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| **Strategic Media Relations in the Digital World** |
| **Spring 2022** |
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| **Course Name** |
| 6204 |
| 3 Credits |
|  |
| **Arlington Graduate Center** |
| **950 Glebe Road**  **Thursdays (6-8PM)** |

**BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**Instructor**

Colin Campbell, PhD

**Contact Information**

Phone Number: 202.596.5737

Email Address: colincampbellphd@gmail.com

**Communication**

Appointments and communication are conducted by email unless it’s an urgent matter.

**Blackboard Site**

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course and it will be the primary venue for classroom communications between the instructors and the students. Students can access the course site at https://blackboard.gwu.edu. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or [helpdesk.gwu.edu](http://helpdesk.gwu.edu/).

**Academic Integrity**

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

**University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays**

* Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
* Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
* Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

**Support for Students with Disabilities**

GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

**Title IX: Confidentiality and Responsible Employee Statement**The George Washington University (GWU) and its faculty are committed to helping create a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. GWU strongly encourages all members of the community to take action, seek support and report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty members are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Mental Health Services through Colonial Health (counselors are available 24/7 at 202-994-5300 or you can make an appointment to see a counselor in person.). For more information about reporting options and resources at GWU and the community, please visit <https://haven.gwu.edu/>.

**Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend classes at all times. Student will be allowed one excused absence before it reduces the final grade. Full attendance (camera on) will be expected during an online class. Failure to have the camera on and have an in-person presence will impact class participation and final grades.

## Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation

Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours in instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

**Course Evaluation**

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW’s online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

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| Professor Lawrence Parnell  Director, Strategic Public Relations Program  [lparnell@gwu.edu](mailto:lparnell@gwu.edu) | 703-299-4150 | Suzanne Farrand  Assistant Dean of Students, CPS  [sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309 |

**THE COURSE**

**Strategic Public Relations Program Objectives**

Upon the completion of the Masters in SPR, students will have obtained an enhanced understanding and skills in:

1. Fundamentals of effective, strategic communications;
2. Best practices for writing, media relations and strategic communications planning and implementation;
3. Leadership in communications on a sound ethical and financial basis;
4. Working with management and staff/vendors to develop and manage the implementation of effective communications strategies.

**Graduate School Expectations**  
Students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Utilize effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments on their required due dates and times.
2. Have attained a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
3. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

# Course Details

Course Overview  
This course deconstructs the art and theory of media relations from the public relations and public affairs perspective. Students analyze the state of contemporary  
media – online and off – and its impact on commerce, politics and the human  
contract, examining key factors influencing reportorial and editorial coverage of  
business, government and not-for-profit interests. Special emphasis is on new and  
emerging digital platforms, the advent of the Internet, the rise of fake citizen  
journalism and the impact this all has on storytelling.  
Students will develop strategic media relations campaigns aimed at publicizing a  
product, service, idea or issue of an organization by using a variety of traditional  
and non-traditional digital publicity tools and techniques guided by sound  
messages and directed to sensible outcomes. These media relations strategies and  
tactics will help students to achieve organizational or client goals.  
Course Learning Objectives  
1. Apply new knowledge and skills in media relations and social media in a  
political, governmental, association or corporate settings  
2. Understand the role of media relations in an overall communications plan and  
strategy.  
3. Develop and pitch a news story to the media with a greater chance of success  
4. Write effective news releases and press kit materials (print and digital)  
5. Evaluate the ethical practices of journalists and communications professionals  
6. Foster relationships with key journalists, podcasters and other influencers  
7. Develop understanding of digital and social media and content development for  
media relations  
  
Strategic Public Relations Program Objectives  
Upon the completion of the master’s in SPR, students will have obtained an  
enhanced understanding and skills in:  
1. Fundamentals of effective, strategic communications;  
2. Best practices for writing, media relations and strategic communications  
planning and implementation;  
3. Leadership in communications on a sound ethical and financial basis; and  
4. Working with management and staff/vendors to develop and manage the  
implementation of effective communications strategies

# Expectations and Responsibilities

## Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site regularly throughout the semester to review weekly course content, view announcements, and submit assignments. Students can access the course site through [GWU Blackboard](https://blackboard.gwu.edu/).

Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or the [IT Blackboard web page](https://it.gwu.edu/blackboard).

Please note that your access to this course on Blackboard will continue for one month after the course ends. If you wish to keep any work or materials, you must download or save them before the course closes.

## Technology Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the required technology to fully participate in this course. The minimum technology requirements for learning online at GW are outlined on the [Technical Requirements and Support](https://online.gwu.edu/technical-requirements-and-support) web page.

If you have any problems with the technology in this course, you can seek technological support from GW in a variety of ways, outlined on the [IT Support](https://it.gwu.edu/support) website.

GW is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment that is accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities.

The following links provide more information about the accessibility of technologies that may be used in this course:

* [Blackboard accessibility](https://www.blackboard.com/blackboard-accessibility-commitment)
* [Microsoft Office accessibility](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/accessibility)
* [Adobe accessibility](https://www.adobe.com/accessibility.html)
* [Vimeo accessibility](https://vimeo.com/blog/post/accessibility-updates-to-the-vimeo-player/)
* [YouTube accessibility](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/189278?hl=en)
* [VoiceThread accessibility](https://voicethread.com/about/features/accessibility/)
* [Webex accessibility](https://help.webex.com/en-us/84har3/Cisco-Webex-Meetings-and-Cisco-Webex-Events-Accessibility-Features)

If you have any issues regarding the accessibility of the technology used in this course, please contact your instructor. You may also explore the [Disability Support Services](https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/) website.

