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**An analysis of perceived political characteristics and tactics in  
student affairs organizations**

**Newman, Belinda Kay, Ph.D.**

**Texas A&M University, 1990**

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AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND  
TACTICS IN STUDENT AFFAIRS ORGANIZATIONS

A Dissertation  
by  
BELINDA KAY NEWMAN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 1990

Major Subject: Educational Administration

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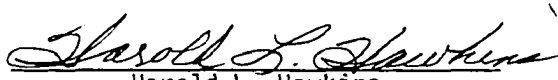
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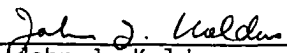
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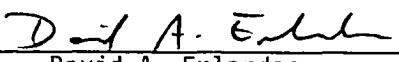
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May 1990

## ABSTRACT

An Analysis of Perceived Political Characteristics and  
Tactics in Student Affairs Organizations. (May 1990)

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The objective of this study was to analyze organizational politics in student affairs organizations. Specifically, the study focused on the following questions:

1. What tactics are perceived as used most often by political actors working in student affairs organizations?
2. What personal characteristics are associated with individuals perceived as politically effective?

A survey instrument was developed for the study to collect information from members of the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators. Of the 235 surveys mailed out, 179 were returned completed and used in the data analysis. This total represented a 76% return rate. In responding to research question 1, TACUSPA members reported the frequency which they observed a particular political behavior or the strength of their agreement regarding a specific political behavior. In response to research question 2, respondents identified personal characteristics which they associated with an individual perceived to be politically effective.



Conclusions of this research indicated that student affairs administrators acknowledge the frequent use of political strategies and tactics to influence others both within and outside an organization. Student affairs administrators perceived an effective politician to use political tactics such as information usage, image building, power-base building and association with the influential. An effective politician is perceived as an individual who becomes a part of the organization through an awareness of and adherence to the norms. Results of the study also indicated that an effective politician takes the time and effort to build relationships with others. The five personal characteristics most often associated with a politically effective individual by student affairs administrators are: (a) articulate, (b) self-confident, (c) competent, (d) motivator, and (e) goal-oriented.

DEDICATION

To

Mom & Dad

&

Mary Margaret

&

Kelly, Becky, Francey,

&

Jocko

from the beginning to end,

your support and encouragement has been unremitting

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Office politics has been described as the best kept secret in American society. This is especially true for recent college graduates, since employees typically learn about office politics from first-hand experience (Kennedy, 1980). The presence of a political environment is inherent in the structural and functional design of organizations. Informal structure allows for covert and nonsanctioned political behavior. Distributed authority and consensus decision-making allow for horizontal, as well as vertical, influence processes (Young, 1987; Tushman, 1977; Farrell & Petersen, 1982; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980). Kennedy (1980) points to dissimilar values and work styles as contributing to increased involvement in office politics. The use of politics is perceived as a "fact of organized life" (Mondy & Premeaux, 1986, p. 39). More importantly, political skills and awareness are touted as essential tools for the person intending to advance up the organizational ladder (Mondy & Premeaux, 1986; Payne & Pettingill, 1986; Young, 1987).

The focus of organizational structure in the contemporary work world has moved from an individualistic to a collective orientation. The one-room schoolhouse has been replaced by school systems. The

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The citations used in this study follow the style of the NASPA Journal.



role of the college's dean of men has expanded to the division of student affairs. Organization members access input channels through committees, task forces, and quality circles. The old style individualism, described by Dewey (1962) depicting the self reliant, self-made pioneer has been replaced with groups of individuals working within a corporate structure. Modern organizations have experienced a shift in emphasis from individualism to collectivism as a result of expanding functions and staff increases (Whyte, 1956).

Accompanying the new collective work environment is the need for skills different from those considered effective in the unitary organization. As early as 1956, Whyte characterized the future organizational member as, "not the individualist but the [man] who works through others for others" (p. 18). Universities and colleges have experienced a similar organizational transformation. In earlier years, "the college administration was the president alone, . . . To meet the multifarious demands of running today's institution of higher learning, the president has been joined by an administrative team, each member specializing, with delegated responsibility, in a particular aspect of administrative operation" (Fisher, 1973, p. 2).

Another significant alteration in organizational structure and function was the move from a centralized administration to a decentralized system, which included the "distribution of authority from top management to lower level managers, supervisors and knowledgeable workers" ("Teamwork," 1988, p. 8). Disseminated authority has led to decisions being made at the mid-level of the organizational hierarchy.

Persons making decisions at the mid-level positions are usually afforded less opportunity to see the "big picture", a situation enhancing the organization's susceptibility to "confusion and disruption" ("Teamwork," 1988, p. 8). Therefore, more persons are participating in the influence process, but with fewer resources and less information than were available to the previous set of decision-makers. This situation often leads to the use of non-sanctioned or illegitimate behaviors or "politicking."

Although teamwork and cooperation are essential to a properly functioning decentralized organization ("Teamwork," 1988), people do not always agree on issues concerning work ethics. How often has the person who subscribes to the belief "talent, hard work, and a share of good breaks" (DuBrin, 1978, p. 3) been overlooked for a promotion in favor of the person who concentrated on "building an empire, attaining high visibility, and utilizing a mentor?" (Sanzotta, 1979, p. 23). Basic values underlying most management theory assume that people "share similar norms, attitudes, values, and views of the world, feelings about situations; and that people in the same situation will share a common experience and viewpoint" (Kakabadse, 1983, p. 10). In short, people's values have a "shared meaning." Kakabadse (1983) argues that unshared meaning exists in organizations along with shared meaning. People disagree and pursue different objectives based on differing norms and values. "Understanding politics in organizations involves analyzing how people manage both shared and unshared meaning" (Kakabadse, 1983, p. 11).

Insufficient investigation into organizational politics has been attributed, in part, to a lack of agreement concerning an operational definition. For purposes of this study, the following definition of organizational politics was developed based on related literature. Organizational politics occurs when an incongruence exists over interests, goals, or methods between at least two individuals within the same or competing organization(s). It entails the resolution of choices through individual or group behavior which is not required by one's job responsibilities nor officially sanctioned by the organization (Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick, & Bronston, 1980; Farrell & Petersen, 1982). Most often the intent of organizational politics is to directly or indirectly influence neutral or opposing parties towards the political actor's interests or goals (Madison et al., 1980).

Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwick, and Mayes (1979) assert that the limited amount of research concerning organizational politics is not due to an absence of political activity occurring in organizational life. The fact that politics is inherent in organizational culture and may contribute significantly to the functional or dysfunctional operation of the system increases the need for investigation. Nothing is to be gained from denying the presence and use of political channels (Sanzotta, 1979).

More importantly, Mondy and Premeaux (1986) suggested that political activity is required of any employee in doing a good job "regardless of the caliber of persons involved or the degree of

formalization of the organization's rules and regulations" (p. 39). Young (1987) encouraged top management to take an active role in confronting the political nature of organizations by determining acceptable political behavior, thus leading to the establishment of political guidelines. Politics is an intrinsic feature of organizational life. "[S]ome people sincerely believe that if they change positions, companies and careers, the politics will go away. . . ." (RoAne, 1986, p. 32). Given this situation, the needs of both individuals and organizations are best served by facilitating practical political awareness and developing positive political skills. To meet these needs, a basic knowledge of the types of political behavior and the accompanying personal characteristics must be developed.

#### Statement of the Problem

Literature in organizational theory suggests that there is "no organization of human beings working together free of political push and shove" (Kennedy, 1980, p. 92). Research on organizational politics has been limited in general and no studies were discovered which focused specifically on the politics of student affairs organizations. There existed a need to explore the dynamics of organizational politics and effects on student affairs organizations and professionals.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze organizational politics in student affairs organizations. In particular, this study identified perceptions of political tactics used in student affairs organizations, and identified personal characteristics associated with individuals perceived as politically active. The initial focus of the study centered upon the careful, systematic development of a survey instrument which was eventually used to collect exploratory data on the indicated research questions. The specific objectives of the study were to answer the following research questions.

1. What tactics are perceived as used most often by political actors working in student affairs organizations?
2. What personal characteristics are associated with individuals perceived as politically effective?

### Definition of Terms

The following terms had special meaning in specific regard to this study.

1. Personal characteristic is the character or particular quality of a person perceived as being conducive to effective organizational politics.
2. Tactic is any action or behavior perceived as being political in promoting a desired end or expected result.

3. Effective political actor is an organizational member who utilizes organizational politics to achieve an intended or expected result (i.e., to enhance or protect the self-interests of individuals or groups).

4. Effective is a term describing the subjective judgement or perception of the degree to which a process accomplishes desired objectives or intended results.

5. Student affairs organization is the administrative unit within a post-secondary institution specifically charged with the responsibility of fostering the personal development of students as individuals and as members of society through extracurricular programming. These units may be identified by different terms such as Student Services, Student Development, Student Personnel, University Relations, and so forth.

6. Student affairs administrator is a full-time professional employee of a student affairs organization whose broad responsibilities include one or more of the following: educational leadership, policy, staff development, and management.

#### Significance of the Study

Given the fact that very little research has been done to describe the political nature of student affairs organizations, this study contributed in filling the gap through development of an instrument for systematic data collection. The study identified and defined both characteristics and behaviors attributed to political

actors perceived as effective in organizational politics. Knowledge of these key attributes should be useful in guiding individual administrators in developing the essential skills for effective politicking. Further, the study should provide information to leaders and supervisors to assist in openly confronting the political nature of their organization and formulating appropriate guidelines for management.

#### Organization of the Dissertation

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the problem and objectives of the study. A review of related literature is presented in Chapter II. The methodology and procedures used in this study are described in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents the results of the information collected from the data analysis. Finally, Chapter V presents the conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study that evolved from this study.

## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"In an ideal world, everybody would get promoted, receive salary increases, be assigned his or her share of desirable and understandable assignments, and, in general, receive other goodies strictly on the basis of merit" (DuBrin, 1978, p. 3). The myth of the American work environment is based on the concept that hard work is the way to succeed. However, there exist numerous examples of people who worked hard, performed well, got along with others, but failed to be promoted (DuBrin, 1978; Kennedy, 1980).

Successful ascension of today's organizational ladder requires the manager/administrator to be able to engage in sensible office politics (DuBrin, 1978; Kennedy, 1980; Sanzotta, 1979; Kakabadse, 1983). Avoidance of managerial obsolescence entails new skills to carry out the traditional organizational functions. The skills considered essential to state-of-the-art leadership are political (Barnard, 1986). Unfortunately, "most high school and college graduates are totally unprepared to deal successfully with the political and informal organization structure. . ." (Sanzotta, 1979, p. 7).

In this review, literature regarding the definition of organizational politics and describing the nature of same is summarized. In the following section, examples of political strategies and tactics commonly used in the organizational context are identified and



discussed. Next, the concepts related to organizational politics and of particular salience to this study are briefly discussed. And finally, the literature concerning the political culture in colleges and universities is examined.

### Limitations of Organizational Politics Literature

Discussing organizational politics was described as analogous to the discussion of sex in the 1950s--"we knew it was going on, but nobody would really tell us about it" (Zehring, 1985, p. 10). Furthermore, even when people agreed that politics occurred in their organization, few individuals viewed themselves as engaging in political activities, a quality referred to as "self-blindness" (Block, 1987, p. 5). People were reluctant to admit that they behaved politically, unless they could demonstrate that their actions/expressions were in the interests of the community or organization (Block, 1987; Burns, 1961; Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981).

As previously mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study, the research on organizational politics has been extremely limited. Vredenburg and Maurer (1984) explained that the "accepted rational, functional model of organizational inquiry has discouraged examining unit and group politicking" (p. 63). Farrell and Petersen (1982) cited three reasons for the scarcity of literature regarding individual political behavior: "(1) failure to distinguish required job behavior from discretionary political behavior, (2) failure to distinguish

calculated from accidental political behavior, and (3) failure to distinguish clearly between macro and micro levels of analysis" (p. 404).

Although gaps in the present state of knowledge concerning organizational politics are being increasingly realized (Porter et al., 1981; Cheng, 1983), the most prevalent obstacle in filling these gaps has been the utilization of an appropriate and effective methodology. Field studies have proven difficult due to the negative connotations associated with office politics and the resulting sensitivity demonstrated by organizational members toward this particular topic. Consequently, individuals in organizations tended to deny that politics exist at the organizational or individual level. In the past, "direct attempts to study the politics of upward influence in a field setting [were] virtually doomed from the start" (Porter et al., 1981, p. 134).

Organizational politics is both objective and subject in nature. As a result, investigations into political processes should concentrate on both the actors engaging in political behavior and observers perceiving the political activities (Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984). Studies which focused on individuals' observations about other individuals' behavior appear to have the least obstacles to date. Perhaps the most noted study of this type was by Allen et al. (1979). The researchers interviewed 87 managers from the electronic industry in Southern California measuring their perceptions of political tactics and personal characteristics regarded as conducive to successful

organizational politics. Cheng (1983) extended the Allen et al. perceptual research by examining the use of power tactics in upward influence in the work environment. The results of his study showed that certain political activities were organizational induced. He concluded that individuals in organizations became involved in politics when supervisors were politically active.

Vredenburg and Maurer (1984) recommended two types of research methodology as particularly appropriate for the study of organizational politics. Case studies were suggested because they provide "an institutional perspective that is likely to generate knowledge of organizational politics" (p. 62) and survey studies because they "solicit manager's perceptions about organizational politics" (p. 63). A systems approach toward political conceptualization was also described as conducive to studying the dynamic nature of organizational politics, giving specific attention to individual and situational variables (Mayes & Allen, 1977; Tushman, 1977).

#### Defining Organizational Politics

Writers, researchers, and managers have demonstrated a reluctance to acknowledge that in a real organization, differences among people are as important as the similarities (Kakabadse, 1983). "The meaning of organizational politics remains largely unknown, in spite of the importance of political behavior to organizational functioning" (Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984, p. 47).

Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (1971) defines politics as "competition between competing interest groups or individuals for power and leadership in a government or other group" (p. 657). Specific to business organizations, politics was described as "a phenomenon that clearly includes the tangibles (hard work, intelligence, and logic) and the intangibles and the sometimes totally irrational" (Cornwall, 1985, p. 38). Pettigrew (1975) provided a slightly different focus, defining political behavior as an action(s) "which makes a claim against the resource sharing system of the organization" (p. 192).

One thread of continuity found in the literature was the notion of influence (Mayes & Allen, 1977; Allen et al., 1979; Montefiore, 1975). In one aspect, influence was described as "acts. . .to enhance or protect the self-interests of individuals or groups" (Allen et al., 1979, p. 77). Other researchers described influence as a manageable process "to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organization or to obtain sanctioned ends through non-sanctioned influence means" (Mayes & Allen, 1977, p. 675). Expounding on the notion of influence, Porter et al. (1981) defined organizational politics as "social influence attempts that are discretionary, intended (designed) to promote or protect the self-interests of individuals and groups (units), and threaten the self-interests of others (individuals, units)" (p. 112).

Kakabadse's (1983) definition of organizational politics involved reconciliation of the following factors: "the individual and [his]

motivation (the needs of the person), the group [he] deals with and its norms and behavior (the shared attitudes of people), the general situation in which the individual finds himself and the acceptable and unacceptable ways people interact with each other" (p. 11).

A somewhat better description for purposes of this study referenced the strategies and tactics used by [political] actors to acquire the desired outcome. In organizational politics, these strategies require the actor "to confront others so as to gain compliance with his or her intentions and objectives, . . . to avoid resistance and challenge to those intentions and objectives, and. . .to resist influence attempts to others" (Frost, 1987, p. 522).

Perhaps the most peculiar aspect regarding political strategies is the potential involvement by individuals with each of the directional relationships within the organization (i.e., downward, lateral, and upward). Unlike leadership and management strategies, political tactics are not exclusive to a particular level of management within the organization. The overshadowing by topics focusing on downward influence and lateral influence was stated as contributing to the limited research on political behavior. Porter et al. (1981) cited the interests of those in charge to improve the performance of those being led as a primary reason for an overfocus on downward (management and leadership) and lateral (group dynamics and socialization) processes. The implications for conducting more studies of upward influence and political behavior included broadening the current views of organizational behavior.

Factors and/or situations contributing to the exiguous research into organizational politics include, but are not limited to, the denial of the existence of politics, self-blindness (the inability or refusal to perceive one's own political actions), the negative connotations associated with political behavior, and the resulting sensitivity of individuals to openly or candidly discuss the topic. Due to these delimiting factors, it has been suggested that a focus on individuals' perceptions of political behavior is a viable method for studying the dynamics of organizational politics. Furthermore, case studies and surveys were identified as an appropriate methodology, with surveys being particularly conducive for studying perceptions. In order to investigate the dynamics of any phenomenon, it is useful to discover an existing definition of the concept or to formulate a working definition. The literature review revealed with a variety of definitions describing organization politics exist; however, these definitions are not necessarily congruent. Commonalities revealed in most of these definitions include: competing interests for a desired outcome; the use of non-sanctioned activities; and the notion of influence as a process. Understanding the prior obstacles to the research in organizational politics and identifying the common threads among the few and varied definitions present in the available literature lead to an apprehension of the nature of organizational politics.

### The Nature of Organizational Politics

Frost (1987) called for a clearer examination and understanding of the nature of organizational politics. "Neither the individual attributes and organizational conditions that lead individuals and groups to behave politically nor the nature and outcomes of political behavior are well understood" (Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984, p. 47). Comprehending the tactics a person uses to generate support for his/her activities is critical to understanding organizational politics (Block, 1987).

Contrary to the belief that politics occurs primarily at the top level of organizations (Gandy & Murray, 1980), political awareness is essential to members at every level within the organization. Most individuals in the work environment fail to realize "how many [of their] actions will [be met] with opposition from someone else. . . [and]. . .how political their actions and justifications appear to others with different motives" (Culbert & McDonough, 1985, p. 18). Specifically, a better conception is needed for understanding the process "in which potential power is transformed into power in action" (p. 539). Similarly, "the characteristics of the players who are involved in the transformation" (p. 539) need to be identified and examined.

In this section, the organizational perspective will be examined first, followed by an inspection of the individual perspective. Individuals participate in an organizational culture when large numbers of subgroups share elements of belief systems and constructions

about the world they inhabit" (Lincoln, 1986, p. 4). The organizational culture is characterized as having both a formal and informal structure. An organizational chart is typically used to depict the formal structure of an organization. The primary purpose of this chart has been to note job descriptions and the direct relationships between positions. Activities and relationships that failed to be recognized on the chart, illustrating the formal structure, were rationalized as composing the informal structure of the organization. "No matter how neat the organization chart, no matter how expertly designed the job descriptions, and no matter how optimized the reporting network, there can be a lot of space between what the people in the organization on paper are supposed to do, and what they actually do. . ." (Funkhouser, 1986, p. 170).

The nature of the political environment differs from one organization to other. Two key factors in determining specific characteristics of the political environment include individual political behavior and organizational norms. Block (1987) compared political actions to walking a tightrope. The objective was to advocate one's own interests and/or position while not creating resistance against those actions. He further described the path a person chooses as a mixture of two forces: the individual choices made in adapting to the environment and the nature of the norms and values of the organization in which the individual is a member. Norms were defined as expected behavior that is officially or unofficially sanctioned by the organization.



### Organizational Norms

Organizational norms were considered particularly salient to the understanding of office politics (Madison et al., 1980; Macher, 1986; Porter et al., 1981). Most individual behavior is in response to organizational norms. People "sense the norms of the organization, and play the game according to the rules that they see others using" (Macher, 1986, p. 83). People survive the organization by learning what is expected and what is rewarded; rewards have the greatest influence in shaping individual behaviors (Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984; Macher, 1986). Organizations send messages to their members through norms and rewards. Rewards provide one of the clearest examples of how individuals learn about the norms specific to their environment.

Political norms are usually established within the informal structure. Formal politics regarding political behavior are rarely developed and/or articulated by an organization. As stated by Porter et al. (1981),

Messages regarding the informal norms that condone political acts may be even more vague than norm messages that condemn such behavior. Thus, while a norm that condemns certain political acts. . . might be explicitly communicated in the informal organization, norms that actually condone other self-serving actions might never be openly discussed, even via informal communication channels. Thus, many political norms must be learned through inference, by watching the political activities of others and noting the positive or negative reactions of persons in the observed actor's norms set (p. 113).

Vredenburg and Maurer (1984) described "normative sanctioning mechanisms, [which] specify the kind and degree of political behavior that will be informally positively sanctioned by the organization, and . . . account for the fact that an organization may quietly tolerate, or expect, or even encourage political behavior by both units and individuals" (p. 50). In addition to the effect of norms on the political climate, Madison et al. (1980) described certain situational factors that serve as significant influences on the political climate. They reported situations such as reorganization changes, personnel changes, and budget allocations as organizational phenomena associated with high levels of political activity. Situations such as rule and procedure changes and establishment of individual performance standards were indicated as producing low levels of political activity.

#### Individual Political Behavior

What is individual political behavior? Several authors defined political behavior as an individual's activities outside the normal and expected performance of the job (Farrell & Petersen, 1982; Madison et al., 1980; Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984; Mayes & Allen, 1977). Political activities involved influence attempts outside the formal or legitimate lines of authority, but within the organization. According to Pettigrew (1973), political behaviors may be enacted individually or collectively. Examination of individual political behaviors should focus on "intended or overt actions by members while recognizing that

unintended or even personal idiosyncracies may have political consequences" (Farrell & Petersen, 1982, p. 404).

Just as the common thread of "influence" was identified in the definition of organizational politics, a common thread was also noted in the literature defining political behavior. Individuals seemed especially inclined to behave politically when a degree of uncertainty was evident in the task or situation (Pettigrew, 1973; Frost, 1987).

Ferris, Russ, and Fandt (1990) reported that the propensity for political behavior is most likely when

- (1) emotionality or task involvement are moderate or low enough, or other conditions exist, to stimulate self-consciousness;
- (2) the social interaction and work context are not rigidly ritualized, scripted, or otherwise constrained (i.e., a reasonably high degree of uncertainty or ambiguity exists);
- (3) opportunities or threats create perceptions of instrumentality of political behavior;
- (4) the employee believes that he/she will be successful;
- (5) when the situation and the potential outcomes are important to the individual; and
- (6) when the employee observes relevant others (e.g., supervisors, coworkers, and so forth) engaging in political behaviors, particularly when they do so successfully (p. 5).

Farrell and Petersen (1982) developed a typology of political behavior in organizations. The typology included three key dimensions of political behavior used to classify an organization's political activities: (a) the internal-external dimension, (b) the vertical-lateral dimension, and (c) the legitimate-illegitimate dimension. The internal-external dimension was concerned with the origin of resources tapped by the individual engaging in political behavior. In particular, the study found that members placed in the lower levels of the organization tended to depend on outside resources when

behaving politically. The vertical-lateral dimension characterized the hierarchial relationships as the dominant feature of the organization. This particular dimension illustrated methods with which individuals chose to increase their power by building relationships and tapping resources of peers or subordinates. The third and final dimension, legitimate-illegitimate, examined the distinction between acceptable politics and extreme politics that violate the rules of the game established by the organization.

