

by Stewart Saxe and George Loney

THE PROPER CHANNELS GAME

RULES

Start the game with any problem likely to crop up in your life on campus and proceed through the proper channels recording the time spent at stops, until you reach finish and gain a solution.

To win you must reach the finish box within fifteen weeks (the most time any student has on campus) without crossing any line in the game and without crossing or re-using any path you've already used. By proceeding carefully from one stop to the next, certain steps may be circumvented to reduce the time spent waiting.

Members of any radical student movement may jump a proper channel four times: once for a picket, once for a sit-in, once for occupying the computer centre, and once for threatening to do any of the above. In each case a wall may be crossed, a previously used path re-used, or a stop just passed through.

For extra excitement, moderates and radicals can compete.

START

If your problem is of an academic nature, proceed through the channel below.

If you have a problem with a university rule, or would like to see a change made in the university's physical property (such as a residence room) or organization, proceed out the left-hand exit.

LECTURER

Totally irrelevant to the decision-making process — this should be quickly apparent so only a day is lost at this stage.

PROFESSOR

Just as irrelevant to the decision-making process — but that fact is not as clear as in the case of the lecturer, occasionally even the professor himself not realizing it. Stop here five days.

UNDERGRAD (OR GRAD) DEPARTMENT OFFICER

This man is the first person who will give you some feeling that you are nearing a solution, because after meeting with you at least twice on the issue he will tell you what committee is in charge of handling such cases. Spend at least a week here.

DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

An older and obviously very wise academic, he will tell you how glad he is that you've come to him with your problem and tell you many of his own. Eventually he will inform you that careful consideration will be given to a solution in the department committee. Spend three weeks talking and waiting.

CHAIRMAN'S SECRETARY

Undoubtedly you will have to see the chairman. Spend two weeks at this stage waiting for an appointment. He's continually out to lunch.

JUNIOR ADMINISTRATOR

These men abound in the administration, but unfortunately nobody knows why. They may be seen any day at five o'clock streaming out of the library in medium grey suits. Usually they spend their time preparing reports that will be ignored and double-checked something someone else has already double-checked. Wanting to feel important and looking for any chance to convince others they are, they will take up days of your time though proving in the end unable even to tell you what the next step is, because they don't understand the system themselves. Spend three weeks here.

STUDENT REP TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As your representative this poor fellow will do all he can to get your problem solved. Unfortunately he can't do anything because he is allowed only to exist to keep you happy and waiting. So wait here three weeks.

DEAN

The key to academic administration is the dean. It is his job to carry out the decisions made by the faculty committees and senior administration committees. He also presents the demands of his faculty to the administration. He will carry your case to a closed meeting of the appropriate administration committee. Spend three weeks talking and waiting.

ASSISTANT TO DEAN

These men are key to the higher echelons. It is their job to put the dean's file folders on his desk in order of priority and to make apologetical speeches to you about why certain problems, which have of course long been known to the dean, can't be dealt with in too great a hurry. Wait two weeks for an appointment with the dean.

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Department heads are very busy men. They arrive late, spend their morning in a committee meeting, take two hours for lunch, spend their afternoon in a committee meeting and leave promptly at 4:55 after having spent the last 25 minutes of their working day on the telephone to someone about yesterday's committee meeting, the morning committee meeting or tomorrow's committee meeting. They will, of course, be able to take your problem to a committee. Wait three weeks for the right committee to meet.

DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

Here are two types of department secretaries. The first really wants to help the students and will try hard to. Unfortunately there is little she can do. The second thinks the world revolves around her. Flip a coin — heads you have the first kind and move on right away; tails you have the second kind and spend three weeks at this stage.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Everybody and every problem has an advisory committee. Here the problem is fully discussed and studies of how the University of Northern California and Yanzania Tech are solving the problem are distributed.

At least two meetings are devoted to every problem before (a) some kind of advice is passed up to whomever the committee is advising; (b) the problem being discussed is forgotten in side issues; or (c) a subcommittee, which will never meet because everyone is too busy, is formed to investigate the problem in depth. Wait here four weeks.

THE BUDGETS COMMITTEE

Every decision costs money, money comes from the budgets committee. However, the budgets committee must know priorities for the entire university, so wait here two weeks and then go immediately to the president's council for a decision on how high a priority your problem is.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

These men are very important in the structure because they usually serve as secretaries to the larger committees. If you don't know why a committee secretary is important, you've never been to a committee meeting and then read the minutes afterwards. When they aren't taking minutes, they are preparing reports on committees or placing the files on the vice-president's desk in neat bundles. Wait here four weeks because administrative assistants are always so very, very busy.

THE PRESIDENT

The president can make decisions but he would rather not let too many people know, certainly not students. So after explaining to you that the Board of Governors makes all the decisions, and making certain you've gone through all the proper stages so far, he will assure you your problem will be taken to the board. Move on after three weeks discussions.

THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

The president's council coordinates all the committees everywhere. Every one of its members has at least one advisory committee. These men bring problems to the council where new solutions are dreamed up or the matter referred to a special subcommittee. Finally, however, a decision will be held up pending a decision from the budgets committee as to whether or not financing is possible.

So wait two weeks and then go directly to the budgets committee.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Your problem has reached the pinnacle of the decision-making process. Here many noble, wise and intelligent men will seriously consider your proposal (we know they are noble, wise and intelligent because most of them are wealthy).

If your problem is novel, a committee or subcommittee may be formed to deal with it. If it is academic, it will of course be sent to the senate for consideration.

Eventually — the board meets every three months or so — a decision will be approved, provided some one responsible from the administration will recommend a decision.

Proceed to finish after waiting one month.

VICEPRESIDENT'S SECRETARY

The vice-presidents' secretaries have been around a long time — in fact in most cases they've outlived their bosses — so you'll have to wait here two weeks in homage. (Brenda Stanton is the exception — you'll still wait two weeks, but you shouldn't mind the homage.)

VICEPRESIDENTS

These men, sometimes many, sometimes few, depending how many resignations recently took effect, are the administration's chief apologists. They are the ones who chair the study and advisory committees, they are the ones who bring together all the many different sectors into one small tight bundle. As they will clearly tell you though, they never, never make a decision. You will be directed to either a committee or the president, after waiting three weeks go on.

THE PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY

The president's secretary is mother-of-the-year and business tycoon all rolled up into one. Being motherly, she thinks students should be kept in their place — the crib.

Wait one week to get an appointment, and then two more for it.

SENATE

Everybody gets together in the senate, the university's academic decision-making body. Almost all final decisions may be made here; except if they require financing (if so you must go to the board of governors).

So after it has been determined that there is money to hire or promote faculty, here is where the job will be done. Except that the department head, faculty councils, department committee, other professors, etc., will be part of the decision along the way, it is still unclear exactly how.

If your problem will cost money or mean a restructuring of the university, that of course must go elsewhere.

But rest assured you've found the home of the decisions the faculty cares about — salary decisions.

Wait three weeks and then move on.

Finish: Congratulations

You have achieved satisfaction; but going to Which Hunt? would have made it easier and faster!