Teaching Note: James Michaels (A) and (B)

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   This teaching note is an accompaniment to the case "James Michaels (A) and (B)." It is designed specifically for management educators to use as a guide when assigning the aforementioned case for written analyses and class discussion. In addition to a detailed synopsis and a revealing epilogue, specific teaching strategies based on the problem-based learning (PBL) method are presented. The case itself provides students a unique situation, yet one that is applicable to all types of organizational contexts. With this teaching note, management educators can further enhance their students' learning and appreciation for the topics of employment law, homophobic harassment, organizational justice, power dynamics, or political behavior, among others. The versatility of this case invites the exploration of other applicable topics in human resource management, organizational behavior, and leadership that may emerge from student inquiry and problem solving. *Organization Management Journal*, 9: 49–62, 2012. doi: 10.1080/15416518.2012.666950

SYNOPSIS

   The case chronicles the gripping details of workplace harassment and a painful aftermath. The events are based on an actual harassment incident and describe the experiences of James Michaels, a junior faculty member at a small liberal arts college. After experiencing homophobic harassment at the hands of a disgruntled student, James struggled to find justice and closure. The case is divided into two sequential parts, (A) and (B). The first installment navigates through his trials and tribulations during the harassment incident and administrative hearings. The second part leads readers through the details of James's struggles with the administration and his attempts, along with those of faculty colleagues, to hold the administration accountable for perceived injustices and policy-violating decisions. It ends at a point when James faces a decision to continue the fight or potentially withdraw from the organization.

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   The case, told from the perspective of James Michaels, begins with background on the protagonist and a thorough description of the harassment incident. He and his computer science department colleagues were both shocked and angered by a harassing e-mail sent from one of his students. A troubled student, Dan Potter, sent his professor an e-mail with a final written assignment attached. In the text of the e-mail, Dan ranted about James's decision to render a failing grade for a plagiarism incident earlier in the semester. In the e-mail, Dan writes, "I wanted a good grade in this class and looks like it's not gonna happen because of you. You're gonna ruin my GPA! I'm furious and can't even look at you. You're nothing but a big faggot. Now you know why I haven't been in class." After experiencing the initial embarrassment, anger, and fear, James consulted his colleagues about how to proceed. His department chairperson, Scott Ferradino, agreed that the college administrators should be brought into the discussion. However, in the short term, they decided that the student would fail the course because of violating the academic honor code due to disrespectful behavior toward a professor in an assignment-related communication.

   As the case progresses, the college's provost, dean of students, and human resource officer review the incident and render a decision that was perceived by many as a weak response to a very serious situation. It was revealed that the college president was involved in the initial administrative deliberations, which violated the procedures outlined in the harassment policy. The college president was the final appeal, so involvement at this stage was premature and potentially a conflict of interest. James and his department colleagues perceived the administration's decision to mandate an apology, mandate attendance at a diversity seminar, and place the student on academic probation simply as a slap on the wrist. James faced the necessary yet difficult decision to file a grievance with a college-wide grievance committee to review the case and render a recommendation for the college president.

   The second part of the case begins with the president's decision to partially uphold and overturn portions of the grievance committee's recommendations. Dan Potter would be suspended even though James's department and the grievance committee recommended dismissal. In addition, the president agreed with the committee that the student's final grade for the course would

need to be reviewed and potentially changed due to possible bias on the part of James. This game-changing event enraged James and his department. Other faculty members throughout the college were also disappointed and infuriated by the president's decision. This was perceived as another weak response by the administration regarding this type of harassment. Additionally, many believed that the president overstepped his bounds by bypassing existing grade appeal procedures and involving himself in grading decisions known to be the purview of the faculty.

With this turn of events, James and others convinced the entire faculty to draft a unified, formal response to the president expressing disappointment and dissatisfaction with his behavior. Unfortunately for James, the faculty leader, Shawn Lynch, postponed action on the letter because of a budget crisis and related issues. Nevertheless, the faculty eventually voted to send the letter. Upon receipt, the president threatened action against the faculty. Shawn successfully lobbied the fearful faculty via e-mail to retract the letter.

The case concludes with James receiving e-mails about the retraction and responses by some senior faculty colleagues concurring with Shawn's decision. James was upset by this final chapter in the post-harassment story and began to question whether or not the decision to fight for justice was the right one. Readers are left with questions about James's past behaviors, but also about his future.

CASE PROBLEMS

Management educators have found cases as useful tools for self-reflection, theory exploration, and practical application (e.g., Argyris, 2002; Bailey, 2002; Clawson & Hawkins, 2006; Diamantes & Ovington, 1995; Ellet, 2007; Garvin, 2007). For a case to be effective in terms of enriching the student learning experience, these same scholars agree that it must be detailed and relevant enough for the reader to "plead for action" (Bruner & Foerester, 2004, p. 1). While this particular decision-oriented case is no different than others in that sense, the nature of the problems faced here by the protagonist and his colleagues is anything but straightforward. Students, through the eyes of James Michaels, are presented with challenging, ill-structured problems that reflect the complex nature of life inside the modern workplace.

In both parts of this case, students are pressed to explore the dynamics underlying James's problems and consider strategies to better his situation. The overarching problem facing the protagonist in the first installment surrounds the harassment and painful aftermath. In the continuation of the case, James is unsuccessful in his attempts to seek justice. With each respective case problem comes a decision point for students to consider. While the following case problems reference specific theories, concepts and/or schools of thought, instructors should also consider encouraging students to reflect on the broad applicability of this case to various topics under

study in management education. For instance, Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal (2008) provide a useful and applicable set of perspectives, or frames, by which to analyze and diagnose the complexity inherent to this case. Related avenues for students to potentially analyze the case and solve the associated problems are presented later in this teaching note.

James Michaels (A): From James's perspective, he experienced not only homophobic harassment by a student, Daniel Potter, but also a variety of injustices resulting from decisions and actions by college officials during the harassment aftermath.

1. In what ways did Daniel Potter's actions and words violate the college harassment policy? Are there ways to consider that they were not in violation of that policy? Applying concepts and theories from Bolman and Deal's structural and symbolic frames, analyze and explain the harassment and ensuing disputes in this case.
2. What recommendations do you have for both James *and* the college president moving forward? Explain and describe in detail the specific strategies for the chosen course of action, using examples from the case and theories and concepts to support your recommendations.

James Michaels (B): James believes that he failed to secure a just and reasonable resolution to hold both the student and president accountable for their respective actions.