Ferris et al. (1990) developed a theoretical model exploring variables which effect people's perceptions concerning organizational politics. The variables were disseminated into three separate categories. The first category, organizational influences, included factors such as degree of centralization, degree of formalization, span of control, and hierarchial level in organization. The second category, job/work environment, encompassed variables such as job autonomy, job variety, feedback, and opportunity for advancement. The third category, personal influences, subsumed the variables gender, age, personality characteristics, and self-monitoring. The authors believed that when these variables were implemented or presented in ways increasing ambiguity and uncertainty within the organization, political perceptions will be high. Conversely, when these variables effect the organization in a manner reducing ambiguity and uncertainty, political perceptions will be low.

Kakabadse (1983) suggested that individuals create "mental maps" (p. 19) ascertained by individual perceptions (beliefs and values) and

the styles utilized to put these perceptions or attitudes into action. Based on this perception/action model, Kakabadse developed stereotypes of four politicians most often found in organizations. The "traditionalists" (p. 21) were primarily concerned with status and role in the group. They enjoyed tasks requiring detail and preferred close supervision. Change, new members, and new methods were viewed by traditionalists as threatening. They provided stability and loyalty to the organization. Persons described as the "team coach" (p. 23) were primarily concerned with maintaining good interpersonal relations among the group. Unlike the traditionalists, they welcomed new members and new ideas or changes in work status, tasks, or content. However, they disliked changes which directly affected the work group. Loyalty to the group overrode their loyalty to the organization. The "company barons" (p. 26) possessed two dominant characteristics: a bird's eye view of the organization and the drive to improve their status/position. Although the barons were successful at pulling people together for a common objective, they usually accomplished this task by testing the waters prior to taking any definitive action. The "visionary" (p. 30), like the baron, had a bird's eye view of the organization; however, the visionary was not confined by organizational loyalty. The visionary's independence combined with a holistic viewpoint produced an individual adept in developing long-range strategies. Whereas, the baron brought about change by initially testing the waters, the visionary was more apt to take risks in implementing changes that require new norms, new values, and new attitudes.

Payne and Pettingill (1986) outlined four strategies commonly used by managers in their response to an organization's political climate:

(1) If the values supported by the firm's political process are objectionable to the supervisor, he or she may want to avoid political involvement, even leave the firm to find employment in a more supportive atmosphere. (2) If the supervisor has strong reasons for remaining with the firm, he or she may wish to confront the political machine. (3) Some supervisors may choose to take a less risky, more reactive strategy, they may try to understand the firm's political tendencies in order to protect themselves or others from its potential abuses. (4) Supervisors . . . also have the option of enhancing their careers by actively, but carefully, becoming personally involved in office politics. An understanding of organizational politics and a reasonable active political posture can enable a supervisor to positively influence organizational directions and combat negative or unethical values (p. 30).

While all four strategies are viable options, Payne and Pettingill pointed to the fourth strategy as a proactive approach and the most desirable method for the successful supervisor. Implementation of this particular strategy must begin with a basic understanding and awareness of organizational politics.

Both organizational conditions and individual behavior contribute to the creation of the political climate in an organization. From an organizational perspective, the norms established within the informal structure have the greatest potential for effecting the political climate. Organizational norms convey the message of what is expected behavior and whether this behavior is sanctioned or unsanctioned by the organization. Similarly, political behavior is characterized as individual or collective actions outside the formal structure of the

organization and/or outside the normal and expected job function. Increased insight into the nature of an organization's political climate leads to a discussion of the strategies and tactics used to influence others and attain desired outcomes.

### Political Strategies and Tactics in Organizational Context

There exist organizational contexts or situations in which political behavior perceptions are increased. As stated previously, this is especially true in situations where ambiguity and uncertainty are present. People typically engage in political behavior because of a desired response, outcome, or reward from another person (Ferris et al., 1990). Moreover, "[m]aximizing one's reward/cost ratio in social life involves. . .control of the self-images that are projected to others. . .and thereby influence how audiences perceive and treat the actor" (Schlenker & Leary, 1982, p. 643). In the following sections, examples of political tactics and strategies are described in relation to specific organizational situations or contexts.

#### Personnel Selection

The ambiguous and uncertain nature of the employment interview increases opportunity for its use as tactical political behavior. Typically, interviewees are attempting to present themselves in the best possible light. During the selection process, the candidate may engage in the political tactic of impression management to conceal

deficiencies in job-related skills or a lack of competence. Impression management and ingratiation exemplify methods of self-presentation intended to please a specific audience for purposes of raising self-esteem or attaining desired rewards. "The importance of self-presentational concerns may well be culturally relative. . . a distinguishing feature of our society is that individuals look outside of themselves rather than looking inward, to find the criteria of worth" (Baumeister, 1982, p. 22).

Types of tactical impression management behaviors commonly employed during interviews include: using self-enhancing statements to create a good impression, using other-enhancing statements to flatter the interviewer or decision maker, expressing attitudes and beliefs similar to that of the interviewer or decision maker, and using supplication to coax the interviewer or decision maker to feel pity for the applicant and thereby leading to an actual offer (Gilmore & Ferris, 1989).

In a situational analysis of sex differences in behavior, Zanna and Pack (1975) confirmed the notion that individuals shape their behavior based on expectations that attractive others hold for them. Although only female subjects were used in this particular study, the researchers stated this notion to hold true for both men and women in situations where the individual is highly motivated to impress another.

Later, von Baeyer, Sherk, and Zanna (1981) demonstrated that individuals attempted to present an image of conformity with inter-



viewers when given information about the interviewer prior to the actual meeting. Subjects were given packets of information, in advance, characterizing their future interviewer as either a person holding traditional attitudes about the ideal female employee (e.g., nonassertive, dependent, easy job assignments) or nontraditional attitudes (assertive, independent, equal work responsibilities). Results showed subjects in the traditional group presented themselves as more feminine than the nontraditional group.

Young (1984) studied factors affecting interviewers' evaluations of teacher candidates. He found persons having an interpersonal style enabling them to assess the impressions of others and to respond accordingly were perceived as being more employable than candidates lacking this ability. Further, he warned that interviewers may be demonstrating the halo effect when they fail to heed to the influences of interpersonal style on the decision making process. He expressed concern for the apparent favoritism towards teacher candidates adept at impression management over candidates who are exceedingly competent in terms of job-related skills and content knowledge.

#### Performance Evaluation and Goal Setting

Performance evaluations and goal setting situations provided additional opportunities for persons to engage in political behavior, specifically self-presentation. Wood and Mitchell (1981) argued that supervisors are informationally dependent upon subordinates when confronted with the diagnostic task of performance evaluations

(attempting to discover causes for failure). Subordinates were shown to consistently use two tactical methods of impression management, accounts and apologies. "In attributional terms, accounts can be described as statements which emphasize the role of certain personal or situational forces in an attempt to influence the amount of choice an observer attributes to an actor for a given performance" (Wood & Mitchell, 1981, p. 358). Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (1971) defined apologies as "an admission of error or discourtesy accompanied by an expression of regret" (p. 41). The authors further emphasized that impression management tactics utilized by subordinates have a greater impact on managers' decisions regarding attributions and disciplinary action than did actual performance failure.

Dossett and Greenberg (1981) studied the effect of goal setting on performance evaluations. They considered the effect of the three variables: (a) person responsible for goal setting, (b) perceived difficulty in achieving established goals, and (c) employee failure/success in achieving goals. They concluded that suggestions for high level goals by the subordinates provided a positive halo effect for the supervisor. The determinant of workers' overall performance effectiveness was the degree of success in meeting the goals. However, those employees setting difficult goals were rated higher than subjects with low goal objectives, regardless of success/failure experienced in meeting the goals initially determined.

Ferris and Porac (1984) also stressed the strategic value of goal setting when subordinates set high goals to create a positive

impression with supervisors or to increase the probability for a favorable evaluation. They studied the differences in goal setting situations when a person was alone versus being observed by others. Results of their study indicated that goal setting was inflated when conducted in the presence of an observer. The subjects in the observed group set significantly higher goals compared to the group working alone; however, average actual performance did not differ between the two groups.

Schneider (1969) explained that self-presentation tactics are used following performance feedback when the feedback is both positive and negative. Persons experiencing failure resulting from a negative evaluation were described as motivated to seek approval. They demonstrated a need to reestablish a positive self-evaluation. In contrast, persons experiencing recent success were motivated to avoid disapproval when receiving the positive feedback. They were interested in maintaining and further strengthening a positive self-evaluation which criticism from others may damage.

### Managerial Decision Making

Political processes arise not because of individual perversity, but because of the nature of organizational processes and decision making under uncertainty. If decisions must be made without enough information or in the face of diverse goals, then non-bureaucratic methods must evolve to attend to the differences in preferences, values, and beliefs about cause and effect relations. If even the most objective issues are open to multiple interpretations, and if organizational participants often derive different meanings from the information base, then bureaucratic decision making procedures will unambiguously decide only a limited set of

organizational decisions. A political perspective is needed to better understand both internal and external organizational activities (Tushman, 1977, p. 212).

Accordingly, Tetlock (1985) suggested that decision making processes which have traditionally been studied as cognitive and information processes need also to be investigated with a focus on the individual as a politician. Individuals are accountable to certain people (constituencies) and are motivated to acquire and maintain a positive image with those to whom they are accountable. Strategies used to justify their judgements and decisions to others include acceptability and ingratiation (tailoring one's opinions/decisions to others, especially high status others). Tetlock further recommends that cognitive research on judgement and decision making be expanded to consider the impact of the social and organizational contexts.

In 1982, Caldwell and O'Reilly conducted a study demonstrating impressions management tactics employed by managers when experiencing failure as decision makers. The managers were depicted as highlighting the favorable information and downplaying the negative information to mask the failure. In effect, the decision makers manipulated the presentation of information to justify their actions and/or positions.

#### Advancement and Reward Allocation

Gould and Penley (1984) identified the following career strategies or methods used by individuals to advance up the organizational ladder with expediency: (a) creating opportunities by learning information of critical use to others, becoming an expert in a specific area, and

identifying areas lacking leadership and assuming the leadership role; (b) nominating oneself (self-presentation) by informing supervisors of one's desires, goals, and accomplishments and presenting a positive image of oneself; (c) seeking career guidance by identifying and developing a relationship with a mentor or sponsor within the organization; (d) building a network and acquiring career leads by developing contacts/friendships both within and outside the organization; (e) agreeing with significant others in an attempt to demonstrate similar opinions and attitudes (opinion conformity); (f) demonstrating similar interests to significant others or expressing an interest in their interests (other enhancement flattering); and (g) working in excess of 40 hours per week and taking work home. Additionally, the authors reported the specific strategies of creating opportunities, opinion conformity, other enhancement flattering, and extended work involvement as positively associated with salary progression.

Freedman and Montanari (1980) reported attitude similarity and pay secrecy as variables affecting reward allocation. They found that managers allocated rewards more equitably when the decision was believed to be public information than when it was assumed to be anonymous.

#### Concepts Related to Organizational Politics

There are several key concepts that, while not synonymous with political behavior, are viewed as closely related (Madison et al., 1980). The areas of power, influence, information usage, and image-

building were considered particularly salient to this study of organizational politics.

### Power

Politics can be construed as an "expression of power and influence" (Lincoln, 1986, p. 10). Mondy and Premeaux (1986) warned that a manager's failure to understand the concepts of power and politics and their interrelationship "often separates the successful from the less successful supervisor" (p. 37). They further argued that "politics is the network of interactions by which power is acquired, transferred, and exercised upon others" (p. 38). Political knowledge was described as essential because it furnished the supervisor with a means of achieving desired results.

Block (1987) described politics as the pursuit of power. Power is both a function of a person's position in the hierarchy and a state of mind. Sources of power stem from the structure and policies of the organization and the personal choices made to demonstrate actions. Kennedy (1984) identified research, relationships, and resources as the three sources of power. She further reported research and relationships as the two most effective avenues for gaining power. Research was described as knowledge of who the powerful people are and the sources of their power. The key aspect of relationships as a source of power included the relationship being mutually beneficial to the parties involved.

In a description of organizational games as a function of politics, power, and communication, Frost (1987) put forward four assumptions:

- (1) Organizational life is significantly influenced by the quest for and exercise of power by organizational actors, which constitute the political activity of organizations.
- (2) Power exists both on the surface level of organizational activity and deep within the very structure of organizations.
- (3) Communication plays a vital role in the development of power relations and the exercise of power.
- (4) The manipulation and exercise of power is expressed, in the sense both of actions and relations, as organizational games (p. 504).

Madison et al. (1980) used the cliché, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, to describe the relationship between politics and power. They argued that individuals placed in high level positions of the organizational hierarchy have a greater opportunity to successfully engage in political behavior because they are in a better position to determine areas of uncertainty. Moreover, they enjoy accessibility to resources to assist in coping with these uncertainties. In contrast, individuals at the lower spectrum of the hierarchy have less of a vantage point in discerning areas of uncertainty and utilizing resources. Therefore, their misdirected attempts to engage in political activities may actually lead to a reduction in power and fewer opportunities for future applications of political behavior (Madison et al., 1980).

Schein (1977) developed a conceptual framework of power related behaviors which linked power bases or resources with the individual's intent and the means used to achieved the desired outcome. He suggested that the intent of the individual to bring about personal

goals could be categorized as either congruent or incongruent with organizational goals. And, the category of intent would determine the nature of the means utilizing as being overt or covert behavior.

Margulies and Raia (1984) emphasized the importance of maintaining a political perspective enabling the individual to function effectively within an organization. They defined power as the "potential to influence organizational activities and outcomes" and politics as the "use of power to modify or protect an organization's system for distributing resources" (p. 20). Political behavior was described as the subsystem through which the flow of power is distributed.

Techniques for building an individual powerbase are unique to organizational norms and values. Political tactics used to acquire power are usually focused on competent performance, coalition building, responsibility for key programs (or those with high visibility), and access to limited resources and valuable information. Additional techniques included denigrating persons with opposing ideas and objectives, undercutting cooperative efforts by putting one person against another, using both persuasion and manipulation to win support, and hoarding responsibility for decision-making. Both the formal and informal organizational structures provided opportunities for persons to accumulate power.



## Influence

The potential for influencing other people was delineated as a key factor associated with social power and political behavior. Influence was described by Kennedy (1984) as the "hallmark of personal power" (p. 34). As early as 1959, Levinger described social power as the "ability to exert interpersonal influence" (p. 83). More recently, Kravetz (1985) described the key to playing politics as the ability to gain the favor of those in power. Kipnis et al. (1980) differentiated between studying organizational politics and leadership based on the focus of individuals' attempts to influence others. Political studies investigated how individuals influence colleagues, subordinates and superiors. In contrast, leadership studies traditionally focused on the influence methods used to improve subordinate productivity and morale. While acknowledging the relationship between organizational politics and power and leadership, Kipnis et al. stressed the need for empirical studies regarding the use of influence in organizations.

Quick (1987) presented a character model of successful managers who are skilled influencers.

Influential people know what they want. They have goals and are careful not to lose sight of them. They want to win, although. . .they can't consistently win at the expense of others. [They] know how to express their needs and wants in terms that others can accept. . . . They are sensitive to time and place, knowing how, when, and where to go after certain kinds of actions and decisions. [They] have credibility. . . . To influence others you don't have to be loved, but you must be trusted and respected. . . . [They] know what motivates others (p. 55).

Associating with influential persons is a political tool used to gain access to the decision makers within the organization and social activities often serve as the primary means of interacting with organization members perceived as influential. Informal interactions were viewed as necessary since traditional bureaucratic hierarchies fail to accommodate regular meetings between the lower and upper echelons of the organization. In addition, persons may seize opportunities to be involved in activities with influential persons outside their organization/unit (Kravetz, 1985; Schein, 1985; Farrell & Petersen, 1982).

#### Information Usage

Information also may be used as a political tool. Several methods exist by which information can be translated into political tactics to gain or increase power. Techniques such as withholding, distorting, and blocking are used to manipulate information. Additional tactics of information usage include screening data before they are distributed and overwhelming a person with data to hide or shadow pertinent details (Schein, 1985).

Information gathering can be used as a tool for developing new ideas or programs. Acquiring information about other programs allows colleagues to assist each other in achieving organizational goals. Establishing personal relationships and networking for the purpose of gaining access to valuable information, both inside and outside the organization, are viewed as political tactics. RoAne (1986) cautioned

organizational members against overlooking the utility of the office network (grapevine), further explaining that 80% of the information in the network is "business-related politics" (p. 33).

Collecting information regarding the history, social norms, and values of the organization can be beneficial, especially to a new member joining the organization. This information may prove useful in identifying where and with whom the real power rests, and how the informal communication system operates. Furthermore, it is helpful to gather information about the historical basis of an important issue. The historical search could uncover significantly linked coalitions and strategies that have proven both useful and useless in previous attempts (Kennedy 1984; Quick, 1987; Barnard, 1986; Schein, 1985).

### Image Building

Image building is a political tool used to promote self-interest. The goal of image building is to present oneself or one's organizational unit in the most favorable light. Tactics associated with image building include general appearance, personal style, and sensitivity to organizational norms. Additional tactics for self-promotion included drawing attention to individual successes and accomplishments, accepting undeserved credit or ownership for ideas and contributions, building a reputation for being liked, and creating a unique, but suitable, identity. Persons may attempt to disguise poor performance or undesirable personal traits as another technique

of image building. It is equally important to promote one's image with subordinates, colleagues, and supervisors.

#### Political Behavior--Negative or Positive?

So, is political behavior good or bad? Perhaps neither. Negative connotations have stemmed from political acts which are primarily self-serving. Perceptions about political behavior are shaped and determined by the degree to which the particular outcome benefits or harms the organization and its members (Bianco, 1985). Young (1987) distinguished between appropriate and inappropriate political behavior for managers. "Unacceptable political activities serve the personal ends of the manager. Responsible political actions, on the other hand, serve corporate [organizational] purposes" (p. 65). Given the fact that political behavior consists of activities that are neither sanctioned nor authorized by the organization, political behavior is "typically divisive and conflictive, often pitting individuals or groups against formal authority, accepted ideology, and/or certified expertise, or else against each other" (Mintzberg, 1985, p. 134).

Politics may be viewed positively as motivation or negatively as manipulation. This distinction is determined by the perceiver. When the receiver feels positive towards a person's attempts to influence, he/she is more likely to feel motivated. However, if a negative response results from such attempts, the receiver will likely feel manipulated (Kakabadse, 1983).

Block (1987) found that people developed political scripts based on their patterned methods for dealing with manipulative tactics and powerful people. He stated:

[N]egative politics is a direct outgrowth of the fact that we give too much power to the people around and above us. Our fear that power will be used against us in a destructive way leads us to be indirect and manipulative. We use indirect strategies as a way of coping with our frustration at not getting our way. We defend manipulation with our claim that it is a jungle out there and authenticity would be suicidal and a choice for unemployment and poverty. The problem arises when we become so accustomed to negative politics that we continue to use it even when the external dangers have disappeared. Each of us has developed over the years a patterned way of dealing with powerful people. This is our political script. Our script is an influence strategy that we bring to the party almost independent of who our boss is or what kind of organizational environment we are working in. It is by understanding these scripts that we eventually are able to choose them instead of being controlled by them (pp. 154-155).

Whereas traditional politics is thought to be the art of manipulation, Block identified tactics that are political and positive. These tactics referred to as authentic, included saying no when we mean no, sharing as much information as possible, using language that describes reality, and avoiding repositioning for the sake of acceptance. Examples of manipulative tactics included managing information and plans carefully to one's own advantage, seeking approval of those above, and being cautious in telling the truth.

### Politics in the University

Just as there is a reluctance to acknowledge the political climate in the business environment, there exists a similar sense of discomfort when viewing the political aspect of a university. Describing

the actual operation of a university as a political process often seems unfitting for an enterprise that has as its primary mission the discovery and transmission of knowledge. However, Walker (1979) asserted that "examining how universities operate as political communities is legitimately separable from considering the purposes of these organizations" (p. 39). Unlike the traditional perspective of politics as a negative phenomenon, Walker argued that politics and political behavior are not necessarily corrupt and that the associated activities within a university setting need to be carefully examined.

Scott (1974) argued that higher education institutions are as political as any other institution and subsequently provided numerous examples of political activities in an institution.

No institution can be free from politics whenever individuals or groups vie for a decision-making power over the allocation of scarce resources. In the world of academe, scarce resources include such things as academic status, control over budget and personnel and students, the attention and time of the powerful. Getting published can be a political process. Getting tenure is a political process. Getting a larger share of line positions for your department, a new program funded, a course accepted as a prerequisite are all political processes. Deciding the ground rules under which decisions will be made is a political process. Politics in academe, as elsewhere, consists in exercising power, consolidating power, or effecting a change in power relationships--or, more crudely, in working the system to get what you need (p. 38).

Richman and Farmer (1974) implied that academic institutions tend to function under the direction of administrators, rather than managers more commonly found in the business community. Management was described as involving activities such as strategic planning, creating problem-solving and decision making, negotiating, diplomacy, and

taking risks. In contrast, administration involved activities that are more routine and predetermined by existing policies. Implementation of goals, priorities, and strategies were conducted in a safe routine manner in an administrative-type organization. Administration is viewed as synonymous with bureaucracy. Richman and Farmer reported effective and professional management as being more useful than competent administration when coping with the "turbulent environment in which most academic institutions now find themselves" (pp. 14-15).

Although the university has been consistently described as a bureaucratic institution, there are several features which delineate it from the typical bureaucracy. Universities have goals that are vague and ambiguous and are often highly contested. Universities are client serving institutions in which a great deal of influence in the decision making processes originates from client influences. Additionally, the university is vulnerable to influences and pressures outside the organization. This vulnerability makes it increasingly difficult for universities to operate autonomously. Conversely, the staff within universities are highly professional and autonomous. Characteristics typically associated with professional employees such as peer evaluations and professional values contribute to an undercutting of the traditional bureaucracy. Professional staffs tend to reject bureaucratic hierarchy and control, thus creating an environment lacking a single dominant group (Baldrige, 1983a).

Baldrige (1983a) conceded that the bureaucratic model fails to provide an accurate description of policymaking in a university. He

points to four areas of deficiency in using the bureaucratic model:

First, the bureaucratic model tells . . . much about authority--legitimate, formalized power--but not much about power based on non-legitimate threats, mass movements, expertise, and appeals to emotion and sentiment. Second, the bureaucratic paradigm explains much about the formal structure but little about the dynamic processes of the institution in action. Third, the bureaucratic paradigm deals with the formal structure at one particular time, but it does not explain changes over time. Finally, the bureaucratic model does not deal extensively with the crucial task of policy formation. . . . It does not deal with political issues, such as the efforts of groups within the university to force policy decisions favoring their special interests (pp. 47-48).

Universities are professional, people-processing organizations with ambiguous goals, lacking specific objectives and direction. "Ambiguity and contest over goals pave the way for the skillful politician" (Baldrige, 1983b, p. 212). A person with an idea and the energy and adept in political skills can influence the organization to move in his/her direction. Adelman (1984) depicted the politics of the university as "an attempt to convince the other man that he would be better off if he used your spectacles instead of his own. . ." (p. 9).

The increasing political influences within the governing structure of today's colleges and universities require administrators to similarly adapt to these changes. The governance of a contemporary college resembles a cabinet form of administration. The president is supported by a network of key administrators who are actively involved in making critical decisions and competing for scarce resources. The effective president is a political leader adept at gathering information and expertise to formulate policies. The leadership of the



presidency "increasingly amounts to the ability to assemble, persuade, and facilitate the activities of knowledgeable experts" (Baldrige, 1983a, p. 58).

