

The Fate of the Great

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This committee will be a NO TECHNOLOGY committee. This means delegates may not use electronic devices such as phones, laptops, and tablets during committee sessions for purposes including but not limited to directive writing, research, and accessing notes. Any exceptions to this rule can be made at the Chair's discretion, but will likely not be exercised. Please print out, write down, or obtain paper copies of any materials you'd like to use throughout the conference.

A few background guides will be printed and available for your reference, but the expectation is that delegates have read the background guide and amply prepared/written down their own notes. A legal notepad will be provided to all delegates for note/directive writing purposes. Bringing additional notebooks, sticky notes, and writing utensils is strongly encouraged. While we welcome paper materials with your own research and preparation, please refer to the CCWA Conference pre-writing policies. Any questions about specific mechanics can be sent to axg1532@case.edu.

Specialized Committee Structure and Mechanics:

This committee will be run as a crisis committee. Crisis committees are run with a front-room/back-room structure. Front room mechanics operate with formal and unstructured debates, and directive cycles. Back- room mechanics involve delegates writing "crisis" notes to associates of their choice in order to influence the committee from behind the scenes. Crisis notes are addressed to a character that your own character can contact, within reason, and these notes will help you to achieve your own personal committee goals, or arcs. These backroom "arcs" will be revealed periodically and help to move the committee forward, while the specific delegates creating these arcs will be left anonymous. Delegates are expected to conduct their own research and prepare adequately for crisis mechanics. A quick overview will be provided at the start of committee session one, but in order to move debate along, limited time will be spent

explaining the ins and outs of the crisis. If you're new to crisis mechanics or need an extra in-depth refresher, links to relevant resources will be provided in the appendix.

The Illness of Alexander the Great: An Opportunity for Chaos

By 323 BCE, the Macedonian Emperor Alexander the Great had reached unprecedented levels of power. In his 12 years of rule, he had expanded his Empire using cunning strategy and relentless expansion to form one of the largest empires in ancient history, stretching from Macedonia and Egypt in the west to modern-day Pakistan in the east. In the process, he had overseen a variety of effective generals and aides who played key roles in his conquests.

Now, Alexander the Great has fallen ill suddenly in Babylon. He is young and healthy, but rumors swirl that his illness is growing more dire by the minute. He has no designated successor, and his vast empire's fate now hangs in the balance with his every breath. As his generals, aides, loved ones, allies, and enemies, it is up to you to decide what to do next. Will you urgently choose a successor in case of his untimely death? Will you keep quiet and loyally sacrifice for his recovery? Will you rush to his bedside to see him for yourself? Or, will you use this moment of weakness as an opportunity, to usurp the great empire while its leader lays ill? In this time of crisis for the empire, your decisions will decide its future.

Key Questions to Consider:

- 1) What conflicts may emerge as a large, diverse empire faces an urgent succession crisis?
- 2) How may alliances bend, break, or grow as a result of the varied interests and backgrounds of the assembled parties?
- 3) How can competing officials cement their legacies and create lasting power?



Alexander's Empire in 323 BCE, when the committee takes place.

History of Alexander the Great's Empire:

In order to understand the rise of Alexander the Great's Macedonian Empire, it is first essential to explain the dynasty he emerged from. Alexander's father, Philip II of Macedon, came from a long line of Kings. Beginning his rule in 359 BCE, King Philip II used his considerable military and diplomatic skills to restore peace for Macedonia after a period of chaos, and eventually took control of the entirety of Greece. One of Philip II's wives was **Olympias of Molossia**, who worked hard to ensure that her son Alexander would become his heir rather than **Philip III** or any of Philip II's other sons. However, Philip II failed to strongly defend Alexander's claim to the throne, and in 336 BCE, Philip II was assassinated while attending the wedding of his daughter **Cleopatra**. It is widely suspected that **Olympias** may have aided in the plot to kill Philip II to protect the power of herself and Alexander.