1. To what extent did the actions of the college president uphold or violate the requirements of procedural, distributive, or interactional justice? What frame(s) do you think the president used to guide his behavior and decisions in this case?
2. If you were the president, how would you apply Bolman and Deal's Human Resource Frame to express your concerns about the written attack on James? Draft a revised "President's Decision Letter" (Exhibit 3) and propose other recommended actions.
3. What specific frame predominates in James's grievance request? Considering the theories and concepts of this frame, what specific recommendations do you have for James to reach a satisfactory conclusion?
4. Using the Political Frame, analyze the conflict and power play in this case. How and why does this frame explain the actions of the various political actors? Applying the theories and concepts from this frame, what should James and the college president do to achieve their respective agendas?

Students assigned the case are challenged to take on the role of James and the college president after each series of major events related to the harassment case and the subsequent conflicts. In the following section, instructors are introduced to a broad-based strategy to introduce students to define the focus and coverage of topics relevant to the case. This changes the role of instructor from director to facilitator (Combs & Elden, 2004), thereby placing responsibility on the students to navigate the learning trajectory including problem definition, analysis, and determining optimal solutions. To help prepare instructors for potential students' case analyses, teaching topics relevant to management and organization studies are presented alongside possible discussion points.

PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

The case was developed with both the educator and student in mind. To that end, opportunities abound to analyze James's experiences through a variety of theoretical lenses. Instructors can empower students to determine the perspectives from which to help analyze this case using the problem-based learning (PBL) method (Bridges, 1992; Pennell & Miles, 2009; Peterson, 2004). While PBL may not necessarily be a "panacea for management education" (Combs & Elden 2004, p. 524), it is a viable alternative to the traditional case method. Assuming the constructivist view of social inquiry, PBL is learner-centered, instead of focusing students only on the content chosen and delivered by the instructor. Therefore, instructors can expect that students will be involved actively in their learning by applying theory, solving problems, and reflecting on how their attitudes and values juxtapose with those reflected by the characters in the case (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Smart & Csapo, 2007).

The case problems faced by James and his allies, including Scott and Anna, are those that "students are apt face as future professionals" (Combs & Elden, 2004, p. 528). The PBL approach will place students in the driver's seat with respect to solving these problems. Thus, the instructor's role will drastically change. With this method, instructors would no longer identify the specific theory or content to use as a basis for understanding the case problems. Students may find the process of problem-solving challenging and anxiety-inducing because of competing options, information asymmetry, or "dead ends" (Peterson, 2004, p. 639) often associated with organizational complexity. Therefore, it is important for instructors to continue encouraging them to dig deeper and consider multiple perspectives from which to analyze the case problems. Hence, the instructor's voice is somewhat silenced while the students become empowered to navigate through the case to fully investigate the associated problems, identify relevant information, research solutions, and determine the best course of action. In accordance with Peterson (2004), a strong proponent of PBL, instructors should be aware of the temptation to solve the problem or offer up specific avenues for students to research. He tells instructors, "It is okay not to have all of the answers [and] it is okay to feel uncertain and anxious just like the students" (p. 639).

Intended Courses and Audience

Both parts of the case detail the purported harassment event through James's eyes, along with a glimpse into the perspectives of the offending student, administrators, and faculty who challenged his stance throughout the story. Its length, depth, and breadth paint a complex picture for the reader. Cases such as this allow students to engage in "self-guided learning that employs analysis to help draw conclusions about a situation" (Ellet, 2007, p. 1). It is ideal for both novice and sophisticated undergraduate students who are regularly asked to not only learn new knowledge, but also apply such knowledge in a critical and systematic fashion with organizational behavior, human resource management, and leadership topics. In addition, graduate students who can capitalize on both their professional experiences and exposure to advanced readings in organization studies may find this a challenging series of ill-structured, relevant problems with various options for James and the administrators.

Both parts of the case could be employed successfully in management courses where topics such as law, justice, diversity, power, culture, and/or employee attitudes are covered. For example, students could view it as a credible workplace situation to explore the organization as a political system by applying related theories and concepts to diagnose the power bases of the main characters. They might then engage in advanced analysis by diagnosing the power players' agendas and political skills, along with recommending strategies for James to survive and thrive in this dynamic environment. Also, students could explore how culture supported an environment that permitted homophobic harassment, which may explain decisions by college officials and faculty. It may also appeal to educators and students in business law and ethics courses where harassment and free speech rights are under debate. For instance, the legal definition of harassment on the basis of sexual orientation and how the college administrators handled the events could be topics that emerge during student-lead investigation. Regardless of the lines of inquiry chosen by the students, it is important for instructors to remember that the topics, concepts, and theories researched and applied to this case may differ. Given that instructors are enabling students to explore and decide the case problems, they will need to remain flexible and open to the direction that students take their case study analyses, depending upon the chosen audience and course.

Combining this case with the PBL method places great responsibility on the student "to investigate, to seek, to think, to create, and to act" (Peterson, 2004, p. 635). This could be a drastic deviation for some students who have come accustomed to being a passive learner. Therefore, as part of the facilitator role, the educator should plan to fully orient students to the PBL method as it relates to the assigned case (e.g., what will be required of them and the educator during the process). The following section is devoted to exploring teaching strategies that will prepare the instructor for adopting this case in a variety of management courses, along with allowing the student to take on the role of primary investigator and problem solver.

Lesson Plan Options

The following PBL-based lesson plan options, summarized in Table 1, offer a suggested structure for instructors to help students tackle the challenges facing James and his colleagues. Instructors obviously have discretion in terms of how the case

TABLE 1
PBL teaching strategy

Implementation stages	Timeline	Activity
Stage 1: PBL method and case introduction—"James Michaels (A)"	Weeks 1–2	(1) Review PBL method with students (roles, responsibilities, and expectations). (2) Introduce case problem, characters, and storyline.
Stage 2: Initial individual written assignment	Week 2	(1) Assign the case problem (A) and three initial discussion questions for individual students to answer in a written analysis in preparation for class discussion.
Stage 3: Debrief	Week 5	(1) Devote one to two class meetings to debrief and review individual responses. (2) Provide written feedback to the students' write-ups.
Step 4: Group assignment	Week 6	(1) After the debrief, organize students to tackle the case collectively in small groups (three to four students per group). (2) Ask each group to codify respective individual answers to the questions assigned in Stage 2. (3) Students should develop their group's shared ideas further by researching explanations to the case problem, researching possible solutions, and developing a proposed recommended action plan to solve the case problem.
Step 5: Present findings	Weeks 10–11	(1) Students present findings to class (oral presentation or via class management system). (2) Groups meet in class to do discuss/debate analyses and recommendations. (3) OPTIONAL—At the instructor's discretion, extend discussion and analysis to include "James Michaels (B)." (4) Ask student groups to revise/resubmit their respective reports to the instructor, now that the case problem has changed.
Step 6: Individual reflection	Weeks 13–14	(1) Reveal the epilogue. (2) Ask each student to draft a reflection memo that addresses the following items: (a) What are the strengths and weaknesses of their group's solution in contrast to the other groups' analyses, contributions, and recommended actions? Would they alter their analyses and problem-solving strategies now that further information is revealed? Why or why not? (b) Compare and contrast their recommendations for James, along with explanations for the existence of the problem, with the information revealed in the epilogue. (3) This memo could then be shared within and among the student groups in a final class meeting devoted to the case study.