In the past, university administrators relied upon lines of authority and powers of persuasion to exert control and manage the operations of the campus. The role of interest groups, both inside and outside the university, have become a major factor in the construction of policies. In an effort to protect these special interests, persuasion has changed to politics. Administrators not only have to manage the special interests of others, they themselves compose one of the many competing interest groups (Baldrige & Deal, 1983).

Baldrige (1983a) described the leader in a political model of governance as "a mediator, a negotiator, a person who jockeys between power blocs trying to establish viable courses of action for the institution" (p. 58). Tushman (1977) stressed that a political perspective is necessary to understand both the internal and external activities of the organization. The uncertainty associated with the nature of an organization creates the political processes and requires non-bureaucratic methods to resolve the differences in values and beliefs among organizational members.

### Summary

If politics are inherent in all organizations, then effective management requires insight into the nature of organizational politics, including an awareness of specific political strategies and tactics.

Exploration of the behaviors and conditions attributed to the political climate of an organization is needed as a basis for developing specific skills for managing the political component. This study was designed to identify and explore perceptions of student affairs administrators regarding the political strategies and tactics and personal characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals. This review of the literature provides student affairs administrators with a basis for defining and understanding the nature of organizational politics. Furthermore, it describes the political processes and characteristics peculiar to units within an academic setting.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The methods used to attain the objectives of this study involved the creation of a survey instrument to collect exploratory data describing political tactics and personal characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals as perceived by student affairs administrators. The procedures used to create the instrument are outlined in the following sections.

#### Development of the Instrument

At the time this study was conducted, there was no available research instrument which specifically identified perceptions of student affairs administrators regarding political tactics and personal characteristics of politically-effective individuals. Therefore, it was necessary to develop an instrument to measure administrators' perceptions regarding organizational politics. This task was accomplished through a series of steps.

#### Step 1

Constructs were developed for each of the two major foci of the study, tactics and personal characteristics of political actors. A review of the literature was conducted to provide the initial direction for formulating these constructs. Based on related literature, four categories were identified as recurring themes when exploring the

dynamics of organizational politics. The four constructs included Use of Information, Image Building, Building an Individual Powerbase, and Associating with the Influential (further descriptions of each category are presented in Appendix A).

### Step 2

A checklist of 23 adjectives describing personal characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals was created based on the literature review. This checklist was examined by each member of the first group of experts (refer to Step 3) for the appropriateness of each of the characteristics included. Three items were added to the list as a result of the suggestions and comments offered by the first group of experts.

### Step 3

Initial interviews were conducted with student affairs administrators representing varying levels of rank and responsibility. Administrators in the first group of experts were employed by higher education institutions in the state of Texas and represented both public and private universities. The purposes of these interviews were to: (a) examine the constructs, (b) add to and amend the constructs, and (c) obtain input concerning appropriate items for the eventual development of the survey instrument. The tape-recorded interviews were semistructured. The interview process began with specific questions, followed by open-ended queries. The semi-

structured design provided reasonable objectivity while affording the interviewer the opportunity to probe deeper for more complete data (Borg & Gall, 1983). Based on information gathered in the literature review and collected during the interviews, 125 items (Appendix B) were written detailing political tactics/behaviors of politically-effective actors.

#### Step 4

Next, a panel of expert judges was identified and selected to check for validity of the dimensions and items developed for the instrument. Criteria for the selection of the second group included the following: (a) current employment as chief student affairs office (CSAO) in a university or college; (b) evidence of professional association activity (elected or appointed officer, involvement with committees, commissions, task forces, and so forth); (c) evidence of advanced level of professional preparation, including one or more graduate level degrees; and (d) evidence of significant practice experience in the student affairs field (at least 7 years).

The identified group of experts was asked to participate via a telephone conversation. All four of the expert judges initially contacted agreed to participate. The group membership represented both male and female chief student affairs officers. Additionally, three of the experts were employed by public institutions and one expert was employed by a private institution. Two of the experts resided in Texas and two resided outside the state. All but one expert held a doctorate.

Step 5

Each member of the panel of expert judges received a packet of materials including the following: (a) a cover letter; (b) an information sheet briefly describing the purpose of the study, research questions, and an operational definition of organizational politics; (c) an instruction sheet; (d) a description of the four categories of political behavior; (e) five envelopes labeled for sorting; (f) the items randomized and typed on separate strips of paper; (g) additional tactic statements sheet for structuring additional input; and (h) a stamped, return envelope (Appendix C). All four of the experts contacted responded in a timely manner and returned the sorted items.

The experts were asked first to examine each of the items from the pool of 125 items and to decide if the items described a political tactic or behavior used by administrators in student affairs organizations. If the item was judged as failing to describe a political tactic or behavior, it was placed in the envelope labeled "inappropriate items". From the remaining items judged to be appropriate, the experts were asked to place the items in one of the four general categories of political behavior in which the tactic normally would fit in its purest form. Finally, experts were asked to provide additional comments and/or suggestions for additional items under the appropriate category on the sheet specifically provided for this task.

### Step 6

Based upon the results of the experts' survey, 43 items were dropped from the original 125 items (Appendix D). The homogeneity of category sorting in conjunction with the confirmation of appropriateness of items as judged by the expert panel provided convincing evidence of instrument content and construct validity. All but 14 of the remaining 82 items were sorted by a majority decision (3/4 or more) into one of the four categories describing political tactics/behaviors. The panel's decisions regarding these 14 items resulted in one-half of the judges sorting the item in a particular category and the remaining one-half sorting the items into a different category. Two current student affairs practitioners and a doctoral student were asked to make forced decisions regarding the appropriate category for these 14 items based on the information previously submitted by the second panel of experts (Appendix E). This third group received similar instruction packets to the expert panel. Subsequently, one item was dropped during this particular procedure. Furthermore, the author determined three items to be inappropriate to the pool of behavior/tactic items because these specific items described personal characteristics rather than behaviors. The personal characteristics delineated from these particular items were added to the checklist of personal characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals.

### Step 7.

An instrument was designed and constructed by the author encompassing the 78 behavior/tactic items, the 30-item personal characteristics checklist, and items necessary to collect demographic information regarding the respondents. The items were randomly assigned within their respective sections of the survey instrument. This instrument was administered in a pilot test to 15 student affairs practitioners. As a result of the pilot test, six behavior/tactic items were eliminated from the survey instrument. An additional response scale was created to be used with behavior/tactic items. These particular items were placed in one of two sections depending upon the appropriate response scale. Minor wording changes were made on the final instrument. The revised instrument is presented in Appendix F.

### Population

The population consisted of the members of the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA). This particular organization was chosen because it serves the primary purpose of representing student affairs practitioners in the state of Texas. In September 1989, TACUSPA officers were contacted and the organization's endorsement of the study was granted. Prior to the first mailout of the survey, TACUSPA provided a membership list of 235 current members.



### Administration of the Instrument

The initial mailing included the total membership provided by the organization's administrative staff. The survey was mailed on November 3, 1989, with a collection deadline of November 17, 1989. Members of the population received a cover letter encouraging their participation, and describing the purpose of the study and the importance of individual responses. Copies of the cover letter appear in Appendix G. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was also enclosed with the cover letter and survey. A 54% return rate of surveys was procured as a result of the initial mailing.

On November 24, 1989, a second packet was mailed to 107 TACUSPA members who failed to respond to the first request. Contents of the second packet were the same as previously described with the exception of a new cover letter (Appendix H). This effort increased the total return rate to 72%.

In an effort to achieve the 75% targeted return rate, a third and final mailing was completed by December 14, 1989. Again, nonrespondents from the original population were sent a survey instrument, a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a new cover letter (Appendix I). This third and last request resulted in a 76% return rate of usable surveys.

Table 1 indicates the rate of return, as well as any reasons for unusability. Two subjects in the population informed the author, via a letter, of their decision to not complete the survey. One returned envelope was sent but the survey was not enclosed. There were a

Table 1  
Distribution of Respondents

Original number of instruments mailed out	235	%
Returned and usable	179	76
Returned incomplete	1	
Surveys lost in the mail	1	
Arrived too late to use	9	
Returned by persons not in student affairs field	1	
Responded, but chose not to complete instrument	2	
Total return	193	82

total of 179 usable surveys returned and used in the data analysis for this study.

#### Description of Respondents

Tables 2 and 3 describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents to this study. The number of males and females participating in the study was almost equal with 90 males and 89 females responding. The predominant ethnic group, as reported by the participants, consisted of Anglos with Hispanics, Blacks, and Native Americans collectively making up less than 14% of the respondents. Categories were created for the data describing age, years of experience, and institutions' enrollment. Information

Table 2  
Demographic Distributions by Individual Variables

---

Total usable responses	179
<u>Gender</u> (Total non-missing cases)	179
Female	89
Male	90
<u>Professional Development Level (Rank) in Organization</u> (Total non-missing cases)	178
Entry Level	15
Mid-level or Department Head	112
Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO)	51
<u>Highest Degree Attained</u> (Total non-missing cases)	178
Bachelor	21
Master	88
Doctorate	62
Specialist	5
Associate	1
Law Degree	1
<u>Total Years of Experience in Student Affairs Field</u> (Total non-missing cases)	178
0-5	43
6-10	44
11-15	35
16-20	32
21-25	14
26-30	6
30+	4
<u>Ethnicity</u> (Total non-missing cases)	175
Anglo	150
Asian American	0
Native American	2
Black	9
Hispanic	13
<u>Age</u> (Total non-missing cases)	166
20-29	18
30-39	52
40-49	60
50-59	32
60-70	4

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Table 3  
Description of Respondents by Institutional Affiliation

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<u>Institution Student Enrollment</u> (Total non-	
missing cases)	179
0 - 4,999	95
5,000 - 9,999	28
10,000 - 19,999	1
20,000 - 29,999	46
30,000 - 39,999	2
40,000 - 49,999	4
50,000+	3
Other	3
<u>Institution Type</u> (Total non-missing cases)	179
Public University	57
Public Community College	41
Public Technical Institute	24
Independent Senior Colleges and Universities	33
Independent Junior Colleges	17
Public Medical Schools and Health Science Center	4
Other	3
<u>Public/Private Institution</u> (Total non-missing cases)	179
Public	127
Private	49
Other	3

---

describing the participant's institution (enrollment, type, public/private) was obtained by matching the numbered surveys with the participant's institution as noted with mailing list initially provided by TACUSPA and then cross-referencing this information with a list of institutions in Texas published by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Although not offered as an option, in the section describing highest degree attained, one respondent wrote in an "Associate" degree and another one wrote in "J.D."

### Methods of Analysis

The data collected in response to the survey were initially analyzed using the Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet package. This analysis was used for the purpose of providing a general description of the responses. Specifically, the mean, range, and standard deviation of responses were computed for examination, as well as the total number of responses for individual items. Since the data represented perceptions of a population rather than a sample, it was determined that comparison of frequencies (i.e., counts and percentages) would be the most appropriate method for presenting the data.

The Number Cruncher Statistical System (NCSS) was used to compute frequencies describing scores for the total respondent group and for groups organized according to selected demographic variables. The demographic variables identified as the basis for further analysis of the data included gender, rank in the organization, highest level of academic degree, and total years of experience in the student affairs profession.

This chapter detailed the methods and procedures used to create the survey instrument and to collect data from members of the target population. Specifically, the study intended to identify tactics used most often by persons perceived as politically effective in student affairs organizations and to identify personal characteristics associated with these persons. The results of this investigation are presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the data generated from the use of the survey instrument. As reported in the preceding chapter, the survey instrument was designed to assess the perceptions of student affairs administrators regarding behaviors and personal characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals. The survey also included a section requesting demographic information.

The two research questions serving as the foci of this study were: (a) What tactics are perceived as being used most often by political actors working in student affairs organizations? and (b) What personal characteristics are associated with individuals perceived as politically effective?

The data collected for this study are organized into two major sections based on the two research questions. The organization of the data presented under Research Question 1 is based on the four themes relating to political behavior that emerged during the development of the survey instrument. It should be remembered that these themes or constructs were discovered in the related literature and during the initial interviews of student affairs professionals. The four themes included: (a) Use of Information, (b) Image Building, (c) Building a Powerbase, and (d) Associating With the Influential. From these themes, items were developed to describe political tactics/

strategies used by administrators. The 72 items are presented individually and in categories. For reference purposes only, the items are numbered as they appeared on the survey instrument.

Under Research Question 2, respondents were asked to indicate those characteristics associated with politically-effective individuals from a list of 30 possible items. The data regarding personal characteristics are illustrated in tables and discussed later in this chapter.

Borg and Gall (1983) stated that the descriptive studies are primarily concerned with discovering "what is" (p. 354). This study focuses on attitudes, types of activities, and measuring the frequency of these activities. The descriptive statistics used included means and standard deviations indicating the variability. Frequencies, including percentages, are also used to report responses of the total respondent group and to compare differences of groups organized by the demographic variables, gender, rank in the organization, highest level of degree, and years of experience. These variables were chosen to provide the writer with a basis for demonstrating the different perspectives possibly resulting from influences by gender, rank, level of degree, and years of experience.

#### Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asks: What tactics are perceived as being used most often by political actors working in student affairs organizations?

### Use of Information

There were 15 items describing political tactics under the construct, Use of Information. The number of responses, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for each of the items are reported in Table 4. The frequencies reported according to the demographic categories can also be found in Table 4. Group responses within the demographic categories which resulted in differences of approximately ten percentage points were reported in the following sections of Chapter IV.

Part A. Responses to Part A under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: always or almost always (1), often (2), seldom (3), never or almost never (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 15. An effective politician senses the appropriate time to advance, to retreat, or to wait with specific requests/decisions.

Virtually all of the respondents agreed that this behavior occurs often (36%) or always or almost always (63%).

The demographic analysis revealed some differences according to the responses by gender. Females (67%) indicated they observed this tactic occurring always or almost always more frequently than males (58%). Also, the higher the level of rank, the more frequently this tactic was observed. Of the entry level administrators, 48% indicated the tactic is used almost always, while 63% of the mid-level administrators and 67% of the CSAO reported similar scores. A similar trend



Table 4

Frequency of Use of Information Political Behaviors/Tactics Reported - Parts A and B

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part A																		
15	1	63	1.4	.61	67	58	47	63	69	48	53	77	62	51	64	61	71	75
N=179	2	36			32	41	53	37	29	52	44	23	38	49	36	32	29	25
	3	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	1			1	1	0	.9	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	0
17	1	2	3.3	.84	2	1	7	0	4	0	2	2	3	0	0	0	5	0
N=179	2	15			12	17	20	13	16	19	15	13	15	19	10	13	19	13
	3	38			43	33	47	40	31	33	42	34	47	35	50	26	29	50
	4	41			36	47	13	44	45	38	36	50	29	38	41	55	43	38
	5	5			7	2	13	4	4	10	5	2	6	8	0	7	5	0
37	1	30	1.9	.84	33	27	27	33	24	19	33	31	18	42	38	19	24	25
N=178	2	57			55	58	67	54	60	81	53	49	74	50	41	68	57	63
	3	8			7	9	0	8	10	0	9	10	6	6	10	7	14	13
	4	3			2	5	0	4	4	0	2	7	3	0	10	3	0	0
	5	2			3	1	7	2	2	0	2	3	0	3	2	3	5	0
41	1	22	2.1	.91	26	18	40	18	26	10	22	26	27	24	27	7	19	13
N=178	2	62			60	63	47	68	53	71	69	48	53	62	63	81	48	63
	3	10			7	13	7	8	16	10	5	18	18	8	2	7	19	25
	4	1			1	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	0
	5	5			6	4	7	5	6	10	5	5	3	5	2	7	14	0
Part B																		
17	1	19	2.1	.73	23	16	20	18	22	29	21	15	27	22	21	16	10	0
N=179	2	61			53	69	67	64	51	43	59	71	47	62	64	65	57	75
	3	17			21	13	13	14	26	29	17	13	24	16	14	16	24	13
	4	2			2	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	3	5	13
	5	1			1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	5	0

Table 4 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)		Total Years Experience (%)								
		Per-	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
		cent	Mean															
Part B (continued)																		
8	1	34	1.8	.74	37	31	33	34	35	29	35	34	32	38	33	39	24	38
	2	56			55	58	60	59	49	62	55	57	59	57	55	52	57	63
	3	7			6	9	7	5	14	10	8	7	6	5	7	7	19	0
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	2			2	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	3	0	2	3	0	0
10	1	10	2.6	1.08	17	3	20	12	4	10	13	8	15	17	12	3	5	0
	2	48			42	55	40	50	45	43	50	47	49	44	50	52	43	50
	3	24			24	25	20	22	31	33	22	25	9	19	31	36	29	25
	4	9			6	11	7	8	10	5	7	12	12	6	0	7	14	25
	5	9			12	6	13	8	10	10	9	8	15	14	7	3	10	0
11	1	20	2.3	1.01	29	11	20	21	18	24	18	19	21	35	24	13	10	0
	2	49			45	53	60	47	49	57	53	42	53	49	45	45	48	50
	3	20			17	22	13	21	20	10	21	23	24	8	21	26	24	25
	4	6			7	6	7	6	6	5	7	7	0	5	5	10	5	25
	5	5			2	8	0	5	8	5	1	10	3	3	5	7	14	0
18	1	11	2.5	.99	13	9	7	9	16	24	10	5	6	11	14	13	14	0
	2	51			53	49	67	52	43	43	53	51	59	60	48	47	38	50
	3	22			18	26	13	27	14	24	26	15	27	14	24	20	19	38
	4	12			11	12	7	8	22	10	7	21	6	11	12	13	19	13
	5	5			5	4	7	4	6	0	3	8	3	5	2	7	10	0

Table 4 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)				Total Years Experience (%)					
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part B (continued)																		
15	1	17	2.1	.73	24	11	13	17	20	24	14	20	21	19	24	16	5	13
N=178	2	65			63	66	73	63	64	62	72	57	61	62	62	71	71	50
	3	15			9	20	7	16	14	10	11	20	12	14	12	10	24	38
	4	2			2	1	0	3	0	5	2	0	3	3	0	3	0	0
	5	2			2	1	7	1	2	0	1	3	3	3	2	0	0	0
4	1	27	2.0	.84	30	23	40	26	26	38	27	23	50	24	21	23	29	0
N=179	2	56			54	59	33	63	49	48	59	55	35	60	62	65	52	50
	3	12			12	11	27	9	14	14	14	10	12	11	14	3	19	25
	4	3			2	3	0	1	8	0	0	8	3	3	2	3	0	13
	5	2			1	3	0	2	4	0	0	5	0	3	0	7	0	13
9	1	24	1.9	.63	32	16	13	26	22	19	26	23	18	25	31	16	19	50
N=177	2	66			56	75	73	66	62	48	68	67	64	61	64	81	67	38
	3	10			10	9	7	7	16	33	3	10	15	11	5	3	14	13
	4	.6			1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	.6			1	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
23	1	7	2.7	.90	11	2	0	8	6	14	5	7	3	14	7	10	0	0
N=177	2	33			28	38	40	30	38	48	33	32	41	25	34	32	19	50
	3	45			42	48	40	47	44	33	43	50	41	44	44	48	67	25
	4	10			13	8	7	11	10	0	14	10	3	14	12	7	10	25
	5	5			6	3	13	5	2	5	6	2	12	3	2	3	5	0
14	1	15	2.2	.84	18	11	20	14	14	14	19	8	18	14	17	19	10	0
N=179	2	55			52	59	60	54	57	57	57	52	59	62	55	52	52	50
	3	25			24	26	13	26	26	24	19	32	21	16	21	26	38	25
	4	3			2	3	0	4	2	0	2	5	0	5	2	0	0	25
	5	3			5	1	7	3	2	5	2	3	3	3	5	3	3	0

Table 4 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population			Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)					
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part B (continued)																		
19 N=178	1	16	2.2	.83	22	11	7	18	16	24	15	13	12	25	21	10	10	13
	2	61			63	59	67	61	57	48	64	65	65	58	57	74	48	50
	3	17			9	26	20	14	24	29	16	15	15	11	19	13	29	38
	4	3			2	3	0	4	2	0	2	5	3	3	2	3	5	0
	5	3			5	1	7	3	2	0	3	3	6	3	0	0	10	0

<sup>a</sup>Part A: 1 = always or almost always; 2 = often; 3 = seldom; 4 = never or almost never; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior

Part B: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior

<sup>b</sup>Degrees: B = baccalaureate; M = master's; D = doctoral

was noted in the degree category. The bachelor's group (48%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always. The percentage increased for the master's group (53%) reporting the same score. And, the doctorate group (77%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always. The category, "5-9 years", reported a score at least ten percentage points less than scores reported by the other categories. In summary, perceptions of the frequency with which this tactic occurs increase as the person's level of rank, degree, and experience increases.

Item 17. An effective politician withholds information from others by failing to release information specifically requested by another or by being vague in presenting information.

Most respondents did not view withholding information by failing to release it or being vague as a tactic used frequently. Thirty-eight percent responded that they seldom observed this tactic being used, and forty-one percent reported it as never or almost never being observed.

According to the responses by gender, the majority of females (79%) indicated they observed this tactic occurring seldom or never or almost never (36%). Males differed slightly in their responses with 80% responding seldom or never or almost never.

Item 37. Information is screened to determine what is to be passed on and what is to be discarded.

Most respondents agreed that information is screened before passing it on. Thirty percent reported the behavior occurring always or almost always and fifty-seven percent reported the behavior occurring often.

According to the responses by degree, 81% of respondents holding a bachelor's degree reported observing the tactic often. In contrast, respondents in the doctorate (49%) and the master's (53%) reported smaller percentages. Within the years of experience category, the "0-4" group (18%) and the "15-19" group (19%) reported the lowest percentages observing the tactic always or almost always, but the highest percentages (74% and 68%, respectively) observing the tactic often.

Item 41. An effective politician has regular interaction with another who holds needed information in order to extract this information.

Student affairs administrators concurred that effective politicians have regular interaction with a person who possesses needed information. Specifically, 22% reported observed the tactic always or almost always and 62% reported observing it often.

No real differences were indicated in the scores reported by males and females. Scores reported according to rank indicated a lower percentage of mid-level respondents (18%) observing the tactic always or almost always, but a higher percentage (68%) observing the tactic often. The bachelor's group within the degree category indicated a similar trend with 19% observing the tactic always or

almost always and 81% observing it often. The doctorate group reported 18% who seldom observed the tactic. According to the responses in the years of experience category, the "0-4" (18%), "20-24" (19%), and "25-29" (25%) groups reported the highest percentages of respondents seldom observing the tactic.

Part B. Responses to Part B under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 17. Organizational grapevines serve as an important source of information.

In responding to the statement, 19% indicated they strongly agreed with the importance of the grapevine, and 61% indicated they agreed that the grapevine was an important source of information.

According to responses by rank, the CSAO group (26%) reported the highest percentage disagreeing with the statement. In the degree category, percentages indicating strong agreement with the statement illustrated a declining trend, with the bachelor's group (29%) reporting the lowest, then the master's group (21%), followed by the doctorate group (15%). The bachelor's group (29%) reported the highest percentage of disagreement with the statement. The "20-24" (29%) and "25-29" (26%) groups reported the highest cumulative percentage of disagreement within the years of experience category.

Item 15. Every unit has an "unofficial" person who excels in utilizing the grapevine for obtaining information.

Again, student affairs administrators acknowledged the existence of the organizational grapevine, with 65% agreeing that every organization has a person who is adept at utilizing the grapevine, 17% strongly agreed with the above statement, and 15% disagreed that every organization has a person with such skills.

