

Sciences Po
Master of Public Affairs 2009-2010

Syllabus, Elective Course, 1st semester (5 credits)

Scenario Planning Lab (SP-Lab)

Thierry J. Senechal and Vianney Basse

Instructors:

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Thierry Senechal is Policy Manager at the International Chamber of Commerce. He has over 15 years' experience advising international organizations about global strategies, with special focus and expertise on governance in failed states, public administration and negotiations. Between 1997 and 2001, he served as Senior Officer with the UN Security Council to manage Gulf War recovery programs. Since 2004, he has acted as leading technical advisor for the Negotiations Support Unit (NSU) of the Palestinian Authority, helping to prepare scenarios and strategies for two files of the Permanent Status Negotiation between Israel and Palestine. He has held various senior appointments with the UN Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), the UN Oversight Office/DPA in New York and the UNHCR in Geneva. He holds degrees from Harvard University (M.P.A. Kennedy School of Government), London Business School, and Columbia University with highest honors (Phi Beta Kappa). He is also a former Sloan Fellow from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he earned an M.B.A.

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Vianney Basse has been the Deputy Diplomatic Adviser to the French Minister of Defense, Mr. Hervé Morin, since May 2007. From 1996 to 2001, Vianney worked in Paris then in London as a Senior Risk Analyst for a leading investment bank. Between 2001 and 2004, he worked in Afghanistan for a non-governmental organization (as Program Manager), then in Kosovo and in the Ivory Coast (as a political and economic expert to commanders of peacekeeping forces). From 2004 to 2005, he was the diplomatic adviser to the general commanding the International Security and Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF). Between 2005 and 2007, he was Project Manager at SGDN, where he followed international security issues. SGDN is the coordination agency attached to the Office of the Prime Minister, in charge of all issues concerning France's internal and external security. Vianney has an M.P.A. from Harvard University (John F. Kennedy School of Government), where he specialized in negotiation, international security and conflict resolution. He holds degrees from ESSEC Business School, Université de la Sorbonne and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, where he has been teaching as an adjunct faculty member since 2005.

Course description:

When you join the SP-Lab, you and other highly qualified graduate students address the political, organizational and systemic challenges that you may face as a leader of your organization, with the goal of producing a framework and tools to aid policy actors lead organizations (whether public, private, or non-profit), through times of turbulence.

The course is structured to be very pragmatic in nature. As in a “Lab”, we expect that you will put forth hypotheses, test them, then go back and revise them based on various inputs or other validations. Identifying the best path for a course of action is an iterative process, so the class is designed with checkpoints and many team discussions. At several points, especially through the “Policy Debates”, you will have the opportunity to present snapshots of your progress in designing scenario, receive feedback, and refine your assumptions and plans.

Course objectives:

Students taking this course will develop the skills of systemic analysis and scenario planning to help understand and manage complex situations. More specifically, this course seeks to develop students’ ability to:

1. *Think systematically about complexity, uncertainty and interdependence under turbulent situations.* Students will learn to recognize the characteristic dynamics of complex adaptive systems, including feedback, information and time lags, linked effects and unintended consequences. The course will also draw on experience of both international organizations and large corporations to use scenario planning as a tool for decision making.
2. *Develop the practice of scenario planning to help navigate through times of change.* We will develop a systematic approach for dealing with scenario planning based on a six-step process including: 1.) Defining the problem; 2.) Identifying driving forces; 3.) Isolating critical uncertainties; 4.) Structuring alternative scenarios of the future; 5.) Generating a portfolio of options; 6.) Recommending strategic actions and evaluating the effectiveness of the recommendations.

Course requirements:

Prerequisites: There are no formal prerequisites for this course. Students of strategic management, organizational behavior, political management and policy development will find the course provides a useful basis for more advanced work in policy making and strategic management.

Attendance: Class attendance is strictly mandatory.

Expectations: You are expected to be prepared for each class. It is essential that you conscientiously do the readings and prepare for and carry out your role (in the simulations / exercises), whenever expected, and be ready to share insights with the class. Failure to

prepare for class will adversely affect your class participation grade and will impair the learning experience.

Assessment and Grade Distribution:

There are three ways to demonstrate your mastery of the course material: 1.) Participating in class discussion; 2.) the Policy Debates and the memo write up; and 3.) Participating in the end-of-term project (presentation of your team scenarios).