should be assigned in their particular courses, but the lesson plan here assigns the entire case and epilogue (Appendix A) over the course of a full semester. The purpose behind this design is twofold. First, students will need sufficient time to research and analyze the case problems. Second, opportunities should be built into the course schedule to afford the students time to share their ideas/solutions with the instructor and/or classmates, in the form of written reports and/or oral presentations, and to receive valuable feedback.

With this design in mind, instructors could begin the semester by briefing the students on the PBL method and role expectations (see Peterson, 2004). Shortly after, introduce the first case installment, "James Michaels (A)," including the main characters and the central case problem. The event chronology (Appendix B) may be a helpful tool when introducing the case. Encourage students to also review the terminology available in the case appendix. This will familiarize them with vocabulary frequently used in most academic settings.

The first written assignment should surround their initial assessment of the case problem. Ask each student to prepare answers to the following questions for an initial debrief to occur a couple of weeks later (Peterson, 2004; Ramsay & Sorrell, 2007). Anticipate that students' answers will likely evolve as they are exposed to and further explore theories and concepts in the course and as they conduct their own research.

1. *What do we know about the harassment incident and resulting actions by James and the college administrators?* This question will guide students to consider the facts of the case and the social and political context in which the protagonist interacts with the offending student and decision makers. Expect students to potentially have competing explanations of what happened, depending upon their past experiences, biases, and theoretical frames (Bolman & Deal, 2008).
2. *What do we need to know—what is relevant and explanatory to the case problem, and could there be conflicts or holes with the existing information?* Here, students may report that they know little about homophobic harassment and related laws, and know little about how to consider existing college policy in terms of defining whether or not the student indeed engaged in harassment. This is simply one example of a possible source of confusion whereby students will indicate the need for more information to assess the problem.
3. *What should James do?* Ask students to identify possible options for James now that the president has decided to partially uphold a grievance committee recommendation and disregard the other central recommendation to dismiss the offending student. Encourage them to consider the potential consequences for their recommended options and choose the best decision given the details of the case.

During the debriefing class meeting(s), devote significant time for students to report their answers to the abovementioned questions. Record any similarities and differences on the board for students to review and debate. This is an opportunity to develop and assign investigating groups who share similar interests and theoretical perspectives to solve the case problem. For instance, some of the students may believe James's best option is to seek legal counsel. If so, they may research this type of harassment as if it happened in their jurisdiction. Options then would be considered for James to take action and to what degree. Once students are organized into such groups, ask them to formalize and develop their responses to the three questions with specific reference to existing research, theories, and concepts relevant to their areas of focus. Ask that students submit the written report by a specific deadline. Also, inform them that they will be asked to present their findings either in class in the form of an oral presentation or as an executive summary posted virtually on the class management system with a more detailed report sent to the instructor. Again, this will depend on instructor preference.

Once the report is drafted and submitted to the instructor, and students have presented their findings, the class should meet again to debate the student groups' recommended solutions. The instructor could then assign the second installment of the case to prompt further inquiry by the students, which would redefine the problem and offer greater complexity. Since James believed he failed to hold the student and president accountable, student groups could now reassess their solutions and relevant information, given that the situation has changed. As Ramsay and Sorrell (2007) recommend, "Further investigations [by students] will likely be necessary" (p. 43) at this point. To continue this strategy, the instructor could conceivably request that the groups resubmit their reports for further discussion and debate, either in class or virtually through the class management system's discussion board.

The final part of this PBL-based strategy involves reflection (Miller, 2004). Return the problem solving and analysis to the individual student, and ask that each draft a brief two-page response memo that articulates the strengths and weaknesses of their group's solution in contrast to the other groups' analyses, contributions, and recommended actions. This memo could then be shared within and among the student groups in a final class meeting devoted to the case study. Correspondingly, assign the case epilogue, which details James's final decision to leave the college and presents further insight from the provost into the possible assumptions underlying the administration's sanction decision. As part of the reflection memo, ask students to compare and contrast their recommendations for James, along with explanations for the existence of the problem, with the information revealed in the epilogue. This will afford students a chance to reconcile any existing disconnects or shortcomings in their analyses and recommendations. Would they alter their analyses and problem-solving strategies now that further information is revealed? Why or why not? This may stimulate considerable debate within each individual and among intra- and intergroup discussions regarding the problem definition and solutions (e.g., proposing a short-sighted strategy, discounting relevant information, and/or adopting a limited theoretical perspective that ignores existing variables or relationships).

Possible Student-Directed Discussion Topics

There are a plethora of ways for students to analyze the ambiguity, conflict, and complexity of the ill-structured case problems. The following will highlight the versatility of this case in terms of topical coverage within a management curriculum. As Bruner and Foerester (2004) recommend, any well-developed case should be like a screwdriver. As they put it, "A screwdriver has an obvious use, but it is often used more widely as a door-stopper, a paint can opener, and, turned upside down, as a hammer" (p. 3). Like the versatile screwdriver, this case is open to analyses from a variety of schools of thought. Consequently, instructors should anticipate students to approach the case problems from competing and complementary theoretical perspectives.

To prepare instructors for the inevitable diversity of perspectives applied by students, this section adopts a well-known approach for analyzing life inside and among organizations. Bolman and Deal (2008), prominent teacher-scholars in management education, have crafted a valuable framework to help students, practitioners, and scholars alike understand organizational phenomena. Their approach incorporates assumptions, theories, and concepts from different lenses or frames, including structure (organization design, policy, and environment), human resources (individual, group behavior), politics (power, conflict, and political behavior), and symbolism (culture). They believe that reframing, the act of moving back and forth among the different perspectives, "increases the probability of seeing and solving 'real' problems, while encouraging people to expand the scope and flexibility of their own thinking [and lessoning] the likelihood of oversimplifying problems" (Gallos, 2008, p. 11). While reframing does not necessarily create an exhaustive list of discussion topics, this does provide a possible preview of what may emerge from student inquiry and dialogue (summarized in Table 2).