More females (24%) indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement than males (16%), while males (20%) disagreed with the statement more often than females (9%). No real differences were evident in the demographic categories with one exception. A high percentage of respondents in the "20-24" (24%) and "25-29" (38%) groups expressed disagreement with the statement.

Item 4. The credibility of the organizational grapevine depends upon the major players connected to the grapevine.

Student affairs administrators generally agreed that the credibility of the organizational grapevine is dependent upon the individuals involved. Twenty-seven percent expressed strong agreement with this statement, and fifty-six percent indicated their agreement.

The demographic analysis revealed some differences in the rank, degree, and years of experience categories. The mid-level group reported the highest cumulative percentage (86%) of respondents agreeing with the statement. The entry level (27%) and CSAO (22%) groups reported higher cumulative percentages indicating their disagreement with the statement. The bachelor's group reported (38%)



the highest percentage of respondents expressing strong agreement in the degree category. According to responses in the years of experience category, the "15-19" (6%) group reported the lowest cumulative percentage of disagreement, and the "25-29" (38%) group reported the highest cumulative percentage of disagreement. Respondents in the "0-4" group (50%) expressed the strongest agreement with the statement.

Item 9. Organizational grapevines are related to informal organizational structure and are based on personal relationships among staff.

Virtually all respondents strongly agreed (24%) or agreed (66%) that grapevines are rooted in the personal relationships among staff.

Responses analyzed by demographics showed a higher percentage of females expressing strong agreement (32%) with the statement. Males (75%) constituted a higher percentage of the responses indicating agreement. In the rank and degree categories, lower percentages of entry level respondents (13%) and bachelor's degree respondents (19%) indicated strong agreement with the statement when compared to other groups. The "25-29" years of experience group reflected the strongest agreement with the statement.

Item 23. Organizational grapevines are well-developed in organizations having an atmosphere of trust among staff.

Student affairs administrators appeared to be split in their perceptions of the organizational grapevine in relation to trust. In fact, they expressed the highest percentage of disagreement with this statement when compared to all other items relating to organizational

grapevines. Of the total respondent group, 55% either strongly disagreed or disagreed that grapevines are well-developed in organizations having an atmosphere of trust. In contrast, 40% strongly agreed or agreed that trust among staff was important to the development of a grapevine.

Scores reported by gender revealed a higher percentage of females (11%) than males (2%) strongly agreed with the statement. A larger percentage of males (38%) than females (28%) agreed with the statement. Further review of the demographic analysis revealed that virtually all demographic groups reported larger percentages of respondents disagreeing with the statement with the exception of four particular groups. The bachelor's group (48%) and the "25-29" years of experience group (50%) reported higher percentages agreeing with the statement. Both the entry level group (40%) and the "0-4" years of experience group (41%) reported similar percentages of agreement and disagreement.

Item 14. Organizational grapevines provide information quicker than usual administrative channels, by passing over several layers of organizational hierarchy.

Student affairs administrators indicated general agreement (70%) with the expediency afforded by the grapevine. In contrast, 25% of the respondents disagreed that grapevines provide more expedient methods of obtaining information than channels existing in the formal structure.

The analysis by demographics revealed very few differences within categories. Specifically, the entry level group (13%) reported the lowest percentage of respondents disagreeing with the statement. Also, in the degree category, the doctorate group reported the lowest percentage (8%) strongly agreeing with the statement and the highest percentage (32%) disagreeing with it.

Item 8. It is useful to gather information because you cannot help others if you don't know something about their business.

Responses to this item indicated a strong agreement regarding the usefulness of gathering information from others as reported previously with item 41. Thirty-four percent strongly agreed and fifty-six percent agreed that it is important to collect information about another person's area of responsibility.

Within the CSAO category, a lower percentage (49%) of respondents indicated their agreement with the statement when compared to entry (60%) and mid-level (59%) groups. When comparing respondent groups by years of experience, the "20-24" group indicated a higher percentage (19%) of respondents who disagreed.

Item 10. Information can be exaggerated to help a person get out of a "tight spot" (e.g., the person says he/she has been trying to contact someone when in truth only one attempt was made).

Student affairs administrators differed in their perceptions that information is exaggerated to escape from a "tight spot". Specifically, 48% agreed that information is used for the described purpose, and 24% disagreed with the notion.

According to the responses by gender, males (3%) reported a much lower percentage of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement than did females (17%). Conversely, males (55%) reported higher percentages of agreement than did females (42%). Furthermore, the demographic analysis revealed that the percentages of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement decreased with the entry level (20%), mid-level (12%), and the CSAO (4%) groups, respectively. In contrast, the percentages increased among the years of experience groups beginning with the "0-4" group and continuing to the "25-29" group.

Item 11. The volume of information presented in a meeting can prevent others from being able to adequately evaluate the facts, forcing them to blindly trust the presenter of the information.

Student affairs administrators indicated a general agreement with the notion that voluminous information is presented to force recipients to blindly trust the presenter. Specifically, 20% of the respondents strongly agreed and 49% agreed.

According to responses by gender, a higher percentage of females (29%) than males (11%) expressed strong agreement. Among the rank categories, the entry level group indicated the highest percentage of agreement (60%) and the lowest percentage (13%) of disagreement. Group comparisons by degree revealed a lower cumulative percentage in the bachelor's group (15%) disagreeing with the statement than in the master's (28%) and the doctorate (30%) groups. Also, the "5-9" group (35%) expressed a higher percentage of respondents who strongly agreed and a lower percentage of respondents (8%) who disagreed. A

higher percentage of respondents in the first three groups (0-14) of the years of experience category expressed strong agreement than did respondents in the "15-29" years of experience groups.

Item 18. Jargon can be used in presentation of information to mask its inaccuracy or to prevent others from comprehending the true meaning.

In responding to this statement, administrators appeared to differ in their views. Fifty-one percent agreed that jargon can be used to mask inaccuracies or to impair accurate comprehension. In contrast, 22% disagreed with the statement.

The demographic analysis showed the entry level group (20%) reporting the lowest cumulative percentage disagreeing with the statement. However, the CSAO group (22%) reported the highest percentage strongly disagreeing with the statement. Scores reported according to degree indicated that respondents holding doctorates (21%) expressed the lowest percentage of strong agreement with the statement and bachelor's (24%) respondents the highest percentage strongly agreeing with the statement. Scores reported by years of experience indicated the "5-9" group (25%) expressing the least disagreement with the statement.

Item 19. Information is manipulated by being delayed.

Most student affairs administrators agreed that information is manipulated by being delayed. Of the total respondent group, 77% believed this attitude to be held by politically-effective individuals.

The demographic analysis revealed a higher percentage of females (22%) expressing strong agreement. Males (29%) subsumed a larger percentage disagreeing with the statement than did females (11%). In the rank category, entry level respondents (7%) indicated the lowest percentage of strong agreement with the statement. Scores reported according to degree showed the bachelor's (29%) respondents reporting a high percentage of disagreement. Comparisons among groups by years of experience revealed the "20-24" (36%) and the "25-29" (38%) groups reporting higher percentages of respondents expressing disagreement. Additionally, the "15-19" and "20-24" groups reported similarly low percentages (10%) of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement.

#### Image Building

There were 24 items describing political tactics under the construct, Image Building. The number of responses, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for each of the items are reported in Table 5. The frequencies reported according to the demographic categories can also be found in Table 5.

Part A. Responses to Part A under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: always or almost always (1), often (2), seldom (3), never or almost never (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 1. An effective politician dresses according to organizational norms rather than personal preferences.

Table 5  
Frequency of Image Building Political Behaviors/Tactics Reported - Parts A and B

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population				Rank (%)	Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per- cent	Gender (%)		Entry		B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29		
			Mean	SD												Female	Male
Part A																	
1	53	1.5	.55	55	51	67	59	37	48	48	60	44	60	52	55	57	50
N=179	44			44	44	33	39	57	52	49	39	53	40	45	42	33	50
3	3			1	4	0	2	6	0	3	2	3	0	2	3	10	0
4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	29	2.0	.96	38	20	40	33	18	24	26	32	27	38	31	26	33	0
N=179	56			49	63	40	55	63	62	59	52	59	57	52	55	48	75
3	8			7	9	7	7	10	0	9	10	6	3	12	10	10	13
4	1			0	2	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	2	3	0	0
5	6			6	6	13	5	6	14	3	7	9	3	2	7	10	13
47	38	1.8	.96	39	38	47	40	34	38	36	42	32	46	42	43	29	25
N=177	50			51	50	40	50	54	62	51	44	59	49	39	47	62	50
3	5			2	8	7	5	6	0	8	3	3	0	12	0	10	13
4	1			2	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	3	0	0
5	5			6	5	7	5	6	0	5	8	6	5	5	7	0	13
7	46	1.6	.64	57	36	33	53	35	43	43	48	41	41	51	55	48	25
N=178	48			41	54	60	41	59	43	51	48	53	54	42	42	38	75
3	5			2	8	7	5	4	14	5	3	6	5	5	3	10	0
4	1			0	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	5	0
5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	67	1.4	.60	66	63	60	69	67	38	65	79	56	51	81	58	86	88
N=179	31			33	29	40	30	28	62	33	18	41	46	19	39	10	13
3	1			0	2	0	0	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	5	0
4	.6			0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
5	.6			1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0

Table 5 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)									
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female		Male		Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
					Female	Male	Entry	Mid												
Part A (continued)																				
22	1	25	1.9	.68	25	26	33	27	20	10	22	35	12	27	26	26	29	38		
N=179	2	65			70	61	67	64	67	81	65	60	74	68	60	71	57	63		
	3	7			2	12	0	6	12	5	11	3	9	5	10	3	14	0		
	4	1			2	0	0	1	2	5	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0		
	5	1			1	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	5	0	0	0		
27	1	9	2.2	.76	14	4	14	9	8	0	10	11	6	16	7	3	10	13		
N=178	2	69			71	68	79	75	53	71	70	65	64	62	74	84	57	75		
	3	17			11	23	7	12	33	24	15	19	21	22	14	7	29	13		
	4	1			2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	3	0	2	0	0	0		
	5	3			2	4	0	3	6	5	2	5	6	0	2	6	5	0		
14	1	27	1.8	.60	27	28	27	28	28	29	28	21	29	24	29	32	29	13		
N=179	2	65			65	64	67	66	61	67	64	71	65	65	67	58	57	58		
	3	7			7	8	0	6	12	5	7	8	6	8	5	10	14	0		
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	5	.6			1	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0		
35	1	14	2.4	1.0	18	10	20	14	12	5	15	15	6	11	24	10	24	0		
N=178	2	48			52	44	47	46	54	76	44	43	59	51	42	55	33	38		
	3	25			17	32	20	25	24	10	28	28	15	32	22	26	24	50		
	4	8			6	10	0	9	8	10	7	8	15	5	5	3	14	13		
	5	5			7	3	13	5	2	0	6	7	6	0	7	7	5	0		
40	1	60	1.4	.62	65	56	60	60	61	33	61	68	44	62	64	68	62	63		
N=179	2	39			34	43	40	40	35	67	36	32	56	38	33	32	33	38		
	3	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	5	1			1	1	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	0		



Table 5 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per-	Mean	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
		cent	SD															
Part A (continued)																		
9	1	48	1.6	.85	53	43	40	52	43	57	46	47	59	38	50	48	48	38
N=179	2	47			43	51	53	44	51	33	50	48	38	51	50	48	48	38
	3	1			0	2	0	2	0	5	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	13
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	4			5	3	7	3	6	5	3	5	3	8	0	3	5	13
12	1	28	1.9	.72	30	25	27	30	22	14	26	31	18	31	19	42	33	25
N=178	2	60			60	60	60	59	60	62	61	57	68	64	69	39	48	63
	3	11			8	14	7	10	14	24	9	10	12	6	10	13	19	13
	4	1			2	0	7	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	2	0	0	0
	5	1			0	2	0	0	4	0	1	2	0	0	0	7	0	0
18	1	46	1.8	1.1	44	47	40	46	47	29	38	61	27	38	59	48	48	63
N=178	2	39			40	38	27	41	37	38	44	32	50	41	34	42	29	38
	3	7			6	9	7	8	6	5	10	5	9	8	5	3	19	0
	4	2			2	1	0	1	4	5	1	2	3	0	2	0	5	0
	5	6			8	5	27	4	6	24	7	0	12	14	0	7	0	0
21	1	50	1.6	.79	51	50	47	50	53	29	47	65	38	43	55	52	62	63
N=179	2	45			44	46	53	45	41	67	48	34	56	51	45	45	19	38
	3	2			1	3	0	3	2	0	3	0	6	0	0	0	10	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	3			5	1	0	3	4	5	2	2	0	5	0	3	10	0
28	1	29	1.9	.79	31	28	33	33	20	5	31	37	27	19	38	28	29	50
N=177	2	60			61	58	60	59	62	81	59	52	65	65	60	55	57	50
	3	7			2	11	7	5	12	10	6	8	6	11	0	10	10	0
	4	2			3	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	3	3	2	0	0	0
	5	2			2	2	0	2	4	5	2	2	0	3	0	7	5	0

Table 5 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)						
		Per-	Mean	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
		cent	SD															
Part A (continued)																		
29	1	30	1.9	.77	37	23	33	31	28	19	34	29	32	27	36	29	24	25
N=178	2	49			45	52	33	42	67	48	46	52	44	46	48	55	48	63
	3	20			16	23	33	25	4	29	18	19	24	24	14	16	24	13
	4	1			2	0	0	1	2	5	1	0	0	3	0	0	5	0
	5	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
30	1	21	2.1	.95	26	17	20	21	24	14	22	21	24	32	17	20	24	0
N=178	2	57			49	64	47	58	57	57	53	61	62	49	62	50	52	88
	3	14			13	14	27	12	14	14	16	12	12	8	10	17	24	13
	4	4			5	3	0	5	4	5	5	3	0	5	5	7	0	0
	5	5			8	1	7	5	2	10	5	3	3	5	7	7	0	0
44	1	55	1.5	.64	62	47	67	58	44	38	52	59	53	53	60	61	52	25
N=178	2	43			35	52	33	39	54	57	46	39	41	47	38	36	48	75
	3	1			2	0	0	1	2	5	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	1			1	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	3	0	0
45	1	49	1.6	.74	48	49	60	46	49	33	44	63	41	57	48	61	43	25
N=179	2	40			46	34	40	41	39	43	42	32	47	35	38	36	43	63
	3	9			5	13	0	10	10	14	14	2	6	8	12	3	14	13
	4	2			1	3	0	3	2	10	0	3	6	0	2	0	0	0
	5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
48	1	50	1.5	.57	55	46	53	52	47	38	46	63	44	51	60	52	38	38
N=179	2	49			44	53	40	48	51	62	53	36	56	46	41	48	57	63
	3	.6			0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	.6			1	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0

Table 5 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per-	Mean	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
		cent	SD															
1 N=179	1	29	2.0	.96	24	33	20	26	37	24	27	29	32	22	31	32	33	13
	2	51			52	50	67	54	39	57	50	53	53	60	48	45	43	75
	3	13			16	10	7	15	10	14	16	7	9	11	12	13	19	13
	4	4			2	6	0	2	10	0	3	7	3	5	5	0	5	0
	5	4			7	1	7	4	4	5	3	5	3	3	5	10	0	0
5 N=179	1	16	2.3	1.0	19	12	20	14	18	0	17	21	6	16	17	13	29	0
	2	55			49	61	53	57	51	57	50	60	56	62	57	61	38	38
	3	20			21	18	7	21	20	33	23	10	24	19	19	13	19	50
	4	1			1	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	0
	5	8			9	8	20	6	10	10	8	10	15	3	5	13	10	13
13 N=179	1	44	1.8	.87	45	43	47	45	43	43	42	47	27	46	55	42	57	50
	2	43			39	47	33	41	49	38	42	47	44	46	33	48	33	50
	3	8			9	8	7	11	4	19	8	5	24	3	7	7	5	0
	4	2			3	1	0	3	2	0	3	2	0	3	5	0	5	0
	5	2			3	1	13	1	2	0	5	0	6	3	0	3	0	0
24 N=178	1	24	2.2	.95	25	24	33	21	28	35	22	27	21	27	21	23	24	25
	2	46			40	51	40	43	52	45	42	53	44	41	45	47	62	50
	3	24			26	21	13	29	16	10	27	16	27	27	21	27	10	25
	4	3			5	2	0	5	2	0	6	2	3	3	7	0	5	0
	5	3			5	2	13	3	2	10	3	2	6	3	5	3	0	0

Table B

<sup>a</sup>Part A: 1 = always or almost always; 2 = often; 3 = seldom; 4 = never or almost never; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior  
 Part B: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior

<sup>b</sup>Degree: B = baccalaureate; M = master's; D = doctorate

Student affairs administrators indicated their belief that a politically-effective person dresses according to organizational norms with virtually all respondents (97%) reported that they frequently observed this phenomenon.

The demographic analysis revealed few differences among groups within the four categories. Specifically, a low percentage of the CSAO (37%) group reported observing the tactic always or almost always. In contrast, the entry level group (67%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic with similar frequency.

Item 43. An effective politician should dress in similar fashion to those administrators at least one level higher in the hierarchy.

Again, responses indicated that dress is a factor duly considered by student affairs administrators. Of the respondents observing an effective politician dressing in similar fashion to administrators at higher levels of the hierarchy, 29% reported this tactic occurring always or almost always and 56% reported it to occur often.

According to responses by gender, a higher percentage of female (38%) than male (20%) respondents reported they observed this tactic almost always, while a higher percentage of male (63%) than female (49%) respondents reported observing the tactic often. Specifically in the rank category, the entry level group (40%) reported equal percentages of its respondents observing the tactic often and always or almost always. Although the majority of respondents in the CSAO group reported observing this tactic frequently, only 18% reported always or almost always observing the tactic.

Item 47. An effective politician's appearance should project an image of a professional person who is more capable than present responsibilities suggest.

Again, most student affairs administrators agreed that not only is dress an important consideration, but it should be fashioned to project an image of upward mobility. Specifically, 38% agreed that they observed this tactic always or almost always and 50% stated that they observed it often.

The analysis by demographics revealed few differences among groups in the four categories. However, the CSAO group reported a low percentage (34%) observing the tactic always or almost always and a high percentage (54%) observing the tactic often. In contrast, the entry level group (47%) reported a high percentage observing the tactic always or almost always. The bachelor's group (62%) reported a high percentage of its respondents observing the tactic often. According to responses by years of experience, the "10-14" (12%), "20-24" (10%), and "25-29" (13%) groups reported the highest percentage reporting that they seldom observed the tactic occurring. Also, the latter two of the three "20-24" (29%) and "25-29" (25%) groups reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 7. An effective politician learns to play by the rules of the organization.

Student affairs administrators expressed little disagreement regarding the importance of learning to play by the rules of the

organization. Forty-six percent reported observing the behavior always or almost always, and forty-eight percent reported observing it often.

In the rank category, mid-level administrators reported the highest percentage (53%) within groups observing the tactic always or almost always. Although all respondents in the "25-29" group (100%) reported observing the tactic frequently, only 25% comprised those observing the tactic occurring always or almost always.

Item 11. An effective politician makes a conscious decision to be a part of the organization.

Of all the responses to the survey, this statement received the highest percentage (67%) of responses indicating that the behavior occurs always or almost always. In addition, 31% reported observing the behavior occurring often.

The doctorate group included a high percentage of respondents (79%) who observed the tactic almost always, especially compared to the bachelor's group in which only 38% of the respondents observed the tactic with similar frequency. The highest percentage observing the tactic almost always in the years of experience category were represented by the "10-14" (81%), "20-24" (86%), and "25-29" (88%) groups.

Item 22. An effective politician is sensitive to organizational norms and attempts to conform to these norms.

Consistent with previous items relating to conformity of organizational norms and based on responses of item 22, there exists a consensus opinion that effective politicians are aware of and conform

to the organization's norms. In responding to the statement, 25% reported observing the behavior always or almost always and 65% reported the frequency to be often.

The demographic analysis revealed that the entry level (20%), bachelor's (10%), and the "0-4" (12%) groups reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always among all four categories. Groups reporting the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never within each of the four categories included males (12%), CSAO (14%), master's (12%), and "0-4" (15%).

Item 27. An effective politician attempts to conform to organizational norms even when there is a personal disagreement.

Although respondents previously indicated a general consensus that conformity to organizational norms is a tactic frequently used by an effective politician, they appear to depart slightly from this trend when it involves personal disagreements. In responding to this particular item, 78% stated that they observed the behavior often or always or almost always, and 17% reported it as occurring seldom.

Responses by gender indicated that females (14%) observed the tactic always or almost always with more frequency than males (4%). Conversely, a higher percentage of males (23%) than females (11%) reported that they seldom observed the tactic. Interestingly, the CSAO group (8%) reported the lowest percentage observing this tactic always or almost always, and the highest percentage (33%) observing the tactic seldom. Scores reported by degree showed the bachelor's

group not reporting any scores of 1 (always or almost always). However, this same group reported a higher percentage of respondents (24%) who seldom observed the tactic. Respondents in the "20-24" (29%) group reported the highest percentages who seldom observed the tactic. The "15-19" group (3%) reported the lowest percentage among all groups observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 14. An effective politician is concerned with projecting a positive image that is specifically directed towards higher level administrators.

Responses to this particular item coupled with the results of the items relating to dress indicate that respondents view that promoting a positive image should be directed primarily in an upward direction or to higher level administrators. Specifically, 92% viewed this tactic as occurring always or almost always or often.

Scores reporting the frequency in which this tactic was observed by respondents in the four demographic categories revealed no real differences.

Item 35. If a supervisor fails to inquire about the work progress of an individual, an effective politician informs the supervisor of his/her performance.

Student affairs administrators differed in their perceptions of whether effective politicians should take the initiative to inform supervisors of their performance. Forty-eight percent viewed an effective politician as using this tactic often; however, twenty-five percent viewed the tactic as occurring seldom.



Responses by gender revealed a lower percentage of females (17%) than males (32%) reporting they observed the tactic seldom. The bachelor's group reported lower percentages observing the tactic always or almost always (5%) and seldom (10%), but a higher percentage (76%) observing the tactic often. In the years of experience category, the "10-14" and "20-24" groups reported similarly high percentages (24%) observing the tactic always or almost always and the "0-4" group (15%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic with similar frequency.

Item 40. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to the supervisor.

Whereas responses to the previous item indicate disagreement whether administrators should inform supervisors of performance, responses to item 40 indicated that 99% of the respondents observed an effective politician proving him/herself competent.

The demographic analysis revealed that respondents in the bachelor's group and the "0-4" group reported scores directly inverse to the majority responses. Specifically, 33% of the bachelor's group observed the tactic always or almost always and 67% observed it often. Additionally, the "0-4" group reported similar percentages with 44% observing the tactic always or almost always and 56% observing the tactic often.

Item 9. An effective politician takes the time to be friendly and to interact with others in order to build a favorable image.

Respondents generally agreed that to build a favorable image, an effective politician invests time to interact with others in a cordial fashion. Accordingly, 48% of the respondents reported the tactic being used always or almost always and 47% reported it as occurring often.

Responses by rank revealed the mid level group (52%) reporting a slightly higher percentage observing the tactic always or almost always. Also, the bachelor's group reported a high percentage (57%) observing the tactic always or almost always, but a low percentage (33%) observing it often. The "5-9" and "25-29" groups reported similarly low percentages (38%) indicating the tactic being observed always or almost always. Also, the "25-29" group (13%) reported the highest percentage of respondents who seldom observed the tactic occurring.