Class Participation (20% of Grade)

We aspire to engaging and high-quality class discussions. The conversation will be engaging if participants are willing to take risky or unpopular points of view; participate in debates and role plays; use logic, precision, and evidence in making arguments, apply course materials appropriately; and are constructively critical. Obviously everyone must be both present and prepared for each class.

The following rule applies: if you do not come to class you get -2 (after 3 unjustified absences you fail), if you are late you get a -2, if you go to class and say nothing you get 0. This is the easy part; the rest is a little bit more complicated: we will give 1, 2 and 3 points for participation. Only a few students per class will receive a 3. A 3 is a comment that moves the dynamics of the discussion in the class significantly. A 2 is a good comment that generates discussion, and 1 is a standard comment. It is important to remember that you get the grade for the class for the best of your participations. If the student speaks 24 times, each of them with a comment that we consider of quality 1, the student will get a 1. Participation is obviously subjective. So, please be aware of the very high weight it has on your grade and talk to us to be sure you have feedback on how are you doing.

The Policy Debates and memo write up (50% of Grade)

The idea of the debates is that the class, in groups of 3-4, debate about current issues based on their knowledge of scenario planning. We will have 2 debates in the class. All teams prepare 1.) a policy memo and 2.) a presentation in support and against the topic chosen for debate. These presentations have to be delivered to us (with the group identified) the morning (before 8:00 am) of the debate. On the day of the class, we choose the teams that will go on stage, their order, and the positions they have to defend. Then we start a debate. After the debate, we have a general discussion how we should think about the problems at hand. This is a mandatory exercise. During the course, you will learn the skills of building policy memos and crafting talking points for public speaking and making your presentation.

During the term, you will also be expected to draft a policy memo related to a specific case study. The memo will not be longer than 2 pages and specific instructions will be provided to you on how to craft such a memo.

End-of-term Project (30% of Grade)

Done by all students in this course, this concentrated and integrative end-of-semester exercise will engage students in a practical policy exercise, which will draw upon knowledge gained from the scenario planning material discussed throughout the semester. The exercise is meant to provide a realistic experience and will involve outside experts, in

addition to the faculty, who will assist in judging the final products. Delivering the presentation on the last day of class is crucial. Throughout the process, we will be available to provide guidance and approval. More information will be provided in due course.

Books and Course Materials:

The primary material for this course will be case studies and articles. The readings have been carefully selected to reflect a variety of perspectives and stimulate your thinking. They will be provided to you before each class by electronic means. There is no course packet for this course.

Two books are listed as optional readings:





- Gill Ringland, Scenario Planning: Managing for the Future, 2nd Edition (April 2006)
- Robert Jervis, Systems Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life, Princeton University Press, 1997




Content, Organization and Schedule:

The course builds cumulatively from simple scenario planning analysis to those of greater complexity. Structured scenario planning analysis exercises are used to isolate and emphasize specific analytic points and essential skills. Cases and readings serve to integrate the analytic points as well as to develop intuition about more complex real-world scenario planning analysis.

Class Schedule:

Note on the symbols:

-  SPA methodology to be covered in class
-  Policy debate to take place
-  A deliverable is due in class
-  Mandatory reading for the class

Session 1:	Introduction to the course
24 September 2009 14:45-16:45	<p>This session will introduce the notion of scenarios in a world of uncertainty and turbulence. We will start the discussion by a panorama of today’s world. In a world of complexity and interconnectedness, how can a leader manage the organization? This is all about decision-making and choices.</p> <p> SPA Methodology: Overall introduction to SPA process. Note: The full methodology will be handed out in class.</p> <p>Case study: Mount Everest. The case will be distributed in advance with instructions. Groups will be formed to discuss the issue and find the most appropriate solutions to the survival problem.</p> <p><i>Reading for Session 1</i>  “Mount Everest 1996”, HBS case 9-303-061  “Mr. Order Meets Mr. Chaos” (9 pages), Robert Wright, Foreign</p>

Policy, May/June 2001

📖 “Linking Scenarios to Corporate Planning” (6 pages), Gill Ringland

📖 “US must learn to think the unthinkable” (3 pages), Eamonn Kelly, September 2005

Session 2:

Methodology fundamentals

1 October 2009
14:45-16:45

During this session, we will explore fundamental questions about government action and inaction in the face of crises that societies see coming. The role of international organizations in anticipating events and mapping the future will also be discussed. What does it mean for a government to recognize a problem, to see a crisis coming? How can scenarios help the decision makers? How much can training, systems, and the regulation of special interests enable political will? To do so, we will study the “Mont Fleur Scenarios”.

