

# The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## M.P.S. in Political Management

Spring 2022

1957 E 112

Jan 10/Mar 20

### Course Name

6403 Political Data & Analytics

3 Credits

### Synchronous:

Thursdays, 6:10 pm – 8:00 pm

Office Hours: Thursday 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Wednesday 8:00 am – 9:00 am (virtual)

Or via appointment

### Virtual:

<https://gwu.webex.com/meet/megoneill>

## Instructor Information

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### Instructor

Meagan O'Neill, PhD

She/her/hers

### Contact Information

Phone Number: (716) 698-8193

Email Address: [megoneill@gwu.edu](mailto:megoneill@gwu.edu)

### Communication

Email is the best way to communicate with me. I respond within 12 hours M-F but tend to respond slower on the weekends. I will advise on statistics, but also happy to mentor students.

## Course Details

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### Required Text and Learning Materials

Access to Blackboard, all required readings will be posted in weekly folders and reading should be completed prior to the next week from week posted (i.e. Week 1 readings due by Week 2).

### Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials

- Wheelan, Chris. 2013. *Naked Statistics*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- *R for Data Science*: <https://r4ds.had.co.nz/index.html>
- *Statistical Inference via Data Science: A Modern Dive into R and the tidyverse*: <https://moderndive.com/index.html>

### Course Description and Overview

To assure success in today's political environment, political managers must also have data competence. This includes the ability to design their own complex projects, constructing comprehensive strategic plans, targeting information and data analysis to specific audiences, gathering information, using data to inform decision making processes, and prediction of needs and outcomes. Data-driven decisions, evidence, and knowledge guide efficacious results.

### Course Learning Objectives

As a result of the course, you will be able to:

1. Exhibit knowledge of reliable and credible quantitative and qualitative research methods through the design and implementation of a political management research project.
2. Apply proper qualitative and quantitative analysis for the specific types of political data and correctly interpret results to answer political management questions.
3. Analyze and objectively critique trends in political data research and their influence on the future of political management, including ethical issues.
4. Interpret political research results and make recommendations to inform political management decisions

### Course Requirements

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|----------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Problem Sets                  | 25% |
| 2. In-class Participation        | 20% |
| 3. Nonparametric Presentation    | 20% |
| 4. Group Regression Presentation | 15% |
| 5. Final Project Presentation    | 20% |

### Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) and Description	Due Date	Weight
Problem Sets	2,3,4  Students will complete problem sets assigned during class prior to the next class meeting. Students are allowed to collaborate with colleagues on the analytic and coding portions, but interpretation and recommendation must be individually completed.	Almost Every class (see schedule)	20%
In-Class Participation	1, 2, 3, 4  Students are expected to come to class prepared for the conversation and tasks. Students should take part in dialogues, exercises, and other in-class assignments.	Every class	20%
Proposal	1, 2, 3, 4  Students will complete a proposal of a research project within political science with a partner. Students should outline what type of research they want to use and what methodology they plan to use. A timeline will also be proposed.	2/10	20%

Mid-term evaluation	1, 2, 3, 4  With your partner, you will write a reflection piece on how your methodology is working, what steps you need to complete, you will also have a chance to reflect on the experience and partnership and ask any questions that you have going forward.	2/	10%
Final Project	1,2,3,4,5,6  Students will utilize information throughout the semester to complete at least two analyses that tell a story to a political organization based on their proposal. Students will present each analysis individually and tie together a message from the analyses. Each analysis has to be an independent method. 5% of your final grade will be based on the critique and feedback given to your colleagues.	3/17	30%
Total			100%

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

Grade*		Grading Standard
A	94-100	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	Completion of the assignment, but without 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.

### 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. Readings will be posted in the Weekly folders and it is up to the students to complete the readings **following** the class. If a reading is due, the problem set may also have questions from the reading.

Week	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	Jan 13	Introduction to course; How does political science use data and research design	Problem Set 1: data in political science
2	Jan 20	<b>NO IN-PERSON CLASS</b> – Lying with statistics and exploring news reporting of data: asynchronous online videos on students' schedules	Problem Set 2: lying, news
3	Jan 27	Methodology, measurement, validation, and error	Proposal
4	Feb 3	Descriptive statistics & intro to R	Problem Set 3: descriptive and R
5	Feb 10	Survey Design and Interviews/Focus Groups	
6	Feb 17	Qualitative Research: simple methods and natural language processing	Reflection
7	Feb 24	Quantitative Research: polls, cross tabs, and simple poll statistics (correlations, t-tests, etc)	Problem Set 4: qualitative and quantitative research
8	Mar 3	Data Storytelling in Political Science and Quality research identification	Problem Set 5: Good and bad interpretations, quality research
9	Mar 10	Quantitative Research: regressions and turn out models	Presentation
10	Mar 17	Presentations	

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### 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.*

## Expectations and Responsibilities

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### Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary 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 [helpdesk.gwu.edu](mailto:helpdesk.gwu.edu).

### **Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation**

For face-to-face classes:

Over the course of the semester, students will spend approximately three hours per week in combined online class meetings (synchronous learning) and engaged in asynchronous instructional learning activities (done weekly on one's own time) over the 10-week term. In addition to these required asynchronous and synchronous activities, reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 8¼ hours per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 30 hours in instructional time (asynchronous and synchronous) and 82.5 hours preparing for class for a total of 112.5 hours. Hybrid and Online courses meet the total 112.5 hours of total instruction.

### **Attendance Policy**

**Attending class is required.** Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the issue to let me know you will absent; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and will negatively count against your participation grade. If excused, you will have the opportunity to make up the coursework in an additional meeting to ensure you are on the same page. There will be one unexplained absence allowed per student per semester without penalty.

### **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." Copying information and pasting it into a paper without a quotation and citation is an act of plagiarism. Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. For the first offense, the student will receive an "F" for the assignment and formal charges will be filed with the Office of Academic Integrity. For the second offense, charges will again be filed and the student will receive an "F" for the final course grade. Penalties for academic dishonesty are not negotiable. You will not be offered a "do-over" or resubmission. 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/>.

### **Classroom Conduct Policy**

You should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. You are expected to be present, attentive, and engaged during course meetings. Please do not attempt to multitask, as it is almost impossible to read something while simultaneously listening to something else. Your phone should be away during class unless you are expecting an emergency call.

### **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. Feel free to contact Meg first, as she is happy to work with feedback.

Dr. Todd Belt  
Director, Political Management Program  
[tbelt@gwu.edu](mailto:tbelt@gwu.edu) | 202-994-4363

Suzanne Farrand  
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  
[sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309

### **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 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.

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.