Item 12. An effective politician avoids alienating others or "stepping on toes" when taking a project from another person.

Student affairs administrators indicated some differences in their responses, but the majority (88%) generally viewed politicians as avoiding the alienation of others.

The bachelor's group reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom and never or almost never among all groups. In the years of experience category, the "0-4" group (18%) and "10-14" (19%) reported the lowest percentages observing the tactic always or almost always. The "15-19" group was the only group among all categories reporting a higher percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always (42%) than reporting it as often observed (39%).

Item 18. An effective politician is sensitive to others, both personally and professionally.

This behavior was viewed by 46% of the respondents as occurring always or almost always and 39% viewed it as occurring often.

In the rank category, a lower percentage of entry level respondents (27%) reported observing the tactic often. This same group (27%) reported a high percentage of respondents who failed to perceive the behavior as a political tactic. Scores reported according to degree level revealed that 24% of the respondents in the bachelor's group failed to perceive the behavior as a political tactic. In the years of experience category, the "25-29" (63%) group reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always and the "0-4" (27%) group reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic with similar frequency.

Item 21. An effective politician builds a reputation for being liked by demonstrating a "can-do" attitude and following through.

Virtually all the respondents (95%) reported that an effective politician almost always or oftentimes builds a reputation for being liked with a "can-do" attitude. Responses to this particular item demonstrate a consistency in student affairs administrators' perceptions of the importance of competence by an effective politician.

According to the demographic analysis, groups within the rank, degree, and years of experience categories revealed a trend of increasing percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always consistent with the advancement of levels within each category (refer to Table 5, p. 72).

Item 28. An effective politician attends to constituents' needs and communicates what he/she has done for them.

Student affairs administrators demonstrated a consensus opinion (89%) that effective politicians communicate their performance outcomes to constituents. In contrast, only 62% perceived that an effective politician should communicate performance outcomes to supervisors (refer to item 35).

Within the rank category, the CSA0 group (20%) reported the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses by degree groups indicated only 5% of the bachelor's group reporting that they observed the tactic always or almost always. However, 81% reported observing the tactic often. In terms of the years of experience category, the "10-14" group (38%) and the "25-29" group (50%) reported the highest percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. The "10-14" group (2%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never.

Item 29. An effective politician takes risks.

Respondents indicated a slight variance in the perceptions of taking risks. Of the respondents, 30% reported that effective politicians take risks always or almost always and 49% reported this behavior occurring often. However, 20% perceived an effective politician to seldom take risks.

The demographic analysis revealed a low percentage of males (23%) observing the tactic always or almost always. In the rank

category, the CSAO group (67%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses by degree indicated the bachelor's group reporting a low percentage (19%) observing the tactic always or almost always and a high percentage (29%) seldom observing the tactic.

Item 30. An effective politician builds an independent image to avoid being brought down with a failing associate.

Although student affairs administrators agree with the importance of conformity, they appear to value independence when it is detrimental to their image. Of the total respondent group, 21% perceived the tactic occurring always or almost always and 57% reported it occurring often.

Responses by gender showed that a higher percentage of males (64%) than females (49%) reported observing this tactic often. In the rank category, the entry level group (27%) reported a higher percentage who seldom observed the tactic. Scores represented respondents in the degree category were consistent with the total respondent group. In the years of experience category, the "15-19" and "20-24" groups both reported the highest percentage (24%) observing the tactic infrequently.

Item 44. An effective politician consciously and unconsciously operates to promote a positive self-image.

Virtually all respondents (98%) concurred that an effective politician frequently operates to promote a positive self-image.

The demographic analysis revealed that more females (62%) than males (47%) observed this tactic occurring always or almost always. Consequently, a higher percentage of males (52%) than females (35%) observed the tactic occurring often. In the rank category, a trend indicating the percentages reported by each group observing the tactic always or almost always decreased with the advancement of levels. This trend was reversed in the degree category, with each group reporting increased percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always with the advancement of degree levels (refer to Table 5, p. 72). Also, the "25-29" group (25%) reported a low percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 45. An effective politician avoids making promises that cannot be fulfilled and fulfills any promises made.

Student affairs administrators perceived an effective politician as a person who fulfills promises or avoids making them; 89% agreed that this behavior occurs almost always or often.

Responses by gender indicated a higher percentage of males (16%) than females (6%) reporting that the seldom or never or almost never observed this tactic. One hundred percent of the entry level respondents reported observing the tactic often or always or almost always. The bachelor's group reported the highest percentage (24%) of respondents observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never. In contrast, the doctoral group reported the highest percentage (95%) of respondents frequently observing the tactic. The demographic analysis also indicated the "5-9" (57%) and "15-19" groups reporting

the highest percentages observing the tactic always or almost always. In contrast, the "25-29" group (25%) consisted of the lowest percentage of respondents reporting the tactic always or almost always occurring.

Item 48. An effective politician proves him/herself to be a competent manager to those persons who control the resources.

Exhibiting competence to those who control the resources was perceived as a tactic that effective politicians would use frequently. Specifically, 50% reported observing this tactic always or almost always and 49% reported observing it often.

The demographic analysis revealed few differences. Specifically, respondents in the doctorate group (63%) reported a higher percentage indicating the tactic occurring always or almost always. Responses according to years of experience revealed the "20-24" and "24-29" groups reporting similarly high percentages (38%) observing the tactic always or almost always. Also, the "10-14" group (60%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Part B. Responses to Part B under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 1. Regular staff meetings provide an opportunity for individuals to inform others of their hard work and accomplishments.

Responses varied among student affairs administrators whether staff meetings should be used as opportunities to inform others of individual performance outcomes. Nevertheless, 79% reported that an

effective politician often or always or almost always uses staff meetings for the aforementioned purposes.

Responses by rank indicated the CSAO group (37%) reporting the strongest agreement with the statement and the entry level group (7%) the least in agreement. In the years of experience category, the "20-24" group (24%) expressed the highest percentage of disagreement with the statement.

Item 5. The organization values personal grooming and appearance, and directly or indirectly rewards individuals accordingly.

In responding to the statement, 71% strongly agreed or agreed that organizations value grooming and appearance and rewards individuals who conform.

Responses by gender revealed the majority of males and females strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. However, a higher percentage of males (61%) than females (49%) reported they agreed with this statement. Only 7% of the entry level respondents disagreed with the statement, and 20% of this same group did not perceive the behavior as a political tactic. In the years of experience category, the "20-24" group (29%) comprised the highest percentage indicating strong agreement and the "25-29" group (50%) included the highest cumulative percentage disagreeing with the statement.

Item 13. Competence is the key trait in building a positive image.

Eighty-four percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that competence is the key trait in building a positive image.



The analysis by demographics revealed that responses by each of the first groups in the rank, degree, and years of experience categories differed from other groups. Specifically, the entry level group reported 13% of its respondents who did not perceive the behavior to be a political tactic. The bachelor's group (19%) and the "0-4" group (24%) reported the highest percentages of respondents disagreeing with the statement.

Item 24. People who have a positive image are usually those who avoid "tooting their own horn"; they are working hard and their horns get "tooted" for them.

Student affairs administrators differed in their agreement whether a person should take the initiative to promote themselves. Of the total respondent group, 70% strongly agreed or agreed that diligent work efforts of individuals are noticed, so that they do not need to promote themselves.

The demographic analysis by rank showed the mid-level group (36%) indicating the highest cumulative percentage of disagreement with the statement. In the degree category, the master's group (33%) reported the highest cumulative percentage of disagreement and the entry level group (10%) reported the lowest cumulative percentage of disagreement. Responses by years of experience indicated the "20-24" group (15%) expressing the lowest cumulative percentage of disagreement with the statement.

### Building a Powerbase

There were 24 items describing political tactics under the construct, Building a Powerbase. The number of responses, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for each of the items is reported in Table 6. The frequencies reported according to the demographic categories can also be found in Table 6.

Part A. Responses to Part A under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: always or almost always (1), often (2), seldom (3), never or almost never (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 3. An effective politician learns about other work units/responsibilities by listening and building relationships with others.

Learning about other work units through building relationships is definitely viewed as a tactic used by effective politicians with 98% of the respondents reporting they observed this behavior often or always or almost always.

The demographic analysis revealed no real differences in responses with one exception. In the degree category, a high percentage of respondents in the doctorate group (82%) reported the tactic occurring always or almost always.

Item 5. An effective politician increases his/her power by obtaining knowledge that others need or perceive as helpful.

Virtually all respondents viewed collecting knowledge from others as a tactic frequently used by an effective politician; 97% observed this tactic being used almost always or often.

Table 6  
Frequency of Building a Powerbase Political Behaviors/Tactics Reported -- Parts A and B

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Rank (%)	Gender (%)		Entry	Mid	CSAO	Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)						
		Per-cent	Mean		SD	Female				Male	B.	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part A																			
3	68	1.4	.59	70	66	60	68	69	52	60	82	56	62	74	74	71	75		
N=179	31			28	33	31	30	31	48	36	18	38	38	26	26	29	13		
	.6			1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		
	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13		
	.6			1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		
5	43	1.6	.55	48	37	38	45	37	38	42	44	35	41	50	36	48	38		
N=179	54			49	59	53	53	59	62	53	55	62	57	48	61	43	63		
	3			2	4	0	3	4	0	5	2	3	3	2	3	10	0		
	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
8	30	1.8	.70	32	28	29	29	31	29	31	24	38	27	31	29	24	0		
N=179	65			65	66	65	66	65	57	64	74	59	68	62	68	71	100		
	3			1	4	0	5	0	10	2	2	0	5	7	0	0	0		
	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
	2			2	2	1	1	4	5	3	0	3	0	0	3	5	0		
10	53	1.6	.73	57	49	43	56	45	43	51	57	65	38	62	42	57	63		
N=179	42			37	47	41	41	45	57	41	40	32	54	33	55	33	38		
	3			2	3	0	2	6	0	3	3	0	5	5	0	5	0		
	.6			1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		
	2			2	1	4	1	4	0	3	0	0	3	0	3	5	0		
13	33	1.8	.71	30	36	24	37	24	19	35	36	24	30	31	42	48	29		
N=178	60			64	56	68	58	68	62	57	62	68	68	64	48	48	57		
	5			1	8	5	5	4	14	5	2	3	3	5	7	0	14		
	.6			1	0	0	0	2	5	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		
	2			3	0	2	1	2	0	3	0	3	0	0	3	5	0		

Table 6 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part A (continued)																		
16		45	1.7	.77	48	42	40	42	55	24	40	60	29	49	36	61	57	50
	N=179	47			44	49	47	51	35	67	50	37	53	51	55	32	29	50
		5			5	6	7	5	4	10	5	2	15	0	7	0	5	0
		2			1	3	7	1	4	0	3	2	3	0	2	3	5	0
		1			2	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	5	0
19		29	1.9	.86	33	26	40	29	28	5	35	29	27	24	33	29	24	38
	N=179	59			55	63	47	63	55	91	48	63	62	68	60	58	52	38
		7			9	6	7	7	8	5	13	2	12	3	7	3	14	13
		.6			0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
		4			3	4	7	2	8	0	3	7	0	5	0	7	10	13
20		56	1.5	.61	63	49	80	57	47	38	56	61	50	60	67	55	48	50
	N=179	41			37	44	20	38	51	62	39	37	50	38	29	42	52	25
		3			0	6	0	5	0	0	5	2	0	3	5	0	0	25
		0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		.6			0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
23		46	1.6	.70	56	37	53	44	51	43	43	57	41	46	43	55	48	38
	N=179	49			38	59	40	52	43	57	51	37	50	54	52	39	43	63
		3			5	1	7	3	2	0	3	3	9	0	0	3	5	0
		1			0	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	5	0
		1			1	1	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	3	0	0
24		9	2.7	.96	9	9	7	6	16	5	7	15	3	11	7	7	19	13
	N=178	37			36	37	53	40	24	48	43	23	44	42	41	39	19	13
		35			34	37	33	37	33	29	36	37	41	25	29	36	52	50
		16			17	14	0	15	22	19	12	21	9	14	21	16	10	25
		3			3	3	7	2	6	0	3	5	3	8	2	3	0	0

Table 6 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per-	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
		cent	Mean															
Part A (continued)																		
25	1	63	1.4	.52	65	61	73	63	61	29	67	69	53	60	71	65	76	63
N=179	2	35			34	37	27	36	37	71	31	29	47	38	26	36	19	38
	3	2			1	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	3	2	0	5	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	1	20	2.1	.83	27	13	13	21	22	24	15	29	18	19	17	26	24	25
N=179	2	55			56	53	67	54	53	33	61	53	44	65	60	61	52	25
	3	18			12	24	13	20	18	38	18	10	27	11	19	13	14	38
	4	6			3	8	7	5	6	5	6	5	12	3	5	0	10	0
	5	1			1	1	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	13
31	1	16	2.1	.82	16	16	13	15	18	14	18	11	18	11	14	13	29	25
N=179	2	64			66	61	60	64	63	62	64	65	62	70	69	68	38	50
	3	14			11	18	13	13	18	14	13	18	9	16	12	16	24	13
	4	3			3	3	0	5	0	5	5	2	8	0	5	0	5	0
	5	3			3	2	13	2	2	5	1	5	3	3	0	3	5	13
34	1	26	1.8	.67	34	19	40	26	24	10	28	26	21	35	36	19	14	13
N=179	2	68			61	74	53	68	71	76	69	66	74	60	57	71	81	88
	3	4			3	4	0	4	6	5	2	5	3	5	2	7	5	0
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	2			2	1	7	2	0	10	0	2	3	0	2	3	0	0
38	1	39	1.7	.62	38	40	33	44	31	29	38	40	47	27	48	42	24	38
N=179	2	56			58	53	67	50	65	71	57	53	50	70	48	58	62	38
	3	5			2	7	0	5	4	0	5	7	3	3	5	0	10	25
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	.6			1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)		Total Years Experience (%)								
		Per-cent	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
Part A (continued)																		
39	1	25	1.9	.80	27	23	27	23	28	14	24	27	29	22	26	19	29	13
N=178	2	63			58	67	60	62	67	62	63	63	53	72	50	71	71	75
	3	8			7	9	7	10	4	10	8	8	15	3	12	7	0	13
	4	2			3	0	0	2	2	10	1	0	0	3	5	0	0	0
	5	3			5	1	7	4	0	5	3	2	3	0	7	3	0	0
42	1	50	1.6	.77	57	43	60	52	45	29	53	55	56	49	50	48	48	63
N=179	2	43			37	49	40	42	45	62	40	42	35	46	45	45	38	38
	3	5			5	4	0	5	6	5	3	3	6	5	2	3	10	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	2			1	3	0	2	4	5	3	0	3	0	2	3	5	0
46	1	40	1.7	.76	46	33	33	39	43	38	32	48	27	38	50	52	33	38
N=179	2	52			46	58	60	52	49	48	59	47	65	54	41	45	48	63
	3	6			5	7	0	5	8	10	6	3	3	5	7	0	19	0
	4	1			0	2	0	2	0	5	0	2	3	0	2	0	0	0
	5	2			3	0	7	2	0	0	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	0
Part B																		
2	1	27	1.9	.77	33	21	47	21	33	24	30	23	27	27	31	23	43	0
N=179	2	63			55	70	47	67	57	71	61	61	68	62	57	61	48	88
	3	7			7	7	0	6	10	0	6	11	3	5	10	10	10	0
	4	2			2	1	0	3	0	5	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	13
	5	2			3	1	7	3	0	0	3	2	3	3	2	3	0	0
3	1	53	1.6	.77	60	46	53	51	57	43	50	60	50	57	50	48	57	50
N=179	2	43			33	52	40	44	39	57	42	39	41	38	45	48	38	50
	3	2			3	1	0	3	2	0	3	0	3	3	2	0	5	0
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	2			5	0	7	2	2	0	5	0	6	3	0	3	0	0

Table 6 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)				Total Years Experience (%)					
		Per- cent	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part B (continued)																	
6	1	19	2.0	.69	21	16	19	16	0	23	21	12	24	19	19	24	13
N=178	2	68			69	67	80	62	86	71	57	79	60	71	68	48	88
	3	10			9	11	0	9	10	6	15	6	16	2	10	24	0
	4	2			1	3	0	2	4	1	5	3	0	7	0	0	0
	5	1			0	2	0	1	2	5	0	0	0	0	3	5	0
						27	23	20	25	28	19	26	15	19	41	26	19
16	1	25	1.9	.62	65	63	67	64	63	61	66	82	65	45	61	71	75
	2	64			7	13	13	10	10	14	7	3	16	12	13	10	0
	3	10			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4	0			1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	.6			28	17	21	13	28	19	19	6	32	17	19	38	25
20	1	22	2.1	.82	48	62	60	57	49	58	48	61	49	56	65	43	63
	2	55			18	18	20	18	18	14	21	33	11	20	10	19	13
	3	18			3	2	7	2	4	0	2	5	0	7	0	0	0
	4	3			2	1	0	2	2	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	2			5	7	0	5	8	10	3	7	0	5	10	0	0
22	1	6	2.6	.77	43	40	60	40	40	41	44	38	51	43	27	43	63
	2	42			42	51	40	46	46	43	48	53	35	45	53	48	38
	3	46			8	1	0	5	4	5	2	6	5	2	3	10	0
	4	5			3	1	0	3	2	0	5	0	3	0	7	0	0
	5	2															

<sup>a</sup>Part A: 1 = always or almost always; 2 = often; 3 = seldom; 4 = never or almost never; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior  
 Part B: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior

<sup>b</sup>Degree: B = bachelor's; M = master's; D = doctoral

The demographic analysis revealed that more females (48%) than males (37%) reported observing this tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, the CSAO group (37%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 8. An effective politician who wants to move up in the organization associates closely with an administrator who is favorably recognized.

Most student affairs administrators viewed this behavior as a tactic frequently used by an effective politician. Specifically, 30% viewed the behavior as occurring always or almost always and 65% reported it as being observed often.

The demographic analysis revealed no real differences in responses with one exception; 100% of the respondents in the "25-29" years of experience group reported the tactic occurring often.

Item 10. An effective politician relies upon those organizational members whom he/she perceives as trustworthy and reliable.

Of the total respondent group, 95% perceived an effective politician as relying on others who are trustworthy and reliable.

Responses by gender indicated that more females (57%) than males (49%) reported observing this tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, the CSAO group reported the same percentage of respondents (48%) observing the tactic always or almost always as those observing it often. In the degree category, the bachelor's group (43%) reported a low percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses according to years of experience revealed



the "5-9" (38%) and "15-19" (42%) groups reporting low percentages observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 13. Proposals are usually accepted because the individual promoting the idea has done his/her homework and a good job of developing the concept.

Respondents generally agree that proposals presented by effective politicians are accepted because of preparatory efforts. Accordingly, 33% observed this to be true always or almost always and 60% observed the statement to be true often.

Responses by rank indicated the CSAO group (24%) reporting a low percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. In the degree category, the bachelor's group (19%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never. Among groups in the years of experience category, the "15-19" group (42%) and the "20-24" group (48%) reported the highest percentages observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 16. An effective politician builds a powerbase by allowing others to share ownership in ideas/projects.

Virtually all respondents (92%) reported that an effective politician purposefully involves others in projects as a means for building a powerbase.

In the rank category, the CSAO group (55%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. In the degree category, an increase in the percentages observing the tactic always or almost always was evident beginning with the

bachelor's group (24%) reporting the lowest, then the master's group (40%), followed by the doctorate group (60%). Responses according to years of experience showed the "0-4" group (18%) reporting the highest percentages observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never. Also, the "15-19" group (61%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 19. An effective politician makes friends with key subordinates who have access to information.

Responses to this statement suggest that the adage "information is power" is duly regarded by student affairs administrators. Of the total responses, 29% reported observing this behavior always or almost always, and 59% reported observing it often.

In the rank category, the entry level group (40%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses by degree revealed a low percentage of bachelor's group (5%) observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 20. An individual is empowered by being aware of the happenings/events within the organization.

Power through awareness is a tactic that is observed frequently by student affairs administrators. Specifically, 56% reported that they observed this behavior occurring always or almost always, and 41% reported it as occurring often.

The demographic analysis revealed more females (63%) than males (49%) observing this tactic always or almost always. Scores reflected by rank showed 80% of the entry level group observing the tactic always

or almost always. In the degree category, the bachelor's group (38%) reported the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses by years of experience indicated the "10-14" group (67%) and the "5-9" group (60%) reporting the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 23. When gathering information, an effective politician uses a variety of sources and avoids trusting only one source.

Responses indicated a general consensus that an effective politician gathers information from a variety of sources, rather than a single source. Forty-six percent of the respondents reported observing the tactic always or almost always, and forty-nine percent reported observing the behavior often.

Responses by gender indicated more females (56%) than males (37%) reported observing this tactic always or almost always. Within the rank category, the mid-level group (44%) reported a lower percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. In the degree category, the doctorate group (57%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Among groups in the years of experience category, the "15-19" group (55%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always and the "25-29" group (38%) reported the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic with similar frequency.

Item 24. An effective politician distributes power among a very small group.

Student affairs administrators observed an effective politician utilizing several persons rather than one to gain power. While 37% reported that they observed this tactic often, 35% of the respondents reported observing it seldom; and 16% view this tactic to never or almost never be used by an effective politician.

The demographic analysis by rank revealed the CSAO and the mid-level groups reporting similar percentages of respondents (55%) who seldom or never or almost never observed the tactic. According to the responses by degree, the doctorate group (58%) reported a high percentage observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never. In the years of experience category, 62% of the respondents in the "20-24" group and 75% in the "25-29" group reported that the tactic seldom or never or almost never occurs.

Item 25. An effective politician understands the top priority of his/her supervisor.

Understanding the top priorities of a supervisor is viewed as a tactic used with high frequency. Specifically, 98% of the respondents reported observing this tactic being used often or always or almost always by an effective politician.

In the rank category, the entry level group (73%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Responses by degree showed the bachelor's group (29%) reporting a lower percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or

almost always. Among the years of experience groups, the "10-14" group (71%) and the "20-24" group (76%) reported the highest percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Conversely, the "0-4" group (53%) reported the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 26. An effective politician avoids always having to be the "chief" when working with a collective project.

Respondents differed in their perceptions regarding whether an effective politician always has to be the chief. Seventy-five percent reported observing the tactic often or always or almost always.

The analysis by demographics revealed a higher percentage of females (27%) than males (13%) observing the tactic always or almost always. Additionally, a higher cumulative percentage of males (32%) than females (15%) reported seldom or never or almost never observing the tactic. According to responses by degree, the bachelor's group (43%) reported the highest cumulative percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never. Among groups in the years of experience category, the "0-4" group and the "25-29" group reported higher cumulative percentages of respondents (38%) reporting the tactic to seldom or never or almost never occur.

Item 31. An effective politician exchanges favors to get a specific goal accomplished.

Results indicated that student affairs administrators differ in the perspective regarding the use of favors to accomplish certain goals. In responding to the statement, 80% observed the tactic being used often or always or almost always.

The demographic analysis revealed no real differences with one exception. In the years of experience category, the "20-24" group (29%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. However, this same group also reported the highest cumulative percentage of respondents (29%) observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never.