## Technology Expectations

Regarding technology skills, you should be able to:

* Create documents and presentation slides
* Use a webcam and microphone
* Use a digital camera or scanner
* Upload files, including recordings and images
* Be open to learning and registering for new technologies
* Be flexible when technological glitches happen (which is a given)
* Seek technological help when necessary by contacting the Division of Information Technology

If you have any problems with the technology expectations in this course, please contact your instructor.

## Getting Started

Everything you need to get started in the course is contained within the Blackboard course site. You can use the menu links on the left side panel to view different components. The content for each learning unit is divided into folders—one for each week. More unit folders will unlock as weeks in the course progress.

## Participation Policy

All students are expected to learn and contribute by being a positive participant in discussions, activities, presentations, and assignments. If you have an unavoidable conflict or become ill, in a way that will affect your participation in a given week, please notify your instructor immediately.

## COURSE GRADING POLICY/REQUIREMENTS

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| Assignment | Weight |
| Written Assignments Tests | 50% |
| Discussion assignments (10 - weekly) | 25% |
| Class Attendance, Preparation and Participation | 25% |
| Total | 100% |

**Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:**

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| **Grade\*** | | **Grading Standard** |
| A | 94-100 | Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work. |
| A- | 90-93 | Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work. |
| B+ | 87-89 | Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work. |
| B | 83-86 | Satisfactory work, but needs reworking and more effort. Note that although not a failing grade, at the graduate level, anything below a “B” is viewed as unacceptable. |
| B- | 80-82 | You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements. |
| C+ | 77-79 | Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern. |
| C | 73-76 | Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern. |
| C- | 70-72 (lowest grade to pass) | Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc. |
| F | Below 70 | Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment. |

\*Please note that you may be penalized for late submission of assignment(s).

**Required Text and Learning Materials**

* THINK Public Relations, 2nd Edition Dennis H. Wilcox, Glen Cameron, Bryan H Reber, Jae-Hwa Shin Pearson Education, Inc ©2013 ISBN: 0205857256
* On Deadline, Managing Media Relations, 5th Ed:

**Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials**

This will be at the professor’s discretion depending on the topical relevancy payoff for the selected materials.

**Tentative Course Calendar\***\*The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

NOTES:

* Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings BEFORE class begins, except for week 1.
* All assignments are to be submitted by the end of the business day (6 PM)
* Class meets in person for 2 hours per week. Students are expected to spend approximately one hour per week on an independent class activity - in addition to the reading and assignments. Work to be completed during this hour will be distributed via Black Board (BB) by the instructor

**Weekly Outlook**

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| **Week** | **Topic** | **Thursday Class** | **Homework** |
| Week 1:  January 13, 2022 | Introductions & syllabus review  Public Relations: A Brief Explainer | Introductions & syllabus review Group assignments  CHAPTER 1 & 2 | Read chapters and Create comprehensive PPT  **Read News: Defining News and Newsmakers** |
| Week 2:  January 20, 2022 | PT. 2:  Public Relations: Growth and Current Firms | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 3&4 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Tools of the Trade** |
| Week 3:  January 27, 2022 | Research and Campaign Planning/Communication and Measurement | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 5&6 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Reporters** |
| Week 4:  February 3, 2022 | Communication and Measurement/Public Opinion | Hybrid Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 6&7 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Spokespersons: Training and Briefing** |
| Week 5  February 10, 2022 | Public Opinion (cont’d.) / Managing Conflict | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 7&8  **--MIDTERM EXAM--** | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Ethical And Legal Issues** |
| Week 6  February 17, 2022 | Ethics and Law/Reaching Diverse Audiences | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 9&10“ | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Media Events** |
| Week 7:  February 24, 2022 | The Mass Media/The Internet and Social Media | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 11&12 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Going Global** |
| Week 8:  March 3, 2022 | Events and Promotions/Global Public Relations | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 13&14 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Crisis Planning** |
| Week 9:  March 10, 2022 | Corporate Public Relations/Entertainment, Sports, Tourism | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 15&16 | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: Measurement and Evaluation** |
| Week 10:  March 17, 20224 | Government and Politics/Nonprofit, Health, and Education | Lecture and quiz on previous week’s material  CHAPTERS 17&18  **--FINAL EXAM--** | Read chapters and create comprehensive PPT  **Read: The Future** |

**Practicing C.A.R.E. in the classroom.\*  
  
1. Courtesy: Students are expected to respect the professor and each other during class or in/outside communications.**

**2. Accountability: Students are expected to contact the professor through email if they have questions about the class and/or material(s).\*\***

**3. Responsibility: Students are expected to appear in class on time in-person or on-camera unless otherwise excused.**

**4. Engagement: Students are expected to interact in class with relative alacrity and adherence to deadlines  
\*Not practicing these fundamental classroom principles will result in a lower grade.**

**\*\*Dr. Campbell reserves the right to modify the syllabus at his discretion**

Colin Campbell, Ph.D., is currently a lecturer at Howard University and is the former

Director of Marketing and Communications for Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the former Editor-In-Chief of the Sphinx Magazine and former communications director for the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

Dr. Campbell is an Edward Bouchet scholar whose research focuses on artificial

intelligence and the use of algorithms in digital journalism. He teaches classes ranging from fundamental media production to multicultural media history to graduate-level writing.

Dr. Campbell is also a TV correspondent who is affiliated with several international TV networks and radio broadcasts. He has covered the Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations as well as the Occupy movement, the State Department and Congress.

**Copyright Statement**

*Unless explicitly allowed by the instructor, course materials, class discussions, and examinations are created for and expected to be used by class participants only.  The recording and rebroadcasting of such material, by any means, is forbidden.*