning to post-negotiation evaluation. In this course, you can develop your negotiating skills through practice and gain insight into what works, what does not, and why.

### **Course Objectives**

- Gain an intellectual understanding of central concepts in negotiation as they apply in a variety of contexts.
- Improve your analytical skills for predicting the behavior of others in negotiation settings.
- Build confidence and flexibility in your negotiation skills to be successful in a variety of cultural, personal, and professional contexts.
- Develop a toolkit of useful negotiation skills and strategies centered on value creation, value claiming, and dispute resolution in the context of interpersonal dynamics.
- Learn to differentiate which aspects of negotiation are culturally contingent.

## **Course Modality**

We will meet in person. All students are expected to be present for each negotiation in class, as well as for the discussion about the negotiation, and any additional debriefing that occurs. Students are also expected to engage with the course material that is uploaded on Canvas. Please present any questions or comments about assignments via email or the chat function on Canvas. Please refer to Canvas to know what material is to be prepared for each class and when assignments are due. If you become sick, please reach out to me and we can discuss about flexible deadlines. The syllabus, handouts, and all PowerPoint lectures may be made available on Canvas. All assignments should be uploaded on Canvas prior to the start of class on the day they are due. Role assignments for each class and role-plays will be presented to you in class.

## **Course Requirements**

### **Required Text can be purchased at Campus Bookstore**

Fisher, Roger, and Ury, William (1991). *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving in*. Penguin.

### **Negotiation Exercises**

Central to the course is a series of role-play exercises. These role-plays are from the NTR and are copyrighted material. They will be handed out in class.

## **Class Rules**

**Attendance.** Considerable emphasis in this course is placed on simulations (role plays) as a vehicle for providing you with opportunities to experiment with negotiating techniques in a variety of contexts. You will negotiate in class each week. Students are paired up and assigned roles for the negotiation exercises ahead of time, and to do this, I must know who will be in class.

Missing a class will seriously limit your learning and adversely affect the educational experience of the students assigned to negotiate with you. The absence of negotiators also hampers class discussions. Thus, there is a strict attendance policy in this class. You may miss one class session without penalty only if you notify me of your absence at least 48 hours in advance (sooner if possible) so that I can re-balance role allocations for the exercise. Each additional missed class for whatever reason will result in 5% off your final course grade. Recruiting and other job- or school-related reasons for not attending class do not count as valid excuses. Students who anticipate heavy personal or professional obligations should consider whether they can make a commitment to this class now.

**Commitment.** You must commit to thorough preparations and serious negotiations. For example, I will often have you complete a planning document before each negotiation, or after negotiations I may ask you to complete a feedback form on your partner's effectiveness. I expect you to take these tasks seriously and professionally. If you are not willing to make that commitment, then this class is not for you.

- The written background material you will receive for each case is meant to represent the confidential preference and knowledge of real people. During the exercise, limit the confidential information you share with counterparts, but never physically show anyone else your written material. In actual settings, you would not give this information to your counterparts. Likewise, some cases may involve points or payoffs you can obtain for certain issues – you should never reveal your point structure to the other participants in the negotiation.

- Do not share or discuss the exercises with students outside of the class. Other students who take a negotiation course might use some of the same cases at separate times or in different semesters. Thus, it is essential that you do not divulge any information to other students regarding cases in this course.

- Do not Google information about the cases. Doing so will not only diminish you and your partner's opportunity for learning but is unethical and will be treated as cheating.

**Professionalism.** Behaving professionally means coming to class on time, returning from

breaks and from negotiating on time and offering insights and constructive comments that move the conversation forward. It also means that you come to class prepared to learn and contribute in an active and respectful manner. Your goal should be to contribute in a meaningful way, not simply talk for the sake of talking. An average of two important and insightful contributions per class is sufficient. If you find that you have not spoken in two consecutive classes, this is an indication that you need to speak up.

