

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management
Summer 2019

Issues Management
PMGT 6412.010/CRN 11114
3 Credits

Thu, May 23 – Thu, July 25
7:10 – 9:40pm
1776 G Street, C-112

BASIC INFORMATION

Instructor

CHRISTOPHER C. HULL, PH.D., is president of Issue Management, Inc., a full-service public affairs consultancy he founded in 2006. He received an undergraduate degree magna cum laude from Harvard University in Government, and holds a doctorate in government from Georgetown University, where he defended with distinction a dissertation that was then nominated for American Political Science Association's E.E. Schattschneider Prize for best American politics dissertation of the year. Dr. Hull has taught at George Washington University in the past as Assistant Professorial Lecturer in the Political Science Department and at Georgetown University as Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Government Department. He is the former Senior Vice President and Campaign Manager, U.S. Public Affairs, for Hill & Knowlton, one of the nation's oldest and largest public relations agencies. In addition, Dr. Hull has held positions including both Press Secretary and Chief of Staff for members of the U.S. House of Representatives, Majority Caucus Staff Director of a state Senate, Assistant to the Director of Communications of a national party committee, a legislative aide in the U.S. Senate, and a researcher at one think tank and campaign manager for and then Executive Vice President of another. He began his career as a White House intern and then full-time volunteer in the Issues Group of a president's reelection campaign. He is the author of *Grassroots Rules: How the Iowa Caucuses Help Elect American Presidents*, published by Stanford University Press, as well as more than 100 book chapters, peer-reviewed articles, conference papers, public presentations and op eds. Dr. Hull has been published, quoted or cited in television, print, radio and online outlets including the New York Times, Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, NPR, MSNBC, CNN International, Bloomberg, Reuters, National Journal, CNBC, The Hill, Hotline, New York Newsday and U.S. News & World Report.

Contact Information

Christopher C. Hull, Ph.D.
chris@issuemanagement.net | 202-258-9710

Communication

Email contact is generally most efficient, but I am happy to meet with students by appointment. Feel free to call or text with time-sensitive questions or in an emergency.

Blackboard Site

My understanding is that a Blackboard course site will be set up for this course. Blackboard will be an alternate venue for outside 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 www.helpdesk.gwu.edu.

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 www.gwu.edu/~dss.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class

If we experience an emergency during class, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we need to leave, we will meet at the Cosi at 1700 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20006, to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University's operating status: <http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu>.

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:

Prof. Todd Belt
Director, Political Management Program
tbelt@email.gwu.edu | 202-994-4363

Dr. Jack Prostko
Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development
College of Professional Studies
jackp@gwu.edu | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

GSPM EXPECTATIONS

Political Management Program Objectives

A Political Management degree prepares students to win campaigns for elective office and policy positions, and to do so in a manner that benefits democracy and society as well as their organization and clients. In completing the degree, students will be able to:

1. Assess a political environment, develop a strategy to achieve specified goals, and execute that strategy;
2. Draw upon a repertoire of effective campaign communication skills;
3. Collect, evaluate, and incorporate empirical evidence to shape and optimize the strategy;
4. Find, engage, and motivate the right leaders, professionals, and citizens;
5. Recognize and work through recurring political dilemmas in a manner that upholds ethical standards and professional conduct.

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 to complete and submit assignments on time.
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.

GSPM prepares students for careers in the professional political world. In politics, words and deadlines matter. Excellent written communication skills are essential for success. Every word used, whether it is in a television or radio ad, direct mail piece, social media, or a press release, will be scrutinized. Similarly, deadlines are important. Election Day does not get postponed because a candidate and their campaign are not prepared. There are no “do-overs” because a direct mail piece did not arrive to its intended recipients until after the election was concluded. Students will be best positioned for success in the practical political world if they have developed and exercise excellent written communication and time management skills.

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://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>.

Attendance Policy

Students will be expected to read all assigned material in advance and be prepared to submit required work and answer questions on it. Assignments will be graded in part on the quality of the student's response to the questions posed. Class participation will not include simply being present and discussing one's views on topics. Hence class attendance while not mandatory is essential for a grade on in-class participation.