Structural Frame: Legal and Policy Environment

The instructor should be prepared for some students to read this case and wonder how and why the offensive behavior perpetrated against James may be an example of workplace harassment. They may also question the degree to which it should be subject to jurisdictional laws and college policy. "Faggot" is a demeaning term often assigned to men, gay or otherwise, with the purpose of espousing hate for and toward those who are different (e.g., either perceived or identified as homosexual) and to place preference on heterosexual identity. This type

TABLE 2
Reframing James Michaels

Frame	Possible topics
Structure	1) Legal environment
	2) Policy implementation and changes
Human	1) Justice theories
Resources	2) Workplace attitudes—commitment and job satisfaction
	3) Organizational citizenship behaviors
	4) Employee retention
Political	1) Power sources
	2) Agendas
	3) Political behavior
Symbolic	1) Culture
	2) Language
	3) Espoused values
	4) Norms
	5) Heterosexism

of harassment is broadly defined as "verbal, physical, and symbolic behaviors that convey hostile and offensive attitudes about one's actual or perceived [sexual] identity" (Konik & Cortina, 2008, p. 315). In a recent survey of students, staff, and faculty in higher education (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, & Frazer, 2010), lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) participants were "significantly more likely to experience harassment [23% of respondents]" compared to their heterosexual counterparts and "seven times more likely to indicate that the harassment was based on sexual identity" (p. 10).

Its pervasiveness, however, does not necessarily equate legal protection. Even if such actions result in emotional distress or distraction from work or study, this behavior may or may not be considered harassment, depending upon organizational policy and existing laws or regulations. In general, determining whether or not behavior can be legally deemed harassing in nature depends upon a number of factors. With respect to this case, James may have experienced a hostile work environment created by written communication that included "derogatory or stereotypical" (Littler-Mendelson, 2009, p. 229) language based on a protected category. Assuming sexual orientation is covered by the particular jurisdiction, legal accountability largely depends on the pervasiveness, frequency, and impact of the harassing behavior. Note that the criteria depend greatly on the jurisdiction. For example, a prime facie assessment may reveal that James indeed did experience this act because of his sexual orientation as revealed by the content of the e-mail and the student's testimony to the grievance committee. Also, the act did emotionally harm James and was professionally distracting to his work, as he stated in his letter to the administration and from his conversations with colleagues and his partner. One may also argue that a reasonable person may also perceive this as harmful. However, it was a one-time incident and did not persist. Most legal experts believe the frequency criterion is critical for courts to find favor to the plaintiff (Allred, 1993), but in some cases the courts have not held up the severe-or-pervasive threshold (Volokh, 1997), especially when institutional policies or procedures do not exist (unlike with the college in this case). As Allred (1993) puts it, no single criterion supersedes the others and such a decision does not come down to a "mathematically precise test" (p. 5).

As previously indicated, the jurisdiction itself may not prohibit homosexual harassment. At the federal level, for example, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 excludes sexual orientation as a protected class thereby permitting harrassment or discrimination in the workplace on this basis (Littler-Mendelson, 2009). State laws, however, may define what happened to James as sexual harassment that created a hostile work environment. Like states, organizations too can have protections for LGBT workers and hold offenders accountable as it relates to their employment status in the organization. In the case of James and his student, the college did have existing policies and procedures in place to investigate and render a decision. While a

court may or may not deem Dan's offensive language in the e-mail to be workplace harassment due to the frequency of the act or the legal classification of this behavior as harassment, the college did find the student responsible for engaging in prohibited behavior that violated existing policy.

One final point that students may wish to debate is whether Dan's words, regardless of impact, are harassing because of the free speech protections afforded under the U.S. Constitution (Volokh, 1997). Some may argue that name-calling is constitutionally protected under the first amendment and simply an exercise of one's right to express opinions and views. Courts, however, have consistently upheld judgments in favor of the plaintiff when the defendant (accuser or organization) violated harassment law. When organizations choose not to investigate or protect employees from behavior that is reported as harassing, the vicarious liability for the employer trumps any concerns for free speech violations brought about by the defendant. As Balkin (1999) eloquently states: "Because there are abundant good reasons to hold employers liable for employees' creation of a hostile environment, the collateral censorship produced by Title VII does not offend the First Amendment" (p. 13). Free speech has its limitations in modern society, and James's experience with an offensive e-mail is an example of the harm that speech can cause.

Students interested in vicarious liability will likely research their respective legal context to determine whether the college can be held responsible. However, most legal experts would agree that the college officials here acted appropriately to investigate and act to protect James from future harassment, thereby protecting the institution from legal action. While one may not agree with the initial sanction decision rendered by the administration nor with the president's decision to overturn the grievance committee, the final sanction determination is one in which the college has complete discretion under law (Volokh, 1997) and as stated in the college policy (see *Operating Procedures, F, iii* presented in "James Michaels [A] and [B]," [Appendix B, Exhibit 1]).

Human Resources Frame: Justice, Attitudes, and Behavior

Students may determine that James's overarching problems in both parts of the case are the result of procedural and distributive injustices inflicted upon by the administration. Their recommendations may be for James to engage in behaviors that reverse the perceived unfairness.

First, with respect to making a case for procedural injustice (Clay-Warner, Reynolds, & Romer, 2005; Leventhal, 1980; Tepper, 2000), the students would need to show that the organization did not fairly apply the harassment policy and associated procedures to investigate James's accusations. Also at issue could be the grade-change review mandate that called into question his academic freedom from administrative overreach.

Regarding the college's harassment policy and procedure, James's perceptions of procedural injustice could be explained by the fact that the college president involved himself at multiple points in the process. If students clearly examined the policy and evidence in the case, the president violated the operating procedure by being present and offering recommendations during the initial administrative review deliberations. This also may bias his decision to appoint members to the grievance committee. While it is permissible for the president to appoint staff and students to this body, he should have recused himself from that responsibility, given the involvement early on in the case. In addition, as final arbiter, his presence created a conflict of interest and likely biased his decision to overturn the grievance committee's recommendation to dismiss the student.