Item 34. An effective politician fights for issues which are viewed as a high priority by the major players in an organization.

Again, student affairs administrators viewed an effective politician engaging in behavior that demonstrates a sensitivity about the priorities of the organization. Of the total respondent group, 94% reported observing the behavior often or always or almost always.

Responses by gender showed that a higher percentage of females (34%) than males (19%) reporting observing the tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, entry level respondents (40%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always. Comparisons of degree groups revealed the bachelor's group (10%) reporting the lowest percentage of respondents who observed the tactic always or almost always. In the years of experience category, the "5-9" group (35%) and "10-14" group (36%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 38. An effective politician increases his/her power through acquisition of additional responsibilities/programs, especially in those areas with high visibility.

Virtually all student affairs respondents (95%) reported observing effective politicians increasing their powerbase by increasing responsibilities in areas of high visibility.

The demographic analysis revealed few differences among respondent groups. Specifically, in the rank category, the mid-level group (44%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Within the years of experience category, the "5-9" group (27%) and "20-24" group (24%) reported the highest percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 39. An effective politician accumulates power through access to financial resources.

Student affairs administrators concurred that effective politicians accumulate power by accessing financial resources. Of the respondents, 25% reported this tactic to be used always or almost always and 63% reported it as being used often.

The demographic analysis revealed no real differences with one exception. Specifically, the bachelor's group reported the lowest percentage of respondents (14%) observing the tactic always or almost always and the highest cumulative percentage (20%) observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never.

Item 42. An effective politician builds a powerbase by taking the time to get to know others and to be accessible to them.

Respondents indicated that power frequently is obtained by investing in relationships with other members of the organization.

In responding to this statement, 50% perceive an effective politician as always or almost always using this tactic and 43% reported it being used often.

Responses by gender demonstrated a higher percentage of females (57%) than males (43%) observing the tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, the same percentage of respondents in the bachelor's group (45%) reported observing the tactic always or almost always as did those observing it often. Responses by degree revealed the bachelor's group (29%) reporting the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 46. Powerful individuals gain support for their ideas from a broad spectrum of people.

Student affairs administrators agreed that support is obtained by relying on multiple sources. Forty percent reported that effective politicians always or almost always gain support from a broad spectrum of people, while fifty-two percent reported it occurring oftentimes.

The demographic analysis revealed that a lower percentage of males (33%) than females (46%) observed this tactic occurring always or almost always. In the years of experience category, the "10-14" group (50%) and "15-19" group (52%) reported higher percentages of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. Also, the "20-24" group (19%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom.



Part B. Responses to Part B under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 2. Persuasion is an effective tool for winning others to an individual's point of view.

Student affairs administrators expressed general agreement that politically effective individuals view persuasion as an effective tool. Specifically, 27% strongly agreed and 63% agreed that persuasion is an effective tool for winning others to a particular viewpoint.

The analysis by demographics revealed a higher percentage of females (33%) than males (21%) strongly agreeing with this statement. Responses by rank revealed that 100% of the entry level respondents expressed strong agreement or agreement with the statement. Whereas, the mid-level (9%) and CSAO (10%) groups disagreed somewhat with the statement. A high percentage of those respondents (43%) with "20-24" years of experience expressed strong agreement with the statement. Of the few respondents in the "25-29" group, none indicated a score of strong agreement, although 88% of the respondents indicated their agreement with the statement.

Item 3. Competence serves as a foundation for building an individual powerbase.

Consistent with previous responses, student affairs administrators again viewed competence as a key trait. In this particular item, 95% agreed that competence serves as a foundation for building a powerbase.

Responses according to groups in the four demographic categories revealed no real differences with few exceptions. In the gender category, 60% of the females strongly agreed with the statement, in contrast to 46% of the males who strongly agreed. A trend of increased percentages of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement was demonstrated in the degree category. Specifically, the bachelor's group reported 43%, the master's group reported 50%, and the doctorate group reported 60% indicated strong agreement with the statement.

Item 6. Coalitions are built by identifying those coworkers who have similar attitudes/views and vying for their support.

Student affairs administrators expressed 68% agreement that coalitions are built by identifying individuals with similar perspectives and winning their support. Additionally, 19% strongly agreed that an effective politician would hold this attitude.

Responses by degree revealed that 86% of the bachelor's group agreed with the statement, although none of the respondents indicated strong agreement. A higher cumulative percentage of doctoral respondents (20%) disagreed with the statement. In the years of experience category, the "20-24" group (24%) reported the highest percentage disagreeing with the statement. One hundred percent of the respondents in the "25-29" group expressed agreement or strong agreement with the statement.

Item 16. Compromise is important because it allows others to have ownership in a decision.

Respondents (89%) agreed that compromise is important because it allows for ownership.

The demographic analysis revealed no real differences with few exceptions. Specifically, in the years of experience category, respondents in the "10-14" group reported comparable percentages of those who strongly agreed (41%) and those who agreed (45%) with the statement. This group also accounted for the highest percentage of scores expressing strong agreement among groups in all four demographic categories.

Item 20. Supervision of others, hiring/firing personnel, and budgetary decisions are administrative responsibilities associated with individual power.

Student affairs administrators differed in their perceptions regarding the power associated with supervisory, personnel, and budgetary responsibilities. Of the total respondent group, 22% expressed strong agreement, and 55% agreed that these responsibilities are associated with individual power.

Responses by gender indicated a higher percentage of females (28%) than males (17%) strongly agreeing with the statement. In the years of experience category, the "0-4" group (33%) expressed the highest percentage of disagreement with the statement.

Item 22. Persons most recently hired into the organization tend to have the most difficulty gaining power.

Respondents differed in their perceptions regarding the difficulty in gaining power by a newly hired person. Forty-two percent agreed

that persons recently hired into the organization tend to have the most difficulty gaining power and 46% disagreed with this attitude.

The demographic analysis revealed few differences in the scores reported by respondents in the four demographic categories compared to the total respondent group. Specifically, the entry level group (60%) reported a high percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement. Also, in the years of experience category, the "5-9" group (35%) reported a lower percentage of disagreement in comparison to other groups within the category.

#### Associating With the Influential

There were nine items describing political tactics under the construct, Associating With the Influential. The number of responses, frequencies, means, and standard deviations for each of the items are reported in Table 7. The frequencies reported according to the demographic categories can also be found in Table 7.

Part A. Responses to Part A under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: always or almost always (1), often (2), seldom (3), never or almost never (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 2. An effective politician develops relationships with the power players in the organization.

Responses indicated that student affairs administrators perceive the development of relationships with power players as a political tactic that occurs frequently. Virtually all respondents (99%) reported observing this behavior often or always or almost always.

Table 7  
 Frequency of Associating With the Influential Political Behaviors/Tactics Reported - Parts A and B

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population		Gender (%)		Rank (%)		Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)							
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part A																		
2	1	63	1.4	.56	65	60	67	60	69	43	64	68	59	60	71	58	76	38
	2	36			35	38	33	39	29	57	35	31	41	41	29	39	19	63
	3	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	4	1			0	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	5	0
	5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1	7	2.4	.75	8	6	0	10	2	15	3	6	6	11	10	7	0	0
	2	60			60	60	69	57	63	55	66	55	61	64	64	52	57	63
	3	26			26	26	8	29	26	25	23	31	21	19	24	32	33	25
	4	6			5	8	15	5	8	5	7	7	2	3	2	7	10	13
	5	1			1	1	8	0	2	0	1	2	0	3	0	3	0	0
6	1	36	1.8	.77	40	31	27	40	29	38	33	39	29	27	43	45	29	38
	2	58			55	60	67	54	63	52	61	55	62	70	52	45	57	63
	3	4			3	4	0	4	6	0	3	5	3	3	0	6	14	0
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	3			1	4	7	3	2	10	2	2	6	0	5	3	0	0
32	1	29	1.8	.73	35	22	47	27	28	24	30	31	32	30	36	16	29	13
	2	64			61	68	47	65	65	71	66	55	65	62	62	77	52	50
	3	5			2	8	0	7	2	5	3	8	3	3	2	7	10	25
	4	.6			0	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0
	5	2			2	2	7	1	4	0	1	5	0	5	0	0	5	13
33	1	25	1.9	.71	26	23	27	25	24	19	25	26	18	24	33	23	29	13
	2	67			66	67	67	67	65	71	68	61	77	70	60	68	48	75
	3	7			6	8	0	7	8	10	5	10	6	3	7	7	14	13
	4	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	2			2	2	7	1	4	0	2	3	0	3	0	3	10	0

Table 7 (continued)

Item #	Score <sup>a</sup>	Population			Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>b</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)					
		Per- cent	Mean	SD	Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Part A (continued)																		
36 N=179	1	36	1.7	.70	39	33	47	37	33	24	35	40	41	27	43	32	38	38
	2	59			56	61	47	58	63	67	60	55	53	65	55	65	52	63
	3	3			2	3	0	3	4	0	2	5	3	3	0	3	10	0
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	2			2	1	7	2	0	10	1	0	3	5	0	0	0	0
Part B																		
7 N=179	1	32	1.8	.65	42	22	40	33	28	29	35	32	21	49	29	32	29	25
	2	60			51	69	60	55	69	62	55	63	77	46	55	65	57	63
	3	7			7	8	0	10	4	10	8	5	3	5	12	3	14	13
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	.6			1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
12 N=179	1	9	2.5	.73	10	8	20	8	8	14	10	5	9	8	12	13	5	0
	2	36			35	37	53	33	35	29	42	31	47	41	29	36	24	38
	3	50			51	50	27	54	51	57	44	55	41	46	55	45	67	50
	4	5			5	6	0	5	6	0	3	10	3	5	5	7	5	13
	5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21 N=177	1	15	2.0	.54	21	10	33	16	10	10	17	15	18	14	24	7	19	0
	2	72			68	77	53	72	78	71	72	73	65	78	66	81	71	75
	3	12			12	12	13	12	12	19	9	13	18	8	7	13	10	25
	4	.6			0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
	5	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

<sup>a</sup>Part A: 1 = always or almost always; 2 = often; 3 = seldom; 4 = never or almost never; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior  
Part B: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree; 5 = not a political tactic/behavior

<sup>b</sup>Degrees: B = baccalaureate; M = master's; D = doctoral

Responses by degree showed the bachelor's degree group (43%) reporting a lower percentage of respondents observing the tactic almost always. Furthermore, in the years of experience category, the "20-24" group (76%) reported a higher percentage of respondents observing the tactic almost always. In contrast, the "25-29" group (38%) reported a lower percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 4. An effective politician utilizes a third party contact when attempting to influence decision-makers.

Respondents indicated the greatest amount of variances in their perceptions regarding this particular statement as compared with all items comprising Part A of the construct, Associating With the Influential. Although 67% observed the tactic occurring often or always or almost always, 32% reported observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never.

Responses reported by rank indicated the entry level group (23%) reporting the lowest cumulative percentage of respondents observing the tactic seldom or never or almost never, although the entry level group (15%) reported the highest percentage never or almost never observing the tactic. Scores reported by degree showed the bachelor's group (15%) reporting a higher percentage of respondents indicating they always or almost always observed the tactic. The most noticeable differences evident in the years of experience category existed among the groups with the most longevity. The "14-19" (39%), "20-24" (43%), and "25-29" (38%) groups comprised the highest percentages reporting the tactic to be observed seldom or never or almost never.

Item 6. An effective politician chooses mentors who are perceived by others as key players.

Respondents indicated a general consensus that politically effective individuals choose mentors who are perceived as key players; 95% reported observing this phenomenon occurring always or almost always or often.

Responses by gender indicated more females (40%) than males (31%) observing this tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, the mid-level group (40%) reported the highest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. In the years of experience category, the "10-14" (43%) and "15-19" (45%) groups reported the highest percentages observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 32. Once initial contact is made with an influential person, an effective politician seeks opportunities to make subsequent contacts.

Most student affairs administrators agreed that contact with key persons is a tactic frequently utilized by a politically effective individual. Specifically, 29% of the respondents always or almost always observed an effective politician seeking opportunities to contact an influential person. Sixty-four percent reported observing this tactic being used often.

Responses by gender indicated a higher percentage of females (35%) than males (22%) observing the tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, the entry level administrators indicated the same percentage (47%) of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always as those observing it often. In the years of experience



category, the "15-19" group (16%) and the "25-29" group (13%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always.

Item 33. An effective politician spends extra time with others who hold key information, because it increases the opportunity to ask appropriate questions at the right time to gain the desired information.

Responses indicated general agreement that an effective politician would utilize this tactic. Twenty-five percent of the respondents viewed this tactic as occurring always or almost always, and sixty-seven percent viewed it as recurring often.

The analysis by demographics revealed no real differences in respondent groups in the four categories.

Item 36. An effective politician identifies key persons in the organization, in terms of influence, and builds relationships with these people.

Once again, respondents seemed to view building relationships with key persons or influential persons as a tactic that a politically effective individual would engage in frequently. Accordingly, 36% agreed that this tactic is used always or almost always, and 59% agreed that it is used often.

Responses by rank revealed similar percentages of respondents in the entry level group (47%) observing the tactic always or almost always and observing it often. In the degree category, the bachelor's group (24%) contained the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always. In the years of experience

category, the "5-9" (27%) group reported the lowest percentage of respondents observing the tactic always or almost always.

Part B. Responses to Part B under Research Question 1 were in the form of a 5-point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), strongly disagree (4), and not a political tactic/personal characteristic (5).

Item 7. Attendance at social events hosted by the organization and associated units is very important.

Most student affairs administrators agreed that a politically effective individual would consider attendance at social events to be very important. In responding to the statement, 92% strongly agreed or agreed that social attendance is important.

The demographic analysis revealed that a higher percentage of females (42%) than males (22%) observed the tactic occurring always or almost always. In the rank category, 100% of the entry level administrators expressed their agreement with this statement, with 40% indicating strong agreement. In terms of years of experience, the "5-9" group (49%) expressed the highest percentage of strong agreement.

Item 12. Social contacts provide the most effective way of associating with the influential members within an organization.

Although respondents perceived attendance at social events to be important (as demonstrated in item 7), they did not view social contacts as the most effective method for associating with influential members. Interestingly, 36% agreed that social contacts provided the most viable method; whereas, 50% disagreed with this statement.

Responses by rank indicated the mid-level (59%) and CSAO (57%) groups expressing the highest cumulative percentages of disagreement with the statement. The majority of responses in both the bachelor's (57%) and doctorate (65%) groups indicated general disagreement with the statement. In contrast, the majority of respondents in the master's group (52%) expressed general agreement with the statement. With one exception, the majority of respondents in all groups comprising the years of experience category expressed general disagreement with the statement. Fifty-six percent of the respondents in the "0-4" group strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

Item 21. Association with influential members in the organization is primarily based on an individual's access to those key people.

Virtually all student affairs administrators (97%) concurred that associating with key or influential persons in the organization is based primarily on access to these people.

The demographic analysis revealed few differences among groups in the four categories. Responses by gender showed a higher percentage of females (21%) than males (10%) observing the tactic always or almost always. In the rank category, a high percentage of entry level respondents (33%) expressed strong agreement as compared to the mid-level (16%) and the CSAO (10%) groups. In the years of experience category, the "10-14" group (24%) reported the highest percentage observing the tactic always or almost always and the "15-19" group (7%) reported the lowest percentage observing the tactic with similar frequency.

### Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asks: What personal characteristics are associated with individuals perceived as politically effective?

Data relating to the second research question were obtained through the use of a 30-item checklist of personal characteristics. Respondents were asked to indicate the personal characteristics they associated with a politically effective individual. Responses were limited to items on the checklist, included as the third and final section of the survey instrument. Results by the total respondent groups and the demographic categories are reported in Table 8.

The personal characteristics associated with a politically effective individual by 70% or more of the total respondent group included: articulate (85%), self-confident (85%), competent (84%), able to motivate others (82%), and goal-oriented (74%). The demographic analysis revealed no real differences in the rank and degree categories and few differences in the gender and years of experience categories.

Responses by gender showed a higher percentage of females than males associating the characteristics articulate (90% versus 80%) and able to motivate others (87% versus 77%) with a politically effective individual. In the years of experience category, the characteristic self-confident was given a low rating by the "15-19" group (74%) and a high rating by the "25-29" group (100%). Competent was a characteristic highly regarded by both the "15-19" (94%) and "25-29" (100%) groups. These same two groups differed in their perceptions regarding

Table 8  
 Personal Characteristics Associated With Effective Politicians as Perceived by Student Affairs Administrators

Characteristics	Total Respondents (%)	Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>a</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)					
		Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Articulate	.85	.90	.80	.87	.85	.86	.91	.83	.86	.79	.81	.91	.84	.91	1.00
Self-confident	.85	.87	.83	.93	.84	.84	.86	.86	.82	.88	.87	.86	.74	.91	1.00
Competent	.84	.84	.83	.87	.80	.90	.81	.84	.87	.79	.81	.83	.94	.81	1.00
Able to Motivate Others	.82	.87	.77	.80	.80	.84	.86	.84	.77	.79	.87	.83	.94	.76	.50
Goal-oriented	.74	.78	.70	.80	.72	.75	.76	.73	.73	.77	.73	.74	.77	.71	.63
Credible	.67	.74	.59	.73	.63	.75	.52	.67	.69	.59	.73	.67	.68	.71	.63
Sense of Humor	.63	.63	.62	.67	.58	.73	.48	.69	.63	.59	.54	.69	.58	.67	.75
Ambitious	.61	.61	.61	.80	.59	.61	.62	.61	.57	.71	.62	.52	.58	.81	.38
Trustworthy	.60	.58	.62	.60	.55	.73	.48	.63	.63	.56	.54	.60	.74	.52	.75
Successful	.60	.57	.63	.67	.62	.55	.52	.58	.65	.62	.54	.64	.45	.76	.88
Socially Adept	.59	.62	.57	.67	.62	.53	.57	.58	.60	.59	.51	.67	.52	.67	.50
Competitive	.58	.55	.62	.67	.57	.59	.71	.57	.53	.62	.65	.50	.48	.71	.75
Honest	.57	.56	.58	.60	.52	.67	.43	.56	.63	.56	.51	.62	.55	.57	.63
Respectful	.51	.52	.51	.47	.49	.57	.29	.58	.53	.35	.51	.62	.48	.57	.50
Visionary/Predictive	.50	.61	.40	.60	.48	.53	.29	.53	.53	.50	.41	.64	.58	.38	.38
Judicious	.49	.52	.46	.40	.43	.63	.48	.46	.57	.41	.57	.45	.45	.57	.50

Table 8 (continued)

Characteristics	Total Respondents (%)	Gender (%)		Rank (%)			Degree <sup>a</sup> (%)			Total Years Experience (%)					
		Female	Male	Entry	Mid	CSAO	B	M	D	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
Sensitive	.49	.47	.50	.47	.44	.59	.24	.50	.55	.44	.46	.50	.48	.57	.50
Loyal	.48	.43	.53	.40	.44	.59	.43	.42	.60	.41	.46	.52	.48	.38	.88
Patient	.45	.45	.44	.60	.40	.51	.33	.46	.48	.47	.46	.45	.45	.38	.50
Logical	.45	.44	.46	.53	.40	.53	.24	.48	.50	.44	.38	.48	.42	.48	.75
Aggressive	.42	.39	.44	.47	.40	.45	.52	.40	.40	.35	.51	.38	.39	.52	.38
Organizational Person	.41	.51	.33	.67	.42	.35	.43	.48	.32	.47	.49	.41	.36	.43	.50
Extroverted	.39	.45	.33	.47	.40	.35	.43	.41	.36	.41	.43	.33	.39	.38	.38
Popular	.35	.30	.40	.40	.32	.41	.43	.38	.29	.27	.22	.43	.39	.43	.50
Independent	.35	.36	.33	.33	.30	.43	.33	.32	.40	.35	.30	.41	.42	.29	.25
Highly Intelligent	.34	.39	.28	.53	.30	.35	.29	.34	.34	.35	.27	.43	.16	.33	.50
Gregarious	.23	.19	.27	.33	.23	.20	.24	.23	.24	.21	.16	.29	.23	.33	.25
Stand Apart from the Crowd	.23	.26	.20	.13	.25	.22	.24	.19	.29	.15	.24	.33	.19	.19	.25
Manipulative	.22	.20	.23	.20	.21	.24	.38	.18	.19	.24	.30	.14	.19	.29	.13
Devious	.08	.06	.11	.07	.10	.06	.14	.08	.08	.09	.08	.12	.03	.05	.13

<sup>a</sup>Rank: B = baccalaureate; M = master's; D = doctoral

the characteristic, able to motivate others. While 94% of the "15-19" group indicated it was important, only 50% of the "25-29" group shared similar views. The "25-29" group also viewed the characteristic, goal-oriented, as less important in comparison to other groups.

The personal characteristics associated with a politically effective individual by 30% or less of the total respondent group included: gregarious (23%), stand apart from the crowd (23%), manipulative (22%), and devious (8%). The demographic analysis revealed no real differences in the gender category and few differences in the rank, degree, and years of experience categories.

Both the entry level group in the rank category and the "20-24" group in the years of experience category indicated a higher percentage of respondents (33%) associating the characteristic, gregarious, with a politically effective individual. Responses to the characteristic, stand apart from the crowd, revealed the entry level group (13%) reporting the lowest percentage of respondents among all groups that associated this characteristic with a politically effective individual. Conversely, the "10-14" group (33%) reported the highest percentage among all groups viewing this same characteristic as important. In comparison to groups in all four demographic categories, the bachelor's group (38%) reported the highest percentage of respondents associating the characteristic, manipulative, with a politically effective individual.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter begins with a summary of the study and presentation of the conclusions drawn from the results. In the following sections, the implications of the findings and limitations of the research are discussed. Finally, recommendations for further study are made.

Summary

The purposes of the study were to identify: (a) tactics perceived as being used most often by political actors in student affairs organizations, and (b) personal characteristics associated with individuals perceived as politically effective.

An instrument was developed to collect information regarding organizational politics in student affairs organizations. The instrument was divided into two major sections according to the research questions. The first section was further organized in two parts. The survey was sent to members of the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA). Of the 235 surveys mailed out, 179 were returned completed and used in the data analysis. This total represented a 76% return rate.

Responses to the survey were tabulated and computed in congruence with the two research questions. The data related to the first research question were arranged according to the four constructs or themes previously identified in the literature review and expert



group interviews. Frequency tables were used to report and analyze the data.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions emerged.

1. Administrators acknowledged the existence of political activities in the workplace and were willing to identify those political behaviors frequently observed.

2. Student affairs administrators generally agreed that organizational grapevines are perceived as important sources of information that are developed within the informal structure of the organization and based upon personal relationships. The credibility of these information sources are perceived as being related to the key persons connected to the grapevine.

3. The negative use of information as a political tactic was not frequently observed nor highly regarded by respondents.

4. Student affairs administrators generally agreed that an effective politician promotes his/herself by presenting a positive image. However, overt self-promotion as a political strategy was not reported as frequently observed. Interestingly, a higher percentage of the CSAO group than the entry or mid-level groups indicated that employees should inform supervisors of their work progress. In contrast, a higher percentage of the entry and mid-level groups than the CSAO group indicated that an effective politician informs his/her

constituents of what has been done for them. These results seemed to reinforce the perceptions that self-promotion is important, but student affairs administrators are reluctant to engage in over self-promotion.

5. Student affairs administrators generally agreed that an effective politician becomes a part of the organization by being aware of and conforming to the norms of a particular organization.