✂ **SPA Methodology:** Particular attention to Step 1 (Problem definition). Step 2 (Driving factors) and Step 3 (Critical uncertainties) will be introduced.

Case: The Mont Fleur Scenarios. An introduction to the world of scenarios.

Reading for Session

2

📖 The Mont Fleur Scenarios, “What will South Africa be like in the year 2002?” with a new introduction by Mont Fleur facilitator, Adam Kahane, <http://www.gbn.com/ArticleDisplayServlet.srv?aid=455>

📖 “Scenario Planning: A Tool for Strategic Thinking”, Paul Schoemaker, Sloan Management Review, Winter 1995 (Pages 25-40)

Optional:

“Scenarios of Change in South Africa”, by Graham Galer (July 2004) <http://taylorandfrancis.metapress.com/media/halhnmmwurme7a768x2m/contributions/l/h/c/a/lhca782543wnphje.pdf>

“Creating Scenario Building Blocks” in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz, (Pages 100-117)

Session 3:

Methodology fundamentals continued

8 October 2009
14:45-16:45

To follow up on last session, we will study “Destino Columbia”.

Case: The Mont Fleur Scenarios. An introduction to the world of scenarios.

Reading for Session

3

📖 “Destino Columbia” (32 pages), a Scenario-Planning process for the new millennium (in-class discussion)

Session 4	Skill-building for scenario-planners: Memo write-up and presentation
15 October 2009 14:45-16:45	This is a pure skill building class: Memo write up. Based on the write up of the policy memo, core concepts will be revisited: Framing issues, decision makers and experts, moving the plot of the scenario, information hunting and gathering, driving forces, emotions and perceptions
<i>Reading for Session</i> 4	<p>📖 General Pointers on Memo-Writing and Talking Points (To be distributed before the class in electronic format)</p> <p>📖 “Composing the Plot” in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 135-162)</p>
Session 5: 22 October 2009 14:45-16:45	Methodology fundamentals continued ✂ SPA Methodology: Steps 1 to 4 revisited and introduction to following steps (Options generation and evaluation).
<i>Reading for Session</i> 5	<p>Case: Applying the process. In-class exercise, based on a group exercise on Afghanistan</p> <p>📖 Afghanistan 2005 and Beyond, Barnett Rubin (Excerpts)</p> <p>📖 Scenarios: An Explorer’s Guide.</p> <p>📖 “User’s Guide: How to hold a strategic conversation”, in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 227-239)</p>
Session 6: 29 October 2009 14:45-16:45	Skill-building for scenario-planners: The Policy Debate In this class, we will learn to master the skill of public speaking.
<i>Reading for Session</i> 6	<p>🏢 Policy Debate - Royal Dutch/Shell in Nigeria (A). Working with Shell’s country manager for Nigeria, the company's Committee of Managing Directors must decide <u>to respond or not to respond</u> to the Nigerian government’s decision to impose the death sentence on Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other leaders of a movement for the rights of the Ogoni.</p> <p>📅 Group memo and presentation support for the debate due by 8:00am.</p> <p>📖 Royal Dutch/Shell in Nigeria (A), HBS Case 9-399-126, available in Course Packet.</p>
Session 7: 5 November 2009 14:45-16:45	Scenarios for the Middle East peace process In this session, we will start a discussion on the implementation of scenarios. It is not sufficient to predict the future, actions and implementation of decisions are required. We will demonstrate that the

process of change is a difficult one.

✂ **SPA Methodology:** Review of final steps

☛ **Policy debate: Permanent Status Negotiation.** Is the Peace process likely to be achieved in the next 5 years?

📅 Group memo and presentation support for the debate due by 8:00am.

📅 Topic for your group end-of-term project is due in class and will be presented by each team in 5 minutes. Instructions to be provided in due course.