James may have also experienced a procedural injustice when the president agreed with the grievance committee to mandate that Dan's grade be reviewed. This not only explicitly bypassed existing grade appeal rules, but was also outside the scope of the investigatory responsibilities of the grievance committee and the authority given to the president. If students astutely argue this point after reading the first part of the case, they will see their analysis supported by evidence in the second installment when Anna and Scott discuss this in great depth. The decision by the president, with the support of the grievance committee, firmly undermined the authority given to James as a faculty member. This experience explains his feeling of betrayal and the initial support by faculty to hold the president accountable later in the case. Along these lines, educators may extend this discussion with their students by asking whether or not they agree with James's perspective. Would they feel unjustly treated as a student if their grade appeal rights were circumvented and a college official rendered a decision that their grade be reviewed? If they were Dan's classmates and found out that his grade would be reviewed, how would they feel? Would they find this offensive? This may stimulate fascinating discussions about the concept of fairness from their vantage point.

Lastly, if students examine the degree to which James faced distributional justice (Adams, 1965), an argument can be made given the nature of the harassment incident and response by the administration. Throughout the first part of the case, James and colleagues were convinced that college officials would side in his favor. He and others genuinely believed the college would deem Dan's behavior as harassment per the policy and hold the student accountable in such a way that he and others would know that harassing behavior is counter to their institutional values. James's expectations, however, were inconsistent with the judgment rendered initially by the administration and when the president's final decision was announced. In this scenario, the outcome could be perceived as unfair (Clay-Warner, Reynolds, & Romer, 2005); James believes that the homophobic harassment was not only deliberate, but also severe enough to merit a harsh sanction. At the heart of this injustice is the fact that the administrators, at least from the information provided to readers, took into consideration neither James's concerns about interacting with this student in future courses nor the message this could send to other students about seemingly inconsequential results for offenders in comparison to the offense. For

James, having anything but a zero-tolerance policy meant that this type of harassment would not be taken seriously by those in the college community.

To some students, the president could be considered the primary authority figure that perpetuated the injustices against James. Instead of "liberating from oppressive conditions" (Sinclair, 2007, p. xix), the president represented what may see as individual and institutional levels of oppression (Bell, 2010; Hardiman, Jackson, & Griffin, 2010). For instance, the reversal of the grievance committee recommendations and revelations by the provost about the president's view of homophobic harassment could reveal attitudes that consciously or unconsciously limit James's just treatment under existing policy. For example, after the president developed a convenient relationship with Shawn Lynch, elected leader of the faculty, James's voice of opposition (Sinclair, 2007) was silenced.

Students may suggest that James respond by accepting defeat in the short term, but move to change things to benefit the institution as a whole in the future. As a tempered radical (Sinclair, 2007), James could reverse the impact of the injustices by "working towards the success of [the] organization while also being true to [himself] and [his values]" (p. 85). For instance, he could work with the administration to establish a committee of faculty, staff, and students to research best practices in workplace harassment prevention and possibly revise existing policies/procedures (e.g., lobbying for a zero-tolerance policy similar to what is in place at Union College: http://www.union.edu/sart/homophobic-harassment/index.php). Also, he could lead efforts to create a faculty–student LGBT alliance group that provides voice and action to the shared values for diversity on campus. This group could then establish a dialogue with the president and board of trustees about LGBT issues on campus.

Students, having reviewed the second part of the case, have a more complete picture of the toxic environment that James faced following the harassment incident. Given the unjust actions taken by college officials, the president, and the FEB chair, an argument detailing possible adverse consequences for James and the entire college has merit. Scholars have consistently documented that workplace injustices, particularly procedural and distributive, are impactful for the individual and organization (Clay-Warner, Reynolds, & Romer, 2005; Hendrix, Robbins, Miller, & Summers, 1998; Tepper, 2000).

For example, James's stress, already at a high level as detailed in the case, may continue to rise as he tries to deal with a faculty and institution for which he believes are unsupportive. His workplace attitudes, influenced by the perceived injustices and the homophobic harassment (Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010), could then become quite negative. His satisfaction with and commitment to the college in the short and long term could diminish if he continually feels unwelcome in an "atmosphere of intolerance" (Irwin, 2002, p. 75). Not only might he begin to tell his story to sympathetic students or alumnae/alumni, which may threaten the reputational interests of the college, but

he may decide to purposefully reduce his organizational citizenship behaviors (Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010) such as attending admissions or alumnae/alumni events to represent his department. That stress may also lead distraction and absenteeism (Irwin, 2002), which could have an impact on his work performance as a teacher and scholar. After reading the epilogue, students could revisit the issue of consequences to reconcile their analyses with what actually transpired. James's departure from the college, for instance, signals the consequential realities many experience after being the victim of homophobic harassment and various organizational injustices.

The organization could also experience negative outcomes because of James's experience. There is a real potential that James may leave the organization as his job satisfaction and commitment diminish overtime due to the unjust experiences. The ripple effects on the broader college community may be even more severe. For example, sympathetic supporters and bystanders may believe the college is insensitive to LGBT concerns and faculty rights. This could result in decreased support for the college by external stakeholders (e.g., in terms of fundraising, word-of-mouth advertising, or faculty recruitment) or by those inside who may experience decreased commitment and therefore wish to quietly seek alternative employment (Day & Green, 2008). With respect to the grade review mandate and associated procedural violation by the president, the college administrators could see less support by faculty for policies or program initiatives. In such an adversarial relationship, even if proposed initiatives create minimal change to existing academic policies, the faculty could find the need to review and challenge the administration simply to protect their oversight role.

Political Frame: Power Play

Students assigned this case in organizational behavior and leadership courses may find the political perspective very applicable to the case problems. James's story is one of power play and fierce political battles. As a partisan (Gamson, 1968), James promotes his agenda to authorities (i.e., the administration and senior colleagues), only to find any short-lived victories replaced by long-term disappointment and defeat. If students choose to examine the case problems from the political frame, they might explore the various power players, sources, and political tactics used to satisfy their respective agendas (DuBrin, 2009; Pfeffer, 1994, 2010). The following offers a preview of what students could include in a political analysis of harassment (Wilson and Thompson, 2001.

Politics is a dynamic phenomenon, and as such the relative significance of the actors' power sources evolved and shifted over time. After reading organizational politics literature, students will likely recognize that power and authority differ (Brower & Abolafia, 1997); analyzing top-down authorities and bottom-up partisans (Bolman & Deal, 2008) reveals varying sources of influence during the harassment incident and ensuing interactions. There was no single omnipotent political player in this case, but certain individuals and alliances did possess

considerable influence over others. Power players could include James, President Jones, and Shawn Lynch (FEB chair), to name a few. Each actor possessed and capitalized on specific power sources to position their unique agenda as valid and reasonable. Appendix C provides a review of the power sources and the actors' respective agendas.