6. Student affairs administrators concurred that building an individual powerbase is a behavior frequently engaged in by effective politicians. They also indicated that an individual powerbase is created by increasing visibility, primarily through association with the major players and those issues/programs viewed as a high priority in the organization.

7. Student affairs administrators generally agreed that information is a key source to building an individual powerbase. Gathering information that others need, increasing one's awareness of events in the environment, and linking with people who have access to information were reported as methods frequently used to increase an individual's powerbase. Respondents also indicated that it is useful to expand basic sources of information, rather than relying on limited sources.

8. Student affairs administrators generally agreed that effective politicians identify key persons in the organization and seek opportunities to maintain contact and to establish relationships with these people.

9. Although social events are perceived as important, student affairs administrators failed to view social contacts as the most effective means of accessing key persons. However, the results indicated that females and entry level administrators reported strong agreement that attendance at work-sponsored social events to be useful political tools.

10. A consistent trend identified within each of the four major constructs was the notion that an effective politician takes the time and effort to build relationships with others. Relationships are developed by sharing power with others, keeping promises, and being accessible.

11. The five personal characteristics most often associated with a politically effective individual by student affairs administrators are: (a) articulate, (b) self-confident, (c) competent, (d) motivator, and (e) goal-oriented.

12. The five personal characteristics least often associated with a politically effective individual by student affairs administrators are: (a) devious, (b) manipulative, (c) stands apart from the crowd, (d) gregarious, and (e) highly intelligent.

### Implications

The results of this study indicate that politics permeates the organizational environment, and student affairs administrators acknowledge the existence of politics in their particular organizations. If politics is the use of influence, then there is some efficacy to increasing an individual's awareness and understanding about the particular strategies and behaviors utilized in the influence process.

#### Implications for Student Affairs

##### Organizations

Political activities often occur even before an individual becomes a member of the organization. This is especially true in the interview process. During this process, candidates who are able to read and accurately project an image that makes a positive impression upon the interviewer have a distinct advantage over other candidates. Moreover, organizational administrators should be concerned about the effect this may have in achieving the assumed goal of hiring the most competent and skilled candidates. Additionally, methods for goal-setting and performance evaluation tend to rely heavily on the employee providing information to the supervisor. This situation obviously allows the employee to promote a positive image by setting high goals and directing attention to successes and downplaying failures and/or mediocrity. The study also indicates that learning the rules and abiding by the norms of the organization is a behavior observed with high frequency.

Organizations should assess what the norms of the organization are perceived to be and determine if this is truly the message intended. This task can be accomplished partly by looking at the reward allocation process to determine what behaviors/performances are being rewarded and what is the criteria for evaluation.

Organizational environments should be designed to develop and maintain an open and trusting atmosphere, thereby decreasing the need and/or desire of members to operate within the informal structure of the organization or engaging the informal processes in the services of the organizational goals. Although organizational grapevines are viewed as credible and important sources of information, increasing communication among members would lessen the need for such a vehicle. More importantly, it would encourage cooperation and allow more people to share in the power.

#### Implications for Managers/Supervisors in Student Affairs Organizations

Although politics is not a practice limited to the managerial and supervisory ranks, administrators are typically in a more advantageous position in terms of access to information, the decision-making processes, and financial resources. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that managers have a greater opportunity to manage the political environment. There are several strategies that can be incorporated to discourage the use of negative politics while utilizing the positive aspects of the political culture. As suggested in the

literature review, the negative use of politics increases in environments with a high degree of uncertainty or ambiguity. Consequently, managers should take steps to increase communication and accessibility to information, in an effort to curtail the uncertainty and ambiguity. Specifically, managers can create multi-directional systems for disseminating information to members in the various units and levels of the organization. In addition, managers should be aware of those actions that may be perceived as condoning illegitimate political activities within both the formal and informal structure of the organization, and avoid or modify these behaviors.

Whereas norms are certainly useful in avoiding anarchism, managers should inventory existing norms and assess their usefulness as guidelines, and not as a means for stifling creative and independent thinking. Managers should provide all employees with opportunities to prove their competence and reliability. This strategy will also assist managers in discovering new talent with whom to share responsibility, thereby increasing production and quality of work output. Managers can increase personal and organizational power by participating and succeeding in those activities/issues viewed as a high priority. Most importantly, the study indicated that effective politicians are people who take the time and interest to build relationships with others. The strategies summarized in this section can facilitate a manager's attempt to develop relationships and effectively communicate with others.

Implications for Individual Members of  
Student Affairs Organizations

The top five personal characteristics most often associated with a politically effective individual coupled with the political strategies identified in this study indicate that an individual can learn the skills necessary to cope in the political culture of an organization. Moreover, an individual can learn the skills necessary to become a player in the political arena.

The results of this study lead to several suggestions for ways in which a person can become an effective politician. Specifically, the individual should become familiar with the norms of the organization and operate in accordance with these norms when possible. Student affairs administrators should invest the time and effort to build relationships with a variety of people, including colleagues, subordinates, supervisors, and high level administrators. An effective politician seeks opportunities to establish contact with these persons and works to maintain the contact.

In addition, it is beneficial to build relationships with those persons viewed as the power players in the organization, as well as persons who have access to necessary and/or useful information. Information is important because it enables an effective politician to be involved in and aware of the events and happenings in the organization.

According to the results of the study, competence is a characteristic closely associated with an effective politician. Administrators can demonstrate competence through both the quality of their work and attitude. In addition, they should look for additional responsibilities and ensure that the task is followed through to completion in a quality manner. This type of consistent performance should allow for others to build trust in the individual and his/her abilities. Personal characteristics such as being articulate and self-confident can also be developed by an individual. Professional and personal development seminars and programs are available to persons desiring to develop these skills. Public speaking, assertiveness training, and goal-setting and decision-making are but a few examples of the types of programs available to assist people in developing or improving the skills perceived as important to being an effective politician.

#### Implications for Student Affairs

##### Professional Preparation

Based on the conclusions emerging from this study indicating that political activities are frequently observed by student affairs administrators and the inference that political skills can be learned, student affairs educators have a responsibility to educate students in graduate programs regarding this particular topic. Knowledge about political skills should be treated similarly as the topic of leadership which has traditionally been viewed as an extremely relevant skill/topic to the academic preparation of future administrators. As



suggested in current literature, today's successful leader is an adept politician.

Also, information regarding the dynamics of political cultures should be offered to both new and seasoned student affairs administrators through staff development programs. Increasing one's awareness of politics will expedite the individual's acclimation into the organization and assist him/her in surviving and/or coping within the political system.

#### Limitations on the Interpretations of the Findings

The study was intended to initiate basic research on organizational politics in the student affairs field. Some evidence of validity was presented; however, the instrument needs to be refined through further review and field testing. Additionally, the personal characteristics checklist included as a part of the survey was not intended to be exhaustive. Items on the list emerged from the related literature and interviews with the expert panels.

The population of the study was limited to members of the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA). Caution is advised in attempting to generalize results of this study to other administrators within or outside the student affairs profession.

Responses categorized according to an individual's primary job function were not included in the data analysis due to the excessive

and varied options resulting in this particular demographic category. Also, any group including five respondents or less within each of the four demographic categories were not included in the discussion of the data. As a result, the following groups were excluded from the presentation and discussion of the data: specialist degree (5), associate degree (1), and law degree (1); "30-34" (4) and "35-39" (2). It should be noted that the responses of each respondent falling in one of the above groups was discussed as represented by the total group responses and by gender and rank categories.

Although it was suggested in the review of the literature that organizational politics is perceived as a sensitive topic by many people, it is assumed that respondents were honest in reporting their perceptions and attitudes.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Future research on this topic should search for explanations of the trend noted between male and female responses, identifying why females typically reported a response indicating stronger agreement and a higher frequency of observation than males. In 59 of the 72 items describing political tactics/behaviors, a higher percentage of females than males reported scores of 1 (always or almost always/strongly agree more). This researcher could find no plausible explanation for this particular trend. Also, further study should be done regarding the difficulty in accessing power by persons newly hired into an organization. Additionally, more detailed investigation

should be conducted into the organizational situations or contexts which tend to facilitate the use of political tactics (e.g., interview process, advancement and promotion, decision-making). It would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study of the perceptions of student affairs administrators regarding political activities, comparing attitudes in the first 3 years to attitudes after 10 years of longevity.

Another future direction would be to compare the 10 characteristics most and least often associated with politicians as reported by student affairs administrators with administrators in other professional areas. A study considering the relationship between ethics and politics would be useful in addressing the issue of negative and positive perceptions of political behavior.

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APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF FOUR CONSTRUCTS/THEMES  
RELATED TO ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS

**INFORMATION USAGE**

Information can be used as a political tool. Techniques such as withholding, distorting, and blocking are used to manipulate information. Additional tactics of information use include screening data before it is distributed and overwhelming a person with data to hide or shadow pertinent details. Another political tactic of information use is establishing personal relationships or networking for the purpose of gaining access to valuable information, both inside and outside the organization. Information gathering is a tool used for developing new ideas or programs. Acquiring information about other programs allows colleagues to assist each other in achieving organizational goals.

**IMAGE BUILDING**

Image building is a political tool used to promote self-interest. The goal of image building is to present oneself or one's organizational unit in the most favorable light. Image building includes general appearance, personal style, and sensitivity to organizational norms. Additional tactics for self-promotion include drawing attention to individual successes and accomplishments, accepting undeserved credit or ownership for ideas and contributions, building a reputation for being liked, and creating a unique, but suitable identity. Persons may attempt to disguise poor performance or undesirable personal traits as another technique of image building. It is equally important to promote one's image with subordinates, colleagues, and supervisors.

**BUILDING A POWERBASE**

Techniques for building an individual powerbase are unique to organizational norms and values. Political tactics used to acquire power focus on competent performance, coalition building, responsibility for key programs (or those with high visibility), and access to limited resources and valuable information. Additional techniques include denigrating persons with opposing ideas and objectives, undercutting cooperative efforts by pitting one person against another, using both persuasion and manipulation to win support, and hoarding responsibility for decision-making. Both the formal and informal organizational structures provide opportunities for persons to accumulate power.

**ASSOCIATING WITH THE INFLUENTIAL**

Associating with the influential is a political tool used to gain access to the decision makers within the organization. Social activities often serve as the primary means of interacting with organization members perceived as influential. Informal interactions are viewed as necessary since traditional bureaucratic hierarchies fail to accommodate regular meetings between the lower and upper echelons of the organization. In addition, persons may seize opportunities to be involved in activities with influential persons outside their organization/unit.

**CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS**

APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL POLITICAL BEHAVIOR/TACTIC  
ITEMS SENT TO EXPERT PANEL

103-1. A person withholds information from others by not releasing information specifically requested by another or by being vague in presenting information.

71-2. Information discussed in a private, confidential meeting is later distorted to one person's advantage.

82-3. Jargon is used in presentation of information to mask its inaccuracy or to prevent others from comprehending the true meaning.

59-4. Information is exaggerated to help a person get out of a "tight spot", e.g., the person says he/she has been trying to contact someone when in truth only one attempt was made

39-5. A person controls channels of communication so as to prevent information from reaching the intended receiver/destination.

114-6. In terms of reports, information is manipulated by being delayed

58-7. The volume of information presented in a meeting prevents others from being able to adequately evaluate the facts; forcing them to blindly trust the presenter of the information.

124-8. It is important to screen information to determine what is to be passed on and what is to be discarded.

15-9. When passing responsibility for a position or project on to another person, the prior administrator withholds vital information causing the new administrator to continually search for information.

122-10. It is important to "test the waters" (e.g., informally present idea or feedback) on an issue before formally presenting idea to the decision makers.

91-11. When gathering information, it is important to use a variety of sources and avoid trusting only one source.

72-12. It is useful to gather information because you can't help others if you don't know something about their business.

98-13. Proposals are usually accepted because the person promoting the idea has done his/her homework and a good job of developing the concept.

16-14. In order to extract information, a person has regular interaction with another who holds needed information.

40-15. A person learns about other work units/responsibilities by listening and building relationships with others.

14-16. The more time an individual spends with another who holds key information, the greater the opportunity to ask appropriate questions at the right time to gain the desired information.

83-17. There are key persons who are not the keepers of information but the gatherers of information and are known and trusted to share information only when appropriate.

108-18. It is important to identify key persons in the organization, in terms of influence, and to build a relationship with these people.

17-19. It is helpful to make friends with key subordinates who have access to information.

41-20. The grapevine is related to the informal organizational structure and is based on personal relationships among staff.

121-21. Every unit has an "unofficial" person who excels in utilizing the grapevine for obtaining information.

73-22. Individuals are able to access the grapevine because they tend to socialize across units and developed outside contacts.

60-23. The grapevine provides information quicker than the usual administrative channels, bypassing several layers of organizational hierarchy.

18-24. Decisions are often made based upon information derived from the grapevine.

42-25. It is difficult to develop a grapevine in organizations where staff have little social contact.

104-26. Grapevines are not well developed in organizations lacking an atmosphere of trust among staff.

92-27. The grapevine serves as an important source of information, whose credibility depends upon the major players connected to the grapevine.

84-28. The grapevine serves as an effective medium for relaying information about job performance to a supervisor.

19-29. People who have a positive image are usually those who avoid "tooting their own horn"; they're working hard and their horn gets "tooted" for them.

43-30. There exists a need for self-promotion because most systems fail to adequately reward hard work and competence.

120-31. Individuals have to pat themselves on the back because work is not consistently acknowledged by higher level administrators.

61-32. If a supervisor fails to inquire about the work progress of an individual, that person should inform the supervisor of his/her performance.

74-33. When compliments are received from others outside the unit, the recipient should ensure that the supervisor sees a copy of the acknowledgement.

20-34. It is important to draw attention to other's successes/contributions through recognition.

44-35. An administrator should pursue ongoing skill development training and inform others of accomplishments.

99-36. Attendance at social events hosted by the organization and associated units is very important.

112-37. Regular staff meetings provide an opportunity for individuals to inform others of their hard work and accomplishments.

117-38. Newsletters, bulletins, summary reports should be used as methods for informing others of an individual's hard work and accomplishments.

21-39. It is important to fight for issues which are viewed as a high priority by the major players in an organization.

45-40. Building a reputation for being liked is often based on demonstrating a "can-do" attitude and following through with this attitude.

62-41. Phonies are easy to spot - an individual cannot build an image that doesn't fit the person.

93-42. People who consistently act out their beliefs create a positive image

75-43. An individual of integrity can make a difference in how the organization's image is perceived both internally and externally.

22-44. Faithfulness, trust, responsibility, and respect are solid traits with which to build a favorable image.

46-45. Competence is the key trait to building a positive image.

85-46. A person cannot promote a positive image if the individual lacks substantive character.

109-47. When associating with higher level administrators, it is imperative that the individual present himself/herself with the utmost of professional character.

63-48. It is imperative that a person dress according to organizational norms rather than personal preferences.

23-49. The organization values personal grooming and appearance, and directly or indirectly rewards individuals accordingly.

47-50. A person's appearance should project an image of a professional person who is more capable than present responsibilities suggest

105-51. A person should dress in similar fashion to those administrators at least one level higher in the hierarchy.

100-52. It is equally important to project a positive image with subordinates and colleagues as with higher level administrators.

76-53. A person's concern with projecting a positive image is directed only towards higher level administrators.



24-54. A third party contact is utilized when attempting to influence decision makers.

48-55. A favorable image is created by treating people like people.

115-56. Building a favorable image requires a person to take time to be friendly and to interact with others.

64-57. It is important to maintain an independent image by avoiding too close an association with another administrator.

86-58. It is important to build an independent image to avoid being brought down with a failing associate.

25-59. An effective way to move up in the organization is to closely associate oneself with an administrator who is favorably recognized in the organization.

49-60. A person deliberately assesses (in)congruence between organizational and personal values prior to agreeing to join the organization.

94-61. A person should be sensitive to organizational norms and attempt to conform to these norms.

125-62. A person learns to play by the rules of the organization.

77-63. A person should attempt to conform to organizational norms even when there is personal disagreement.

26-64. A person should be careful not to alienate others or "step on toes" when taking a project from another person.

01-65. Power is gained by increased length of service with the organization.

65-66. People who were most recently hired by the organization tend to have the most difficulty gaining power.

50-67. Manipulating others is a commonly used technique in increasing a person's powerbase.

119-68. In building a powerbase it is important to take the time to get to know others and to be accessible to them.

113-69. Part of building a powerbase is shielding the supervisor from surprises.

02-70. Power is accumulated through access to financial resources.

27-71. Power increases through acquisition of additional responsibilities/programs, especially those with high visibility.

87-72. Administrative responsibilities associated with individual power include supervision of others, hiring/firing personnel, and budgetary decisions.

101-73. Individuals increase their power by obtaining knowledge that others need or perceive as helpful.

51-74. Compromise is important because it allows others to have ownership in a decision.

03-75. An individual builds a powerbase by allowing others to share ownership in ideas/projects.

28-76. An influence tactic used most often among colleagues is coalition building.

66-77. Persuasion is an effective tool for winning others to an individual's point of view.

78-78. Powerful individuals are able to gain support for their ideas from a broad spectrum of people.

95-79. A coalition is built by identifying those coworkers who have similar attitudes/views and vying for their support.

04-80. Competence serves as a foundation for building an individual powerbase.

29-81. Competence is important in building a powerbase, but it is equally important that the individual be aware of the happenings/events surrounding him/her.

106-82. Long range, solid power is based on the fact that an individual knows what he/she is doing, and can demonstrate and justify subsequent outcomes.

52-83. Power obtained by being a favorite son/daughter is usually short term.

110-84. An individual makes supervisors and other administrators aware of his/her skills and desires for advancement.

05-85. An administrator becomes territorial about programs in an effort to maintain individual power within the organization.

30-86. An administrator distributes power among a very small group.

67-87. People who misuse power undermine the goals of the organization and eventually "do themselves in."

88-88. An administrator circumvents hierarchical lines of communication, either upward or downward, to get a direct response.

79-89. A new person to the organization does his/her "homework" on the organization by reading past files and talking to people about the organization's history.

06-90. An administrator is sensitive to the priorities of a supervisor, and pursues those projects that best match the supervisor's priorities.

31-91. It is important to identify the persons holding the "real" power in the organization and to build relationships with those people.

53-92. An individual uses his/her alliance with one person to influence another.

38-93. Association with influential members in the organization is primarily based on an individual's access to those key people.

123-94. It is important to choose mentors who are perceived by others as key players.

07-95. The best way to associate with the influential members of an organization is through social contacts.

32-96. Once initial contact is made with an influential person, the individual should seek an opportunity to make subsequent contact.

68-97. An administrator evaluates the organizational climate to determine the best time to make specific requests/decisions.

96-98. In dealing with issues, it is critical for an administrator to sense the appropriate time to advance, to retreat, or to wait with specific requests/decisions.

54-99. An administrator exchanges favors to get a specific goal accomplished.

08-100. The intent of exchanging favors between administrators should not focus solely on future paybacks.

33-101. There are times when it is appropriate for an administrator to denigrate the opposition to achieve a desired outcome.

102-102. Colleagues work to resolve issues among themselves to avoid taking problem to supervisor.

80-103. Resolution of problem issues always involve compromise.

89-104. Administrators tend to call upon those organizational members whom they personally perceive as trustworthy and reliable.

09-105. The organizational value placed on professional association involvement effects an individual's decision about his/her personal involvement.

34-106. An effective politician understands upfront that he/she will never understand all the pressures his/her boss faces.

69-107. An effective politician is a good listener who listens to both what people are saying and what they are not saying.

55-108. An effective politician is sensitive to others, both personally and professionally.

116-109. An effective politician understands the top priority of the person with whom they are interacting.

- 10-110. An effective politician is sensitive to the priorities of the organization as determined by the CSAO.
- 35-111. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to the supervisor.
- 107-112. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to the person who controls the resources.
- 118-113. An effective politician avoids making promises that can't be fulfilled and fulfills those promises made.
- 81-114. An effective politician avoids making assumptions about what other people feel or believe.
- 11-115. An effective politician attends to the constituent's needs and **over**communicates what he/she has done for them.
- 36-116. An effective politician chooses battles cautiously by determining whether the outcome will make a difference or it is simply a battle for boosting the individual ego.
- 56-117. An effective politician develops relationships with the power players in the organization.
- 70-118. An effective politician consciously and unconsciously operates to promote a positive image of oneself.
- 97-119. An effective politician always returns to his/her "roots" in the organization to obtain information.
- 12-120. An effective politician has made a conscious decision to be a part of the organization.
- 37-121. An effective politician doesn't always have to be the "chief" when working with a collective project.
- 90-122. An effective politician goes outside the line of authority to assist colleagues in their specific areas.
- 111-123. An effective politician allows others to share ownership in ideas, projects, and so forth.

57-124. An effective politician takes risks.

13-125. An effective politician recognizes staff and lets them know that they are important to the organization and as individuals.

APPENDIX C

MATERIALS SENT TO THE EXPERT PANEL

MEMBERS TO STRUCTURE INPUT

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843-4226

*Department of*  
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Room 222  
M. T. HARRINGTON EDUCATION CENTER  
Phone (713) 845-2716

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this project. As previously discussed, the focus of this research is to develop an instrument for the study of organizational politics in student affairs organizations. Enclosed you will find an information sheet which further describes the purpose of the study and provides an operational definition of the term "organizational politics."

Also included in this packet are detailed instructions on how to structure your input. However, should anything be unclear, or should uncertainties arise, please do not hesitate to call me at (214) 881-5790 (office) or (214) 824-2898.

Again, we appreciate your assistance and hope you find your participation interesting. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Belinda K. Newman

D. Stanley Carpenter

Enclosures



### INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPERTS

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this project. In this packet you will find a small bundle of item statements, five (5) envelopes labeled for sorting, and one (1) return envelope.

1. Examine each item statement and decide if it describes a political tactic or behavior used by administrators in student affairs organizations. Tactics may describe actions associated with administrators at any level of responsibility. If the item is not judged as being a political tactic used by administrators, put it into the envelope marked "Inappropriate Items."
  2. Once you judge an item to be appropriate, then decide which one of the four (4) general categories of political behavior would best subsume the specific tactic. (Refer to Figure 1)
  3. Place each item in the designated envelope. Some items will be difficult to categorize, but try to determine the category the tactic in which the tactic normally would fit in its purest form. This is a forced choice procedure, and agreement of three of four experts will be sufficient to include an item in the final instrument.
  4. When sorting is completed, seal the envelopes and put them in the stamped pre-addressed return envelope.
  5. Can you think of anything that has been ignored, omitted, or covered inadequately by the tactic statements. Please write suggestions for additional items under the appropriate category on Figure 2 (attached)
  6. Place your suggested additions, if any, in the return envelope. It will be appreciated if these tasks could be completed by September 26, 1988.
- THANKS FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!!!!**

**RETURN TO:**

Belinda K. Newman  
Collin County Community College District  
2800 East Spring Creek Pkwy  
Plano, TX 75074

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose is to study organizational politics in student affairs organizations. This study will attempt to identify perceptions of political tactics used in student affairs organizations, and to identify personal characteristics associated with individuals perceived as politically effective. The initial focus of the study will be upon careful, systematic development of a survey instrument which will then be used to collect exploratory data on the indicated research questions.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Two research questions will be posed for the study.

1. What tactics are perceived as being used most often by political actors working in student affairs organizations?
2. What personal characteristics are associated with individuals perceived as politically effective?