Reading for Session 7 📖 Watch the video (First 20 minutes): Let's Meet in the Common Room: How East and West Can Find Common Ground In Today's Strained Political Climate,
http://ksgaccman.harvard.edu/iop/events_forum_video.asp?ID=3106

📖 “The Future of the Middle East” (6 pages), Peter Schwartz, April 2005

📖 “Permanent Status Agreement”, available in Course Packet but review the online text with all the links at <http://www.reut-institute.org/Publication.aspx?PublicationId=404>

“Appendix: Steps to developing Scenarios”, in The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World, Peter Schwartz (Pages 242-248), not provided in Course Packet (Book on reserve), optional reading.

Session 8: The corporate view on scenarios

12 November 2009
14:45-16:45

During this session, we will introduce students to the use of scenarios planning within the corporate world. We will examine four fundamental obstacles to the ability of organizations to embrace the long view strategy: cultural obstacles, psychological obstacles to decision making, organizational obstacles to action, strategic obstacles.



Case: Iridium – Could the failure be avoided? A class discussion will be organized. The case will be distributed in advance and students are expected to do the reading and analysis in group beforehand.

📅 Presentation of first 3 steps of the SP methodology applied to the topic selected by your group for the end-of-term project

Reading for Session 8 📖 The Rise and Fall of Iridium, HBS Case 9-601-040, available in Course Packet.

📖 “Shell Global Scenarios to 2025” (Skim through it to get a sense of

the methodology), The Future Business Environment: Trends, Trade-Offs, and Choices (See www.shell.cosm/scenarios/). Read ‘Scenarios: An Explorer’s Guide’, available in Course Packet.

Session 9 and 10:		Review of the skills and methodology steps
19 November 2009 14:45-16:45 (Part 1) 17:00-19:00 (Part 2)	<p>This is a review session before the presentations for the end of the term project.</p> <p>✂ SPA Methodology: We re emphasize the need to implement action plans for your scenarios. One the scenarios are drafted, they have to be “sold” to management. During the discussion on implementation, we will discuss the following topics: Decision making, Failures, Group dynamics, Leadership, Learning, Organizational behaviour.</p>	
<i>Reading for Session 9 & 10</i>	<p> Review the methodology handed out during previous classes</p> <p> Mastering the Dynamics of Innovation, Chapters 1 & 2, James M. Utterback, HBS Press</p>	
Session 11:		Final wrap up
26 November 2009 14:45-16:45 <i>Reading for Session 11</i>	<p>Discussion on SP and the final project.</p> <p><i>None</i></p>	
Session 12 and 13 :		Student presentations for the end of term project
7 January 2010 14:45-16:45 (Part 1) 17:00-19:00 (Part 2)	<p>Student presentation of group exercise.</p> <p>Please invite your fellow students, friends, partners, spouses, etc.</p>	

Rules for Debate:

- The teams consist of 3-4 participants. Teams are formed the first week. On the second class, before 8:00 am, you have to send to us by email the name of the participants and a name you have chosen for the team. Please note that the team for the class will stay the same through the semester.
- Each team prepares a memo write up and a presentation that has to be sent to us (EMAILS) by 8:00 am the morning of the debate. There has to be two well labeled presentations in Power Point or Adobe, one that supports the YES and the other that supports the NO. In other words, each team knows which topic they will be debating but you do not know if you will be debating in favor or against. So, you have to prepare both arguments.
- Before the class, we take a poll of the participants in the class. Significant others are allowed in the class. They will also fill the survey but their votes will not be counted.
- After the poll is taken, we decide which team will discuss in favor or against, and in which order (in a very dictatorial fashion).
- The first team has 12 minutes to present.
- Then the second team has 15 minutes to present/rebut.
- And we will allow 2 more minutes for the first team to rebut back (if they want to).
- I might allow other rebuttals – again in a very dictatorial fashion.
- Immediately after this period we take the poll again.
- Members of the teams debating will fill the polls but their votes will not be taken into account in the final tally. The same goes for the significant others participating in the class.
- The team that moves the public opinion in the direction they were defending wins the debate. It does not matter by how much. This is a one - zero type of grade. If the public opinion did not change, both teams lose.
- After this time, we open for general discussion.