Another avenue for students to consider could be the actors' political behaviors to solidify their power bases, sustain their agendas, and seek victory. With the first part of the case under review, students may find the harassment incident itself an example of a political battle. James and Dan both positioned their agenda from different points of view. For example, Dan projected his anger with the plagiarism charge and resulting punishment onto James by using the homophobic slur. This scapegoating (Carter, 1996; Eagle & Newton, 1981) was an attempt to place blame on James for a false accusation and remove responsibility for his actions. Although Dan may have seen this as an effective tactic to pressure and guilt James into submission, the behavior represented an ultimate political blunder (DuBrin 2009; Pfeffer, 2010). Instead of approaching the plagiarism accusation in a mature and humble manner, Dan decided to intimidate and harass. His actions backfired and opened up an entire new set of problems that alienated James, department faculty, and some members of the college community.

James, however, believed Dan's concerns about the plagiarism allegation were no longer an issue, given his earlier decision to assign a failing grade for the exam. Now the battle shifted to Dan's purposeful harassment. James strongly argues that the content of the e-mail was not only a violation of college policy, but also violated the academic honor code. With the assistance of both Scott and Anna, he defined his priorities and helped shape the coalition's agenda to achieve justice and preserve faculty rights. This helped broaden his coalition. However, in the second part of the case, the coalition among faculty broke down once Shawn proposed retracting the letter. Students may argue that James, with Scott and Anna's support, could have appealed to superordinate goals. For example, he could have persuaded his fellow faculty that both short- and long-term interests were at stake. If students, staff, and college stakeholders became aware of the harassment incident and related injustices, there might be implications for student retention and recruitment, possible difficulty in retaining qualified faculty, and future legal challenges if students, staff, and faculty were not protected. This might have convinced faculty not only that this was inconsistent with the espoused values, but that it did not make business sense. Given the financial problems facing the college, this could have ensured a stronger coalition.

There were points in the case when James did not anticipate the consequences of his actions and those of others. For example, his decision to bluntly threaten media exposure and suggest legal action likely undermined potential administration support. Students may interpret this as an ineffective Machiavellian act of manipulation because it did not influence the president as

James had hoped (DuBrin, 2009). If anything, the president was advised by legal council to avoid any discussion of these matters with James. If he had avoided this bullish influence tactic, access to the president may have been more readily available and open to James's position. This tactic undercut any possibility of negotiating a mutually beneficial conclusion. In addition, he did not foresee the counterstrategies employed by the newly formed alliance of Shawn and the president. As faculty leader, Shawn knowingly engaged in co-optation with the president (DuBrin, 2009). This was a strategy to overcome the movement by the faculty to rebuke the president, which he believed was a distraction from more important and timely financial challenges.

The college president is another prominent character on which students may wish to focus their political analyses. Faced with a storm of controversy with the harassment, the president may have wanted to decisively contain the harassment case to avoid further escalation. In attempts to satisfy both parties (holding Dan accountable for the harassment and standing firm on protecting him from grading bias), the president failed to stop James from filing the grievance and initial action by the faculty. Potentially overconfident (Pfeffer, 2010), and at least insensitive to James's concerns, the president soon found his power threatened by the faculty. The president wielded his legitimate authority at various points in the case without regard for the potential implications. If he were more in tune with the political terrain, especially with respect to the grade review part of his final decision, the escalation vis-à-vis the faculty letter may have been averted. Nevertheless, the president's political maneuvers later in the case changed the game in his favor, which limited his accountability and stopped any further action by the faculty. Capitalizing on his reward power and establishing an alliance with Shawn Lynch was a masterful move. As a result, the president subdued the faculty response. By convincing Shawn that the financial challenges superseded the harassment-related issues, the president's final decision was fully implemented and unabridged. However, readers may concede that long-term costs also existed in terms of his potentially damaged reputation with the faculty. As Pfeffer (2010) so eloquently states, "Nothing comes without cost and that is certainly true of power" (p. 199).

Symbolic Frame: Language, Norms, and Values

Part of the students' approach to understanding the case and recommending actions for James may involve a thorough cultural analysis. For example, such a focus may involve a closer look at language and norms among the different subcultures at the college. Within organizational cultures, language codifies shared expectations, reminds participants of core values, and can have utility for those seeking to establish and influence a group of followers (Pfeffer, 1994).

If students examine the language of homophobic harassment in particular, they could find that Dan and James interpreted the term "faggot" quite differently, which likely defined their stance

on the issue. For Dan, the term had quite a different meaning. In his social environment (i.e., the sport team), this homosexual labeling was a normative way to express anger and possibly exert his masculinity (Nielson, Walden, & Kunkel, 2000). Here students may see the meaning of "faggot" socially constructed across subcultures in the college and thereby interpreted differently (Burr, 1998). If students decide to explore language and masculinity to explore Dan's behavior, instructors could ask follow-up questions to target their analysis and inquiry. For instance, if Dan uses this slur to express his masculinity, is he also distancing himself from James because of a threat to that masculinity (as hinted in the e-mail by stating "now you know why I haven't been in class")? Maybe Dan's behavior is due to his own struggles with sexual orientation?

Regardless of Dan's intentions, language "provides a point of view within which [the audience] orient [their] actions" (Boje, Oswick, & Ford, 2004, p. 571). In response, James positioned Dan's rationale for using the slur by rejecting it outright (Boghossian, 2001; Davies & Harré, 1990). One might argue that James continued to pursue avenues to hold the student accountable because of the meaning associated with the language in LGBT community. The unfortunate reality is that homophobic slurs, such as "you're such a fag" or "that's so gay," have become ubiquitous in modern discourse to represent "all things uncool or nerdish" (Rasmussen, 2004, p. 289). The term "faggot" is offensive and considered by those in the queer or LGBT communities as homophobic or heterosexist harassment (Ferfolja, 2010; Irwin, 2002; Konik & Cortina, 2008).

In the epilogue, students learn that the provost believed that members of the administration interpreted this type of harassment in such a way that furthers the argument that heterosexism (Robinson, 2005) existed. The e-mails sent by senior faculty at the conclusion of the case also point to a subculture of acceptance for this language. Students may use this evidence to explain why Dan faced a less harsh punishment than otherwise would have existed if a racial or ethnic slur had been used. This speaks to the "advantages bestowed on heterosexuals . . . that exclude the needs, concerns, cultures and life experiences" of LGBT individuals (Blumenfeld, 2010, p. 371). This analysis may then explain why James was unsuccessful in his attempts to manage symbolism among subcultures that define and attach different meaning to the slur.