### **DEFINITION OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS**

For purposes of this study, the following definition of organizational politics was developed based on related literature. Organizational politics occurs when an incongruence exists over interests, goals, or methods between at least two individuals within the same or competing organization(s). It entails the resolution of choices through individual or group behavior which is not required by one's job responsibilities nor officially sanctioned by the organization. (Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick, & Bronston, 1980; Farrell & Petersen, 1982) Most often the intent of organizational politics is to directly or indirectly influence neutral or opposing parties towards the political actor's interests or goals (Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick, & Bronston, 1980).

### **INFORMATION USAGE**

Information can be used as a political tool. Techniques such as withholding, distorting, and blocking are used to manipulate information. Additional tactics of information use include screening data before it is distributed and overwhelming a person with data to hide or shadow pertinent details. Another political tactic of information use is establishing personal relationships or networking for the purpose of gaining access to valuable information, both inside and outside the organization. Information gathering is a tool used for developing new ideas or programs. Acquiring information about other programs allows colleagues to assist each other in achieving organizational goals.

### **IMAGE BUILDING**

Image building is a political tool used to promote self-interest. The goal of image building is to present oneself or one's organizational unit in the most favorable light. Image building includes general appearance, personal style, and sensitivity to organizational norms. Additional tactics for self-promotion include drawing attention to individual successes and accomplishments, accepting undeserved credit or ownership for ideas and contributions, building a reputation for being liked, and creating a unique, but suitable identity. Persons may attempt to disguise poor performance or undesirable personal traits as another technique of image building. It is equally important to promote one's image with subordinates, colleagues, and supervisors.

### **BUILDING A POWERBASE**

Techniques for building an individual powerbase are unique to organizational norms and values. Political tactics used to acquire power focus on competent performance, coalition building, responsibility for key programs (or those with high visibility), and access to limited resources and valuable information. Additional techniques include denigrating persons with opposing ideas and objectives, undercutting cooperative efforts by pitting one person against another, using both persuasion and manipulation to win support, and hoarding responsibility for decision-making. Both the formal and informal organizational structures provide opportunities for persons to accumulate power.

### **ASSOCIATING WITH THE INFLUENTIAL**

Associating with the influential is a political tool used to gain access to the decision makers within the organization. Social activities often serve as the primary means of interacting with organization members perceived as influential. Informal interactions are viewed as necessary since traditional bureaucratic hierarchies fail to accommodate regular meetings between the lower and upper echelons of the organization. In addition, persons may seize opportunities to be involved in activities with influential persons outside their organization/unit.

FIGURE 1.  
CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

**ADDITIONAL TACTIC STATEMENTS**

**INFORMATION USAGE**

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**IMAGE BUILDING**

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**BUILDING A POWERBASE**

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**ASSOCIATING WITH THE INFLUENTIAL**

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**OTHER**

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**FIGURE 2.**

APPENDIX D

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR/TACTIC ITEMS

SELECTED BY THE EXPERT PANEL

**1111**

1. An effective politician withholds information from others by not releasing information specifically requested by another or by being vague in presenting information. (1111)
  3. Jargon is used in presentation of information to mask its inaccuracy or to prevent others from comprehending the true meaning. (1111)
  8. Information is screened to determine what is to be passed on and what is to be discarded. (1111)
  14. An effective politician has regular interaction with another who holds needed information in order to extract this information. (1111)
  17. There are key persons who are not the keepers of information but the gatherers of information and are known and trusted to share information only when appropriate. (1111)
  21. Every unit has an "unofficial" person who excels in utilizing the grapevine for obtaining information. (1111)
- 

**111 & other**

4. Information is exaggerated to help a person get out of a "tight spot" (e.g., the person says he/she has been trying to contact someone when in truth only one attempt was made). (111,IP)
6. In terms of reports, information is manipulated by being delayed.(111,IP)
7. The volume of information presented in a meeting prevents others from being able to adequately evaluate the facts, forcing them to blindly trust the presenter of the information. (111,IP)
9. When passing responsibility for a position or project on to another person, the prior administrator withholds vital information causing the new administrator to continually search for information. (111,IP)
12. It is useful to gather information because you can't help others if you don't know something about their business. (111,3)

**111 & Other (continued)**

20. Organizational grapevines are related to informal organizational structure and are based on personal relationships among staff. (111,IP)
23. Organizational grapevines provide information quicker than usual administrative channels, by passing over several layers of organizational hierarchy. (111,IP)
26. Organizational grapevines are not well developed in organizations lacking an atmosphere of trust among staff. (111,IP)
27. Organizational grapevines serve as an important source of information, whose credibility depends upon the major players connected to the grapevine. (111,IP)
98. In dealing with issues, it is critical for an effective politician to sense the appropriate time to advance, to retreat, or to wait with specific requests/decisions. (111,3)
- 

**2222**

44. Faithfulness, trust, responsibility, and respect are solid traits upon which a favorable image is developed.
48. An effective politician dresses according to organizational norms rather than personal preferences.
49. The organization values personal grooming and appearance, and directly or indirectly rewards individuals accordingly.
50. An effective politician's appearance should project an image of a professional person who is more capable than present responsibilities suggest.
56. An effective politician takes the time to be friendly and to interact with others in order to build a favorable image.
61. An effective politician is sensitive to organizational norms and attempts to conform to these norms.

**2222 (continued)**

111. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to the supervisor.

118. An effective politician consciously and unconsciously operates to promote a positive image of oneself.

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**222 & other**

29. People who have a positive image are usually those who avoid "tooting their own horn"; they're working hard and their horn get "tooted" for them. (2 2 2, IP)

31. An effective politician pat himself/herself on the back because work is not consistently acknowledged by higher level administrators. (2 2 2-IP)

41. Phonies are easy to spot - an individual cannot build an image that doesn't fit the person. (2 2 2 -IP)

43. A person of integrity makes a difference in how the organization's image is perceived both internally and externally. (2 2 2 -3)

45. Competence is the key trait to building a positive image. (2 2 2-3)

46. A person cannot promote a positive image if the individual lacks substantive character. (2 2 2-IP)

51. A person should dress in similar fashion to those administrators at least one level higher in the hierarchy. (2 2 2 -IP)

53. A person's concern with projecting a positive image is directed only towards higher level administrators. (2 2 2-IP)

58. An effective politician buildss an independent image to avoid being brought down with a failing associate. (2 2 2-3)

63. An effective politician attempts to conform to organizational norms even when there is personal disagreement. (2 2 2-IP)

64. An effective politician is careful not to alienate others or "step on toes" when taking a project from another person. (2 2 2 -3)



## 222 & Other

113. An effective politician avoids making promises that can't be fulfilled and fulfills those promises made. (2 2 2-3)

115. An effective politician attends to constituents' needs and **over**communicates what he/she has done for them. (2 2 2 -IP)

124. An effective politician takes risks. (2 2 2 -1)

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## 3333

68. An effective politician builds a powerbase by taking the time to get to know others and to be accessible to them.

71. An effective politician increases his/her power through acquisition of additional responsibilities/programs, especially in those areas with high visibility.

72. Administrative responsibilities associated with individual power include supervision of others, hiring/firing personnel, and budgetary decisions.

78. Powerful individuals gain support for their ideas from a broad spectrum of people.

79. Coalitions are built by identifying those coworkers who have similar attitudes/views and vying for their support

86. An effective politician distributes power among a very small group.

123. An effective politician allows others to share ownership in ideas, projects, and so forth.

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## 333 & other

13. Proposals are usually accepted because the individual promoting the idea has done his/her homework and a good job of developing the concept. (333-2)

**333 & other (continued)**

15. An effective politician learns about other work units/responsibilities by listening and building relationships with others. (333-1)

19. An effective politician makes friends with key subordinates who have access to information. (333-1)

39. An effective politician fights for issues which are viewed as a high priority by the major players in an organization. (333-1)

59. An effective politician closely associates oneself with an administrator who is favorably recognized as way to move up in the organization. (333-1)

66. Persons most recently hired into the organization tend to have the most difficulty gaining power. (333-4)

70. An effective politician accumulates power through access to financial resources. (333-1)

73. An effective politician increases his/her power by obtaining knowledge that others need or perceive as helpful. (333-1)

74. Compromise is important because it allows others to have ownership in a decision. (333-2)

75. An effective politician builds a powerbase by allowing others to share ownership in ideas/projects. (333-2)

76. Coalition building is an influence tactic used most often among colleagues. (333-1)

77. Persuasion is an effective tool for winning others to an individual's point of view. (333-2)

82. Long range, solid power is based on the fact that an individual knows what he/she is doing, and can demonstrate and justify subsequent outcomes. (333-2)

80. Competence serves as a foundation for building an individual powerbase. (333-2)

**333 & other (continued)**

99. An effective politician exchanges favors to get a specific goal accomplished. (333-IP)

104. An effective politician calls upon those organizational members whom he/she perceives as trustworthy and reliable. (333-4)

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**4444**

Attendance at social events hosted by the organization and associated units is very important.

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**444 & other**

16. An effective politician spends extra time with another who holds key information, because it increases the opportunity to ask appropriate questions at the right time to gain the desired information. (444-1)

18. An effective politician identifies key persons in the organization, in terms of influence, and builds relationships with these people. (444-3)

93. Association with influential members in the organization is primarily based on an individual's access to those key people. (444-IP)

94. An effective politician chooses mentors who are perceived by others as key players. (444-3)

95. The most effective way of associating with the influential members within an organization is through social contacts. (444-IP)

96. Once initial contact is made with an influential person, an effective politician seeks an opportunity to make subsequent contact. (444-IP)

APPENDIX E

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR/TACTIC ITEMS DECIDED  
BY THE THIRD EXPERT GROUP

## SPLIT DECISIONS

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2-37. Regular staff meetings provide an opportunity for individuals to inform others of their hard work and accomplishments. (11-22)

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3-11. When gathering information, an effective politician uses a variety of sources and avoid trusting only one source. (11-33)

3-81. Competence is important in building a powerbase, but it is equally important that an individual be aware of the happenings/events surrounding him/her. (11-33)

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2-32. If a supervisor fails to inquire about the work progress of an individual, the person informs the supervisor of his/her performance. (22-33)

2-40. An effective politician builds a reputation for being liked by demonstrating a "can-do" attitude and following through with this attitude. (22-33)

2-62. An effective politician learns to play by the rules of the organization. (22-33)

2-108. An effective politician is sensitive to others, both personally and professionally. (22-33)

3-112. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to those persons who control the resources. (22-33)

2-120. An effective politician makes a conscious decision to be a part of the organization. (22-33)

3-121. An effective politician avoids always having to be the "chief" when working with a collective project. (22-33)

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4-54. An effective politician utilizes a third party contact when attempting to influence decision makers. (33-44)

3-109. An effective politician understands the top priority of the individuals with whom they are interacting. (33-44)

4-117. An effective politician develops relationships with the power players in the organization. (33-44)

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APPENDIX F

INVENTORY OF TACTICS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS  
ASSOCIATED WITH POLITICALLY EFFECTIVE INDIVIDUALS  
IN STUDENT AFFAIRS ORGANIZATIONS





**Using the following scale**

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
always or almost always	often	seldom	never or almost never	not a political tactic/ personal characteristic

Circle the number that best describes your perception of the frequency with which politically effective individuals participate in the behavior or demonstrate the personal characteristic described in each of the following items.

- |   |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1. An effective politician dresses according to the organizational norms rather than personal preferences.                                       |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. An effective politician develops relationships with power players in the organization.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. An effective politician learns about other work units/responsibilities by listening and building relationships with others.                   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. An effective politician utilizes a third party contact when attempting to influence decision-makers.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. An effective politician increases his/her power by obtaining knowledge that others need or perceive as helpful.                               |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. An effective politician chooses mentors who are perceived by others as key players.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7. An effective politician learns to play by the rules of the organization.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8. An effective politician who wants to move up in the organization associates closely with an administrator who is favorably recognized.        |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9. An effective politician takes the time to be friendly and to interact with others in order to build a favorable image.                        |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 10. An effective politician relies upon those organizational members whom he/she perceives as trustworthy and reliable.                          |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 11. An effective politician makes a conscious decision to be a <u>part</u> of the organization.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 12. An effective politician avoids alienating others or "stepping on toes" when taking a project from another person.                            |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 13. Proposals are usually accepted because the individual promoting the idea has done his/her homework and a good job of developing the concept. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 14. An effective politician is concerned with projecting a positive image that is specifically directed towards higher level administrators.     |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 15. An effective politician senses the appropriate time to advance, to retreat, or to wait with specific requests/decision.                      |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 16. An effective politician builds a powerbase by allowing others to share ownership in ideas/projects.  |

Using the following scale				
1	2	3	4	5
always or almost always	often	seldom	never or almost never	not a political tactic/ personal characteristic
<p>Circle the number that best describes your perception of the frequency with which politically effective individuals participate in the behavior or demonstrate the personal characteristic described in each of the following items.</p>				

- 1 2 3 4 5 17. An effective politician withholds information from others by failing to release information specifically requested by another or by being vague in presenting information.
- 1 2 3 4 5 18. An effective politician is sensitive to others, both personally and professionally.
- 1 2 3 4 5 19. An effective politician makes friends with key subordinates who have access to information.
- 1 2 3 4 5 20. An effective politician is empowered by being aware of the happenings/events within the organization.
- 1 2 3 4 5 21. An effective politician builds a reputation for being liked by demonstrating a "can-do" attitude and following through.
- 1 2 3 4 5 22. An effective politician is sensitive to organizational norms and attempts to conform to these norms.
- 1 2 3 4 5 23. When gathering information, an effective politician uses a variety of sources and avoids trusting only one source.
- 1 2 3 4 5 24. An effective politician distributes power among a very small group.
- 1 2 3 4 5 25. An effective politician understands the top priority of his/hcr supervisor.
- 1 2 3 4 5 26. An effective politician avoids always having to be the "chief" when working with a collective project.
- 1 2 3 4 5 27. An effective politician attempts to conform to organizational norms even when there is a personal disagreement.
- 1 2 3 4 5 28. An effective politician attends to constituents' needs and communicates what he/she has done for them.
- 1 2 3 4 5 29. An effective politician takes risks.
- 1 2 3 4 5 30. An effective politician builds an independent image to avoid being brought down with a failing associate.
- 1 2 3 4 5 31. An effective politician exchanges favors to get a specific goal accomplished.
- 1 2 3 4 5 32. Once initial contact is made with an influential person, an effective politician seeks opportunities to make subsequent contact.
- 1 2 3 4 5 33. An effective politician spends extra time with others who hold key information, because it increases the opportunity to ask appropriate questions at the right time to gain the desired information.

Using the following scale

1	2	3	4	5
always or almost always	often	seldom	never or almost never	not a political tactic/ personal characteristic

Circle the number that best describes your perception of the frequency with which politically effective individuals participate in the behavior or demonstrate the personal characteristic described in each of the following items.

- 1 2 3 4 5 34. An effective politician fights for issues which are viewed as high priority by the major players in an organization.
- 1 2 3 4 5 35. If a supervisor fails to inquire about the work progress of an individual, an effective politician informs the supervisor of his/her performance.
- 1 2 3 4 5 36. An effective politician identifies key persons in the organization, in terms of influence, and builds relationships with these people.
- 1 2 3 4 5 37. Information is screened to determine what is to be passed on and what is to be discarded.
- 1 2 3 4 5 38. An effective politician increases his/her power through acquisition of additional responsibilities/programs, especially in those areas with high visibility.
- 1 2 3 4 5 39. An effective politician accumulates power through access to financial resources.
- 1 2 3 4 5 40. An effective politician proves him/herself as a competent manager to the supervisor.
- 1 2 3 4 5 41. An effective politician has regular interaction with another who holds needed information in order to extract this information.
- 1 2 3 4 5 42. An effective politician builds a powerbase by taking the time to get to know others and to be accessible to them.
- 1 2 3 4 5 43. An effective politician should dress in similar fashion to those administrators at least one level higher in the hierarchy.
- 1 2 3 4 5 44. An effective politician consciously and unconsciously operates to promote a positive self-image.
- 1 2 3 4 5 45. An effective politician avoids making promises that cannot be fulfilled and fulfills any promises made.
- 1 2 3 4 5 46. Powerful individuals gain support for their ideas from a broad spectrum of people.
- 1 2 3 4 5 47. An effective politician's appearance should project an image of a professional person who is more capable than present responsibilities suggest.
- 1 2 3 4 5 48. An effective politician proves him/herself to be a competent manager to those persons who control the resources.

Circle the number that indicates your level of agreement that the following attitudes or beliefs are held by politically effective individuals.

1 strongly agree	2 agree	3 disagree	4 strongly disagree	5 not a political tactic/ personal characteristic
------------------------	------------	---------------	---------------------------	---

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Regular staff meetings provide an opportunity for individuals to inform others of their hard work and accomplishments.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. Persuasion is an effective tool for winning others to an individual's point of view.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. Competence serves as a foundation for building an individual powerbase.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. The credibility of the organizational grapevine depends upon the major players connected to the grapevine.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. The organization values personal grooming and appearance, and directly or indirectly rewards individuals accordingly.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. Coalitions are built by identifying those coworkers who have similar attitudes/views and vying for their support.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. Attendance at social events hosted by the organization and associated units is very important.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. It is useful to gather information because you cannot help others if you do not know something about their business.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. Organizational grapevines are related to informal organizational structure and are based on personal relationships among staff.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 10. Information can be exaggerated to help a person get out of a "tight spot" (e.g., the person says he/she had been trying to contact someone when in truth only one attempt was made).  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 11. The volume of information presented in a meeting can prevent others from being able to adequately evaluate the facts, forcing them to blindly trust the presenter of the information. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 12. Social contacts provide the most effective way of associating with influential members within an organization.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 13. Competence is the key trait in building a positive image.   |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 14. Organizational grapevines provide information quicker than usual administrative channels, by passing over several layers of organizational hierarchy.                                 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 15. Every unit has an "unofficial" person who excels in utilizing the grapevine for obtaining information.  |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 16. Compromise is important because it allows others to have ownership in a decision.   |

Circle the number that indicates your level of agreement that the following attitudes or beliefs are held by politically effective individuals.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	agree	disagree	strongly disagree	not a political tactic/ personal characteristic

- 1 2 3 4 5 17. Organizational grapevines serve as important sources of information.
- 1 2 3 4 5 18. Jargon can be used in presentation of information to mask its inaccuracy or to prevent others from comprehending the true meaning.
- 1 2 3 4 5 19. Information is manipulated by being delayed.
- 1 2 3 4 5 20. Supervision of others, hiring/firing personnel, and budgetary decisions are administrative responsibilities associated with individual power.
- 1 2 3 4 5 21. Association with influential members in the organization is primarily based on an individual's access to those key people.
- 1 2 3 4 5 22. Persons most recently hired into the organization tend to have the most difficulty gaining power.
- 1 2 3 4 5 23. Organizational grapevines are well-developed in organizations having an atmosphere of trust among staff.
- 1 2 3 4 5 24. People who have a positive image are usually those who avoid "tooting their own horn"; they are working hard and their horn gets "tooted" for them.

What personal characteristics do you associate with individuals perceived as politically effective? Please indicate your choices by placing a checkmark (✓) before the items which best describe these personal characteristics.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> judicious                  | <input type="checkbox"/> articulate              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> successful                 | <input type="checkbox"/> independent             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> patient                    | <input type="checkbox"/> loyal                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> extroverted                | <input type="checkbox"/> gregarious              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stand apart from the crowd | <input type="checkbox"/> sensitive               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> devious                    | <input type="checkbox"/> able to motivate others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competent                  | <input type="checkbox"/> credible                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competitive                | <input type="checkbox"/> highly intelligent      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> popular                    | <input type="checkbox"/> socially adept          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> honest                     | <input type="checkbox"/> self-confident          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "organizational man/woman" | <input type="checkbox"/> ambitious               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> logical                    | <input type="checkbox"/> sense of humor          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> respectful                 | <input type="checkbox"/> goal-oriented           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> aggressive                 | <input type="checkbox"/> visionary/predictive    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trustworthy                | <input type="checkbox"/> manipulative            |

Please return by Friday, November 17.

6

Return to:  
Belinda Newman  
P. O. Box 9536-110  
Austin, Texas 78766

APPENDIX G

COVER LETTER TO MEMBERS OF TACUSPA

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843-4226

Department of  
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Room 222  
M. T. HARRINGTON EDUCATION CENTER  
Phone (409) 845-2716

November 3, 1989

Dear Colleague:

We need your help! As a member of TACUSPA you have been selected to participate in a study on organizational politics. About twenty minutes of your time will be required. The coding of the enclosed survey is strictly for clerical purposes and the information will be kept confidential. It would be helpful if you would complete and return the survey in the enclosed stamped and pre-addressed envelope by Friday, November 17.

Specifically, the study will focus on organizational politics as perceived by student affairs administrators. Given the fact that research describing the political nature of student affairs organizations is severely limited, this study will help fill the gap.

Your individual response is very important, and we greatly appreciate your time and cooperation. Again, please return the completed survey by November 17.

Sincerely,

Belinda K. Newman  
Doctoral Researcher

D. Stanley Carpenter, Ph. D.  
Associate Professor

APPENDIX H

FIRST REMINDER LETTER



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843-4226

Department of  
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Room 222  
M. T. HARRINGTON EDUCATION CENTER  
Phone (409) 845-2716

November 24, 1989

Dear Colleague.

In early November you should have received a survey instrument regarding political behaviors in student affairs organizations. We are particularly interested in obtaining your responses because your experience and input will contribute significantly to the further understanding of management and leadership concepts in our profession.

It will be greatly appreciated if you will take about 20 minutes to complete the survey and return it by **Wednesday, December 6, 1989**. A stamped, pre-addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. If you have already mailed in your form, please disregard this notice.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and help.

Sincerely,

Belinda K. Newman  
Doctoral Researcher

D. Stanley Carpenter, Ph. D.  
Associate Professor

Enclosures

APPENDIX I

SECOND REMINDER LETTER

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843-4226

Department of  
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Room 222  
M. T. HARRINGTON EDUCATION CENTER  
Phone (409) 845-2716

December 13, 1989

Dear Colleague

In November you should have received a survey instrument regarding political behaviors in student affairs organizations. We are in the final stretch of attempting to get all the instruments returned. To date we have approximately a 72% return, but we would like to collect as many more as possible.

This survey requires only a few minutes for completion. Would you please be so kind to complete the survey and return it as soon as possible. Your response is critical to the success of this study.

Thank you for your assistance in this endeavor.

Sincerely,  
Belinda K. Newman  
D. Stanley Carpenter, Ph.D.  
Texas A&M University

## VITA

Belinda Kay Newman was born in Alice, Texas, on October 4, 1956. She graduated from Alice High School in 1975 and attended Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education in 1979. She also received a Master of Education degree in Educational Administration in 1981.

Belinda began her professional career as coordinator for the Intramural and Recreational Sports Department at Texas A&M University in 1979. In 1981, she joined the Department of Student Affairs as an assistant area coordinator for residence life and was later promoted to supervisor of judicial affairs for the university. In 1985, Belinda became the associate director of student development at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina, and was promoted to associate dean of student development during the same year. While completing her dissertation, Belinda served as legislative aide for State Senator Kent Caperton during the 71st Legislative Session.

Belinda currently resides in Austin, Texas. Her permanent mailing address is 1003 Anderson, Alice, Texas 78332.