Regardless, Alexander was crowned as King of Macedonia, and honored his father with an elaborate funeral and tomb, to gain the favor of the skeptical Macedonian court. Together,

Alexander and **Olympias** executed or otherwise eliminated threats in the royal court and solidified Alexander's rule. Appointing **Antipater** as regent in Greece, Alexander next set his sights on the mighty Persian Empire, and invaded modern Turkiye with his army. In 333 BCE, Alexander's Macedonians fought the Persian army of Darius III at the Battle of Issus, and when it became clear that the Persians would lose, Darius III fled. His mother, **Sisygambas**, subsequently disowned Darius and grew close to the victorious Alexander the Great. After refusing several peace offers from Darius III, Alexander defeated Tyre and Gaza after lengthy sieges and continued his advance. Reaching Egypt, he founded the city of Alexandria and consulted the desert oracle at Ammon. Pursuing Darius III to Gaugamela, Alexander defeated the Persian army again in 331 BCE, and Darius was assassinated by his own troops. Thus, Alexander was crowned the King of Persia and completed his conquest of the empire. A rival named Bessus also claimed the Persian throne, but Alexander's friend and general **Ptolemy** captured and executed him.

Some of Alexander's generals and courtiers grew dissatisfied as Alexander adopted several Persian customs, and Alexander grew more anxious. He executed the esteemed general Parmenio in 330 BCE after his son was convicted of plotting to assassinate Alexander, and later personally killed the general Cleitus in 328 BCE. Later, while taking the Persian city of Sogdia, Alexander spotted **Roxana** and (as the legend claims) fell in love at first sight, marrying her shortly after. Besides **Roxana**, Alexander also had a strong romantic relationship with his general Hephaestion, whose death in 324 BCE left the king devastated.

In 327 BCE, Alexander marched into India, and met King **Porus** in battle in 326 BCE. Despite **Porus**'s elephants, Alexander defeated his army, and planned to keep advancing further into India. However, his tired army refused, and so they returned to Persia. There, to formally link the Macedonian and Persian dynasties, Alexander married Darius III's daughter **Stateira II** and had his officers marry many more Persians. This angered many Macedonian allies and even caused mutinies, but Alexander simply replaced the lost officers and solidified his position.

In 323 BCE, while planning his next conquest in Arabia, Alexander the Great fell ill. He has chosen no successor, and so his sudden illness has left the entire Empire in a state of flux. With a giant empire expanding across the eastern Mediterranean and West Asia, the fate of Alexander will have monumental implications.

Character Dossier:

The characters included in this crisis committee will be split into three groups: **Alexander's Royal Family, Generals, and Outside Rulers.**

Royal Family: These are influential people who have a direct bond with Alexander the Great, either through direct familial relation or, in some cases, an adoptive familial bond. They each have power through their direct proximity to Alexander and many would be his natural successors based on the dynastic tradition. Some of them have also exerted influence in various spheres of his empire through their connection with him and his ruling power.

Royal Family-Specific Questions to Consider:

- 1) How can the family defend against outside threats and maintain power within their inner circle?
 - 2) Can the close bonds between the ailing Alexander and his family members be used to pursue future interests?
- **Roxana of Bactria:** Married to Alexander the Great in 327 BC, she has since become an influential member of the court. Using this power, she is fiercely protective of the dynasty she hopes to create with Alexander. As the mother of his only known legitimate son, she will stop at nothing to preserve their power and dynastic rights. How will this formidable queen react to the sudden threats caused by Alexander's illness?
 - **Alexander IV:** As Alexander the Great's only legitimate son, he is in a strong position to retain his father's empire. However, his youth could make him a tempting target for would-be usurpers seeking to create their own dynasties. How will he navigate this new

uncertainty?

- To maximize historical accuracy while including Alexander IV, assume he was born in 324 BCE (earlier than in real life).
- **Philip III Arrhidaeus**: As the illegitimate son of Philip II and the older half-brother of Alexander, Philip III is in a natural position to gain power at Alexander's expense. However, he will have to contend with being constantly underestimated due to his developmental disability, and the scheming plans of Alexander's inner circle who may hope to use him. Will he be able to ascend to power, or will he be treated as a political pawn?
- **Olympias**: The fearsome and cunning matriarch of the dynasty, Olympias has developed a strong network of political contacts and powerful allies. Her close relationship with her son Alexander the Great, as well as her own ruthless machinations to retain influence, have left her as perhaps the most powerful woman in the Empire. Rumors about her orchestrating the assassination of her husband Philip II to preserve the power of herself and her son have only contributed to her reputation as a deadly, effective politician. Now, with her son weak, will she be able to retain her power, or will it be stolen from her?
- **Cynane**: As the eldest half-sister of Alexander the Great, she has a strong combination of political connections and military skill. She trained in war and fought the Illyrians under Philip II, before teaching her daughter, Adea Eurydice, methods of warfare. With her extensive knowledge of warfare and the royal court, will she rise to take power now that Alexander has fallen ill?
- **Cleopatra**: Alexander's only full sibling, she has developed strong diplomatic and political relations with leaders of regions such as Epirus and Molossia. Her marriage to Alexander of Epirus and regency over Molossia after his death established her political power, and she was aided by a close relationship with her mother Olympias. Through this, she gained political favor and popularity through distributing grain shipments across the Mediterranean, and became a strong political force by 323 BCE. Now, Alexander's illness leaves her in a precarious position. Will she be able to utilize her power and contacts to gain control in the dynasty, or will she be targeted as a