Classroom Conduct Policy

This class provides an opportunity to practice proper skills and decorum for use in the professional world after you leave GSPM, which means you should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. Use of electronic devices for purposes other than classwork (e.g. texting, social media) is not permitted. Students causing other disruptions, such as carrying on a conversation with another student, typing loudly, or having devices emit audible alerts, will also not be tolerated. A student who has been warned about this behavior and persists in this conduct will be asked to immediately leave the class. You would not do these things in the presence of a client or another business situation. Finally, do not approach the instructor during class time to discuss issues regarding your assignments. Class time is for group work, not the discussion of individual issues.

THE COURSE

Learning Objectives

Issues Management will help you learn and apply the principles necessary to identify, direct and/or overcome, and assess policy, political and public perception issues that pose opportunities or threats to an organization. Our approach will focus on creating a clear link between public affairs strategies and tactics and an organization's bottom-line goals.

If you engage in the discussion and assignments, by the end of this course, you will be prepared to:

1. **Apply** fundamental and sophisticated techniques for managing issues, recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities and preventing or countering threats;
2. **Identify** opportunities for issues management in the political landscape around you
3. **Map and identify** the landscape, spotting or anticipating conditions that presage issues or issues themselves before they arise, including by using SWOT (Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat) analysis;
4. **Design** an issues management approach rooted in organizational opportunities and/or needs, including by using a MOST (Mission/Objectives/Strategies/Tactics) framework;
5. **Operationalize** issues management plans working with a team to explain SWOT and MOST and preparing to implement the plan
6. **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners for maximum issues impact; and
7. **Assess and communicate** the effectiveness of issues management internally.

In terms of “designing an issues management approach” specifically, you will be prepared to:

1. Assess a current political environment as being either a threat or an opportunity to the advancement of an organization;
2. Develop a strategic plan to achieve a specific step towards the achievement of that vision and/or protect against an imminent challenge to that vision;
3. Engage a champion and others to help deal with issue, as well as activate individuals or groups who may be reluctant to challenge the status quo; and
4. Collect, evaluate, and incorporate relevant empirical evidence to shape, optimize, and continuously inform the developed strategy.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation in weekly in-class discussions, responding to questions relating to the assigned readings and/or presentations, as well as articles on issues that relate to class topics.
2. Completion of individual assignments to help internalize and apply learnings from class.
3. Participation in and completion of a group project to apply learnings in a public affairs team setting.

For the first individual assignment, students will assume the role of an issues management professional, writing a proposal for a public affairs initiative for a prospective client. Proposals should include a SWOT analysis of the client’s situation on the issue, as well as a MOST framework for the proposed program, followed by a well-researched budget to implement the recommended tactics.

For the group assignment and following individual assignments, students will work as a team to implement selected/approved proposals, potentially including campaign management, coalition-building, media relations, social media, issue research, grassroots organization, government relations, and tracking and reporting results. (NOTE: Lobbying and Disclosure Act [LDA] registration is not required for government relations work for which an individual or firm is compensated less than \$5,000/mo.; since this work will be uncompensated no LDA registrations will be required.)

More detail on assignments will follow during class sessions.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

I will assign readings each week to help drive class discussion. My intention is to draw mainly from *Strategic Issues Management*, 2nd ed. by Heath and Palenchar, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie; and *Rules for Radicals* by Saul Alinsky.

Evaluation and Grading			
Assignments	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due	%
Identify potential client that you are going to pitch by "qualifying" prospects and presenting results to professor, including "pain" and "budget"	Identify opportunities for issues management in the political landscape around you	30-May	10
Set and conduct pre-pitch meeting with potential client, drawing out the client's overall issue context, as well as mission and key objectives, strategies, and tactics the client might value, plus "budget" (which will be theoretical, not actual), submitting an initial SWOT analysis	Map and identify the landscape, spotting or anticipating conditions that presage issues or issues themselves before they arise, including by using SWOT (Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat) analysis	6-Jun	10
Submit proposal to client and professor including SWOT analysis, MOST framework, (theoretical) budget, and personnel bios including those of fellow students	Design an issues management approach rooted in organizational opportunities and/or needs, including by using a MOST (Mission/Objectives/Strategies/Tactics) framework	13-Jun	10
Prepare preliminary implementation plan in case your proposal is accepted, working with other students as your potential team members	Operationalize issues management plans working with a team to explain SWOT and MOST and preparing to implement the plan	20-Jun	10
First set of deliverables due to campaign manager, client and professor in issues management campaign, either as campaign manager or team member, focused on what you can do internally	Apply fundamental and sophisticated techniques for managing issues, recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities and preventing or countering threats	11-Jul	10
Second set of deliverables due to campaign manager, client and professor in issues management campaign, focused on what you can persuade others to do	Identify and network with traditional and non-traditional partners for maximum issues impact	18-Jul	10
Final report due to campaign manager, client and professor, summing up deliverables per the original proposal	Assess and communicate the effectiveness of issues management internally	23-Jul	20
Mini-quizzes on readings	All	All	10
Class participation	All	All	10
Total			100