CONCLUSION

For James Michaels, the events following the harassment incident were undoubtedly painful. Students are left with a defeated protagonist uncertain about his future. They are challenged to understand his reality and to develop theory-driven recommendations for how to react and adapt. The PBL method and suggested lesson plan will enhance students' problem-solving skills, along with their understanding and application of various theories in management and organization

studies. For instructors adopting this case study, the teaching note will be a "laboratory guide, not an answer key" (Lundberg & Winn, 2005, p. 279) that could open the door to numerous possibilities for student learning.

NOTE

The referenced case was developed solely for student learning using critical thinking, theory application, and problem-solving skills in both written assignments and class discussions. This is neither an endorsement nor a reflection of effective or ineffective management practices. While the referenced case is based on actual events, numerous aspects of the story are fictionalized to protect the confidentiality of persons and entities involved. The details presented in the case are from the perspective of James Michaels (pseudonym).

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APPENDIX A: EPILOGUE

"I'm still amazed that folks didn't step up and support you over e-mail," exclaimed Ken. After James received the e-mails from senior faculty and Shawn's decision to retract the letter was implemented, he lost all hope that things would turn around. "It is what it is, and the sooner I come to grips with the new reality, the better we'll all be. But, I do need to think about my future at the school," James responded. He knew deep down that it would be difficult to interact with both unsupportive colleagues and administrators, let alone see Dan in the classroom again.

After just two weeks since the e-mail exchanges occurred, James heard from a handful of fellow junior faculty who expressed sympathy for his situation. One colleague approached him in the student union with a hug and said, "I just wanted to reach into the screen and slap them across their face; I mean, really, to think what you went through wasn't harassment. They are out of touch to say the least." Before James could ask why no one thought there was a need to actually respond, his colleague said, "I know you must feel lonely, but know that the silent majority is in your favor. But, with the budget stuff happening, I guess we're all afraid of what the president might do." Thanking his colleague, James reiterated his genuine appreciation for the behind-the-scenes support, but he admitted to himself that it might be too little too late to maintain his affinity for the institution. He was hoping a conversation with the provost would diminish thoughts of looking for a new job.

Later that day, the provost greeted James with a firm handshake and smile. "James, I want to thank you for seeing me today. I'm saddened by all that has happened, but amazed at the same time by how committed you have remained to your students and the college. I'm very thankful for all that you have done in the midst of what I can only imagine has been painful." James appreciated his kind words, but responded still a bit taken aback by all of the backroom dealings between the president and FEB chair. "How is that such behavior against a faculty member by a student would result in little to no action? I know, suspension for a semester by *this* president at *this* college is

considered monumental, but with all that happened, I thought the administration would take this a bit more seriously." The provost revealed that, off the record, he was equally perplexed. "I know this president and my colleagues, and with great regret I believe they did not necessarily see what happened to you at the same level as other forms of harassment." Perplexed, James responded, "So, indeed, harassing a gay or lesbian professor is different in their eyes than if I were black or a female?" The provost continued to explain that while he believed there should not be a hierarchical categorization or classification of harassment, others are unable to see homophobic harassment in the same way. James was amazed at this revelation and said so to the provost. Nevertheless, the provost reiterated the confidentiality of their conversation and reassured him that none of what transpired in the previous year would have any adverse impact on his performance reviews for tenure and promotion. James knew that was the case, but it was comforting to hear it from the provost. As he left the meeting, James realized, however, that job security is of little value in an organization where he felt unprotected and invisible when faced with harassing student behavior.

Upon difficult conversations with Scott, and with the support of Ken, James decided to enter the job market in hopes of finding a college or university that would both talk the talk and walk the walk in terms of valuing diversity and accountability. Scott promised James that he would write letters of support and call colleagues at other schools to do whatever he could to help him transition to a new academic home. He did not want to lose James from the faculty, but knew how unhappy he would be if the shoe were on the other foot. After months of interviewing and second-guessing his decision to leave, James decided to accept a position at a school in another state. With a degree of relief and excitement, James drafted his resignation letter and asked to see the provost.

"Ed, I wanted to thank you for your mentorship and advice during my time here. As you know, this past year has been emotionally draining and professionally distracting." The provost interrupted, "You've been a trooper, to say the least." James continued, "So, I'm here to submit my letter of resignation. I've accepted a position at another school in the north." Seemingly shocked, the provost quickly asked what he could do to keep James at the college, such as a salary increase or research grant. James reassured him that the decision was made and he was looking forward to a new start at a school that truly upheld the values dear to him. With regret, the provost accepted the letter and said, "We're losing a great professor and I hope my colleagues learn from all of this. I know I have."

James walked back to his office with a sense of finality and weight lifted off his shoulders. He had yet to come to grips with the uncertainty of accepting a new position, and the associated excitement and anxiety, but he was confident that he was ready to learn from the painful experiences in the past and face the new challenges ahead.

APPENDIX B: EVENT CHRONOLOGY

TABLE B1
James Michaels (A)

Date	Event(s)
February 2009	• Dan Potter and classmate violated the academic honor code by cheating on exam in CSMGT 380, taught by Dr. James Michaels.
April 30, 2009	• Dan submits his final project and in the body of the e-mail uses a homophobic epithet to harass James. James meets with Scott and Anna to discuss the incident and options for seeking justice. The administration commences an investigation.
May 1, 2009	• Computer Science faculty meet to discuss the event and agree on a set of sanction recommendations for the administration to consider. Department colleagues support James's decision to fail Dan for violating the academic honor code.
May 8, 2009	• The administration completes the investigation and requests to meet with James to discuss its decision. James has a contentious meeting with the administration and learns that the student will essentially receive a warning with the additional mandate to apologize and attend diversity training. In a separate meeting with the provost, James learns that the president was involved in the administrative review. With the support of his department, James drafts a request to file a harassment grievance.
May 9, 2009	• James officially submits the grievance request to Provost Smith.
June 10, 2009	• James and Scott meet with the grievance committee.
June 15, 2009	• James receives a letter from President Jones in which, after receiving the recommendations by grievance committee, the president renders his final decision on the harassment case.