powerful threat?

- **Thessalonike**: The older half-sister of Alexander, her mother had less influence than those of Cleopatra and Cynnane, so she was often overlooked. Still, she was likely raised by Olympias, and has grown into a mature and independent woman. Now, could the weakness of her half brother provide an opportunity for Thessalonice to step out of the shadows?
- **Sisygambis/Sisyngebris**: As the mother of Persian “King of Kings” Darius III, she already had strong influence in the region, and gained a close bond with Alexander the Great after his conquest of Persia. After her son fled Alexander, she acted almost as a second mother for Alexander, which helped him to be accepted as Persian royalty. With Alexander now sick, the Persian matriarch faces an uncertain future.
- **Adea Eurydice**: A bold young woman trained in war, Adea Eurydice was brought up in the royal court thanks to her mother Cynnane. As Alexander fell ill, Cynnane was planning for Adea Eurydice to marry Philip III Arrhidaeus. Given her access to both political and military strategy, will Adea Eurydice become a formidable force as Alexander wanes?
- **Stateira II**: The daughter of Darius III, she was recently married to Alexander the Great in 324 BCE. As a newcomer to the Macedonian court, she may have to rely on the remains of her Persian court connections to wield power. Will she be able to retain her position now that her husband is weak?

Generals: Alexander’s loyal generals, who command military respect and have direct control over various territories in Alexander’s absence. Many of them have reputations that cultivate both respect and fear among allies and enemies alike. While they owe their careers to Alexander and demonstrate loyalty, they are also well positioned to take advantage of his weakness if they chose to start their own dynasties.

General-Specific Questions to Consider:

- 1) How can the generals translate military power into political power and gain public

support?

2) How can the generals appeal to established power structures of the government and Alexander's mother to pursue their goals?

- **Perdiccas**: As a long-time general and recent commander of the Macedonian cavalry, Perdiccas has played a critical role in Alexander's conquests. He has used his martial skill to develop a close relationship with Alexander, and has been held in high regard by both the Emperor and the army. With his military connections and respect, Perdiccas represents a powerful voice among Alexander's generals.
- **Antipater**: As the governor of Macedon while Alexander was off on campaign, Antipater has developed a strong basis of political power for himself and his son Cassander. His control over Alexander's home region and the royal court offer him a strong position as both a political and military leader. Will he dare to challenge Alexander's power?
- **Antigonus**: An accomplished general who was satrap of Asian Phrygia, he is ambitious and eager to make a name for himself. He is well known for defending Phrygia from a Persian counterattack in a great victory. With both regional influence and fame, he could gain a stronger voice in the future of the Empire.
- **Ptolemy Soter**: One of Alexander's most famous and talented generals, he has built up a base of power in Egypt. Making Alexandria the new capital, he has established himself as the preeminent holder of Greek power in Egypt. Now, with Alexander ill, Ptolemy could utilize his control of this ancient and pivotal region for many possible ambitions.
- **Seleucus I Nicator**: A strong and effective general, he has developed a base of power in Babylon (where Alexander currently rests) and the Middle East. His combination of military prestige and power in the immediate region make him a major factor in coming events. Will he stay loyal to his commander, or grab power for himself?
- **Laomedon of Mytilene**: A key general who has had a strong bond with Alexander the Great since the days of Philip II, he aided the young prince in his early intrigues. He remained in Alexander's high esteem during his reign, being in charge of Persian captives. Now, the aging and esteemed general may have to consider how to navigate his

role in a world with a weak (or fallen) Alexander.

- **Cassander**: As a young man, he was taught by Aristotle as well as his powerful father Antipater. Now, he has visited Alexander's court in Babylon as the Emperor lay dying, and is eager to become just as famous as his father. To what lengths will he go to make a name for himself?