Standard Grade Scale for GSPM Classes	
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, & presentation, but needs 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 inadequate motivation and concern.
C 73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation & concern.
C- 70-72	(Lowest passing grade) Poor. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F Below 70	Unacceptable performance or inability to submit the assignment.

*Assignments submitted up to two days after deadline will be penalized 1/3 letter grade. Assignments submitted more than two days after deadline will be penalized an additional 1/3 letter grade per day.

Class Schedule			
Week	Date	Class Outline	Assignment
1	23-May	Welcome and introductions Syllabus and expectations Introducing issues management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is an issue? • What are you actually <i>managing</i>? • What's the difference between issues and <i>crisis</i> management? • How do you identify issues management opportunities? • How do you conduct initial issue and/or potential client/candidate research? • How do you prospect and qualify leads ("pain" and "budget")? Group exercise: Brainstorming issues to prospect	Attend with calendar, syllabus, and textbooks
2	30-May	Mini-quiz on readings Surveying a particular issue's landscape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you find out what your candidate/client's issue is? • How do you set and conduct pre-pitch meetings with potential candidate/clients? • How do you drawing out the candidate/client's overall issue context? • What is SWOT Analysis? • How do you identify a mission and key objectives, strategies, and tactics the client might value? 	Results of "Prospecting"

		Group exercise: SWOT	
3	6-Jun	<p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>Building an issues management plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seminal importance of ideas • Identifying decision-makers • How do you design an issues management approach rooted in the client's opportunities and/or needs? • What's a MOST (Mission/Objectives/Strategies/Tactics) framework? • How do you set a budget for an issues management effort? 	SWOT Analysis
4	13-Jun	<p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>Preparing to implement an issues management campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you translate a proposal into an implementation plan? • How do you organize others as your potential team members based on selected tactics and budget? • How do you operationalize SWOT and MOST? 	MOST/Client Proposal
5	20-Jun	<p>Group exercise: Organizing potential teams</p> <p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>Identifying and engaging a "Champion:"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of leadership in issues management • How to find a Champion • How to manage a Champion • Do I need more than one Champion? • Thought leaders vs. doers • Vote counting <p>Group exercise: Proposal decisions and selected campaign kickoff meetings</p>	Implementation plan
6	27-Jun	<p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>Coalition-building in an issues management campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying additional players on the field • Stakeholder mapping: Who are the players that care and how are they affected? • Engaging allies in the process of becoming activists on behalf of one's issue, including research products turned to each audience ("message segmentation") • Identifying the opponents, performing opposition research, and countering, neutralizing, or flipping them. <p>Group exercise: Campaign meetings followed by verbal</p>	(Verbal campaign update)

		updates from campaign managers	
7	11-Jul	<p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>The changing media landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who's your audience? • What media does your audience consume? • That's your media landscape. • The impact of social media on influencers <p>Group exercise: Campaign meetings followed by presentation of deliverables</p>	First set of deliverables
8	18-Jul	<p>Mini-quiz on readings</p> <p>Preparing reports for issues management efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the goal here? • What does your client/candidate need and/or want? • Quality vs. quantity • Medium is the message • The thump factor • Flash <p>Group exercise: Campaign meetings followed by presentation of deliverables</p>	Second set of deliverables
9	25-Jul	<p>Group exercise: Presentations of final reports</p> <p>Concluding remarks</p>	Final report & presentations