Quality in-class comments do one or more of the following:

- Go beyond the facts of a particular negotiation or reading and address how it matters
- Provide links between the topic under discussion with other exercises, lectures, outside situations, or your individual experiences
- Extend, build upon, or constructively critique others' contributions
- Present alternative perspectives worthy of further discussion or debate

## More Course Information

**Statement of Intent for Inclusivity.** As a member of the Georgia Tech community, I am committed to creating a learning environment in which all students feel safe and included. Since we are individuals with varying needs, I invite you to enter a dialogue with me about the things I can stop, start, and continue doing to make our class an environment in which every student feels valued and can engage actively.

**Academic Integrity.** Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on GeorgiaTech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18b.php> and <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/genregulations/honorcode.ph>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a paper or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

**Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities.** If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (often referred to as ADAPTS) at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me as soon as possible to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

**Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement.** We strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and the students. Simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions with myself and each of the other students in the class will help build the environment that we seek. Let us commit to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

**Notes on Research.** The results of the simulations and any surveys you may complete will provide rich material for class discussion. These data may also support valuable research. Analysis of such data has contributed to the ongoing evolution of negotiation theory and teaching. I want to inform you of the potential research use of these data. Only aggregate, statistical information would be published. Complete anonymity would be guaranteed.

**Copyright Notice.** Materials used in class, including but not limited to, handouts, images, exercises, cases, charts, and graphs are copyrighted and may not be used for purposes other than the educational experience of this class without the written consent of the instructor.

**Regrades.** The process of assigning grades is intended to be one of unbiased evaluation. This means that students are encouraged to respect the integrity and authority of the professor's grading system and discouraged from pursuing arbitrary challenges to it. As the individual negotiation journals and group projects do not have clear right or wrong answers and their grading is inherently subjective, re-grades are generally not provided. These policies exist to make grading as fair as possible across all students.

**A comment on grades.** While there are many reasons for you to care about your grades, I want you to recognize the opportunity you have this semester to dig into the messiness of organizational life within the safety of the classroom. These opportunities do not come often in a career. My goal is to guide you through an experience that, with your engaged participation, will add value to you, your career, and your life. I strongly encourage you to adopt a similar goal for yourself and the role you will play compared to your classmates in this course. I encourage you to consider your grades in the context of your goals in this course. Focus on learning the content. Your grades will take care of themselves.

## Assessments & Grading

Performance	Percentage
Negotiation reflection journals (weekly)	20%
Exam	20%
Group Presentation	20%
Attendance	20%
Class Participation	20%

The following assessments will be used to evaluate student performance:

## **Negotiation Reflection Journals**

Each week, you will submit a brief reflection journal describing a negotiation you engaged in—whether formal or informal. Your entry should highlight which principles from that week’s class you applied, the outcome of the negotiation, and how your approach evolved based on prior experiences. This is not a checklist assignment; instead, you are expected to thoughtfully connect course concepts with your real-life bargaining situations, offering personal insight into what worked, what did not, and why. These journals are meant to help you develop a deeper understanding of your negotiation style and growth over time.

## **Exam**

There will be one comprehensive exam covering all course material, including lectures, class discussions, assigned readings, and case examples. The exam is designed to assess your understanding of key negotiation concepts, your ability to apply them in various contexts, and your critical thinking around negotiation strategy. To succeed, you should keep up with the weekly readings, participate actively in class, and review your notes regularly.

## **Group Presentation**

In small groups of 2 or 3, you will choose from a list of well-known negotiation failures and deliver a 20-minute presentation analyzing the case. Your presentation should identify key elements such as the bargaining zone, target points, points of resistance, and major negotiation breakdowns. You will also assess how each party could have improved their approach and what was the BATNA? A slide deck is required and must be submitted prior to your presentation. Grades will be based on the quality of your research, the depth of your critical thinking, and the effectiveness of your presentation skills. More detailed instructions and case options will be provided later in the course.