Allies & Enemies: These are the emperors and leaders of other neighboring or vassal territories, who have lived in awe of Alexander's rise to power. Some of them represent enemy kingdoms, who have lived in fear of his conquests and hope for an end of his empire. Others represent kingdoms that have allied with his empire, and must begin to consider how they will fit into a new ancient world if Alexander is weakened or dies. Each ruler could utilize this moment to either develop stronger ties with Alexander's empire, or fulfill their own ambitions of taking parts of it for their own rule.

Allies and Enemies Questions to Consider:

- 1) How can the allies use their specific skills or connections to develop unique power?
 - 2) How can the enemies take advantage of this vulnerable moment to re-assert independence or even initiate larger plots?
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- **Ariarathes I of Capadoccia**: The aging head of a long line of Persian royalty, Ariarathes I remained loyal to King Darius III, and resisted Alexander the Great's invasion. Now, his land of Capadoccia remains unconquered and fiercely resistant to Greek incursion. Will Alexander's weakness be the opportunity to defeat the Empire once and for all?
 - **Pharnabazus III**: A Satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, he knew Alexander as a young adult due to his family's exile in Macedon from 352-342 BCE. Later, he worked with leaders from Rhodes, Sparta, and Athens to attempt to take Greece from Alexander's control. Despite some success at ports, he was left isolated by the fall of King Darius III, and eventually submitted to Alexander's Empire. Despite his submission, Pharnabazus retains key allies and may take this chance to renew his resistance to Macedonia.

- **Atropates**: A loyal Satrap of Media who once sheltered King Darius III, he later surrendered to Alexander after Darius's death in 330 BCE. Atropates demonstrated his new loyalty to Alexander by delivering Baryaxes (a local rebel) to the Emperor, and his daughter was married to Perdiccas. Still satrap of his region of Media, he now faces an uncertain future with Alexander weak.
- **Porus**: An Indian king along the Indus River, he was feared by many including Alexander, who tried to negotiate before Porus refused. In the legendary Battle of the Hydaspes, Porus was defeated, but impressed Alexander. The Emperor allowed Porus to retain and even expand his land, leaving Porus as a powerful Satrap. Far from the intrigues in Babylon and Greece, how will Porus use his freedom as Alexander weakens?
- **Cleophis**: After her son's death in battle against Alexander's forces, Cleophis became Queen of her Assacani people in 326 BCE. However, she soon came to terms with Alexander, and was allowed to keep her throne as a vassal, while he massacred Assacani soldiers and burned their cities. The charismatic and fierce Cleophis may now have a chance to avenge her son and challenge Alexander's weakened rule.
- **Thaïs**: A witty and influential confidant of Alexander the Great, she left her home of Athens to accompany him in his campaign. She was seen as responsible for convincing Alexander to burn down the palace of Persepolis, capital of Achaemenid Persia. She later was married to Ptolemy Soter, and had several children with him. Clearly a convincing and popular member of the Macedonian court, she has strong connections and abilities to influence the course of the Empire's history.
- **Amastris**: A Persian princess who was the niece of King Darius III, she was trained from an early age in leadership. After Alexander the Great took over Persia, she was given in marriage to his general Craterus. Despite her youth, she is quickly gaining influence, and the illness of Alexander may present further opportunity for advancement.
- **Antigone**: Captured first by the Persians and later by the Macedonians, she was enslaved and eventually became a spy. By spying on the Macedonian general Philotas for his rival, she helped to destroy his power. Now, with the royal court thrown into chaos, can she utilize her spying abilities to gain power despite her lack of status or connections?

- **Oracle at Delphi:** Residing at Delphi in Greece, this rotating sequence of women were said to communicate directly with the Greek god Apollo. They were held in high esteem and consulted often by Greek leaders before deciding their future plans. With Alexander ill, it is likely that many of the Empire's leaders will seek out the Oracles and their wisdom. Thus, they have a profound ability to influence the coming actions of many key people.

Appendix

Crisis Committee Guidance:

- If you're completely new to crisis committees and would like an in-depth understanding of its mechanics and rules, you can use this link: <https://munuc.org/crisis/>
- If you'd like a refresher or a more brief explanation of the key features of a crisis committee, you can use this link: <https://bestdelegate.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-crisis-committees/>
- Still have any questions during the committee? Feel free to speak to your crisis chairs, they are experienced with crisis committee mechanics and happy to help!

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