TABLE B2
James Michaels (B)

Date	Event(s)
June 15, 2009	• Disappointed and heartbroken by the president's decision letter, James meets with Scott and Anna to discuss the letter from the president. • James and Scott meet with the provost to discuss options to appeal the president's decision. • Provost Smith informs James and Scott that there are no appeal options and that the president's decision stands.
Summer 2009	• Scott and Anna meet informally with FEB colleagues to apprise them of the situation and solicit support for possible action against the president. • They convince FEB members to address the issue with the faculty.
August 28, 2009	• The full faculty hold their first meeting of the fall semester. • Discussion on the harassment and alleged procedural injustices is postponed due to the financial crisis facing the college.
September–October 2009	• Scott and Anna convince the FEB and chairperson, Shawn Lynch, to take up the issue at the November faculty meeting. • FEB members agree to draft a letter rebuking the president.
November 30, 2009	• Faculty meet to discuss the case; James presents the facts to a sympathetic and supportive faculty. • The faculty unanimously supports a strong letter rebuking the president for the weak response and procedural injustices; Shawn Lynch sends the letter to the president.
December 7, 2009	• The president responds to Shawn in an off-the-record conversation. • Shawn is concerned about the president's anger and meets with Scott, Anna, and James to discuss potential implications. • They convince Shawn to wait for an official response by the president before any sort of action.
Late December 2009–January 2010	• President Jones and Shawn meet behind closed doors on a number of occasions to discuss a possible resolution to this matter. • Shawn recommends that the FEB retract the letter; FEB members, including Scott and Anna, debate the matter. Majority of FEB support the retraction.
January 7, 2010	• Shawn asks all faculty to vote via e-mail to retract the letter. • Two senior colleagues respond in favor of retraction and go further by suggesting the faculty apologize to the president.

APPENDIX C: POWER PLAYERS

Dr. James Michaels

Information. As the target of harassment, James had intimate knowledge about the events involving the student and administration, including the apparent procedural violations by the president. He shared the specifics of the case to solicit support among the faculty before and during the meeting when the letter was voted upon. In addition, he indicated in his letter to the provost that he could potentially share facts of the case with media, special interest groups, and college stakeholders. James acting as a whistle-blower could be damaging for the college in terms of public relations, especially during a difficult time with low enrollment and declining student retention.

Alliance. James successfully acquired alliance power both within his department and across the college community. Scott and Anna had great respect for James and saw him as an emerging teacher-scholar. Gaining their support was critical

for two reasons. First, they had expert knowledge about the college policies and a broader professional network outside the department. Second, Scott and Anna were members of the FEB where such an issue could go before the faculty. Creating a coalition with these two individuals enhanced his power base. In terms of outside the department, James gained support for his agenda by lobbying other faculty and appealed to their interests for protecting faculty rights and well-being. This was evident by the unanimous vote obtained during the faculty-wide meeting regarding the letter to the president.

President Robert Jones

Legitimate. The college president had the ultimate responsibility to render the final decision regarding the harassment case. His position, as indicated in the harassment policy, afforded him considerable influence over the official college position on this issue. As stated in the case, the chain of

command ended with the president and there were no other formal options to appeal his decision. Therefore, the president had the positional influence to both control priorities and establish precedent for future administrative decisions. For example, he directed the provost to begin working with the department to reassess the student's grade. To the surprise of James and others, the provost conceded to the president in the face of legitimate policy and procedural error questions.

Reward. The legitimate authority speaks to only part of the president's power. His control over rewards in terms of budgetary decisions involving faculty salaries and financial priorities greatly influenced political behavior later in the case. For example, Shawn Lynch was concerned that a harshly worded letter from the faculty could upset the president and lead to possible retribution. Given the budgetary challenges facing the college, Shawn was aware of the president's control over valuable resources. The faculty leader was fearful about how the president would respond if the letter remained, particularly with the fiscal crisis, and he convinced faculty over winter break to retract the letter. This was evidence of the president's ability to influence using the power of the purse.

Alliance. The president also successfully created a powerful alliance with respected members of the college community, including Dean Miller, Provost Smith, and FEB chair Shawn Lynch. Both administrators, Dean Miller and Provost Smith, legitimized the president's decision and implemented their respective duties. Without their support, he would have faced greater resistance from the faculty and fellow administrators. However, the president's alliance with Shawn was critical to bringing this case to a close. During winter break, the two agreed that this entire affair was a distraction from more pertinent issues related to the fiscal health of the college. The president benefited from this relationship, especially since Shawn was able to convince the FEB to move forward with a proposal to retract the letter. Details regarding their interactions over break were left to the readers' imaginations, but an argument can be made that the alliance enhanced the president's influence in this case.

Dr. Shawn Lynch, FEB Chair

Legitimate. The faculty leader emerged as a powerful player later in the case. As elected chair of the FEB, Shawn controlled the bully pulpit and shaped the agenda. This became evident when the decision to address the president's behavior was postponed more than two months. Shawn believed that the financial problems facing the college deserved greater attention. In addition, he was able to convince FEB members that the initial letter needed to be toned down so additional conflict would be avoided. While the language was changed during the faculty-wide meeting in November, Shawn was successful in his efforts to later retract the letter. His position afforded him the opportunity to control the message.

Coercive. Instructors may wish to remind the students about the peer-based performance review system that exists in a college setting. Given his senior status and relationships with other faculty members, Shawn could conceivably influence tenure and/or promotion decisions for junior faculty. While there was no evidence to suggest he would purposely torpedo a colleague's chances for tenure and/or promotion, the fact that Anna was careful to challenge him because of his "clout" spoke to this potential power source.

Centrality. Shawn had access to other power players, including the president. This was particularly helpful when considering that he sought to focus on the budgetary concerns facing the college. As faculty leader, Shawn was regularly involved in budget and planning discussions with the president and other senior administration officials. Having a seat at the table enhanced his legitimacy in the eyes of the other faculty and helped in his effort to set FEB priorities.

Dr. Scott Ferradino

Reputation. As Computer Science Department chairperson, Scott oversaw the most successful academic program, in terms of enrollment, at the college. In addition, he proved himself as a committed to the college's interdisciplinary liberal arts mission. Therefore, administration officials and faculty respected his voice. His status within the college community allowed him to express his views without fear of retribution and upheld support for James throughout this difficult ordeal. For example, Scott, with the support of Anna, successfully persuaded the FEB to support a letter rebuking the president. He also challenged James during the first attempt to the retract letter and once again via e-mail during winter break. However, his reputation power was weakened when he was unable to convince others that retracting the letter prior to the president's response was premature. He remained an influential figure, but Shawn successfully retook control.

Alliance. Building on his reputation, Scott formed a coalition among FEB members to ensure the letter was presented to the faculty for a vote. Through this informal alliance, Scott ensured that entire faculty became aware of the situation and collectively responded to the president's behavior. His alliance remained firm at this point in the case, but was later challenged. Shawn broke through this tenuous coalition of faculty and convinced FEB members and senior colleagues that a retraction was necessary.

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