

# The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## **M.P.S. in Political Management**

Spring Semester 2021

February 4, 2021/April 15, 2021

### **Course Name**

Course Number 6466

3 Credits

Thursday 7:10 PM - 9:10 PM

Virtual

### **Instructor**

Devaguptapu, Raghu

### **Contact Information**

202.258.5595

raghu@lefthookstrategy.com

### **Communication**

If needed, don't hesitate to email me with questions and I'll try to get back to you promptly. I also can be available before and after class.

### **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. I will also be emailing students on a class list that I will create. 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).

The course will meet online at 7:10 on its scheduled meeting days via Zoom.

### **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/>.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attending class is expected. Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the issue to let me know that you will be absent, otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and it will negatively count against your participation grade. Simply put, you must attend class to participate. Three or more class absences during the spring semester will result in a failing class participation grade.

### **Online Classroom Conduct Policy**

You should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. Unless you are having connection difficulties, you are expected to activate your camera and to be present, attentive, and engaged during online course meetings. Please do not attempt to multitask, as it is almost impossible to read something while simultaneously listening to something else.

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

Over the course of the semester, students will spend approximately two hours per week in online class meetings (synchronous learning), plus another hour engaged in asynchronous instructional learning activities (done weekly on one's own time). 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, 8 ¼ 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.

### **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:

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

## **THE COURSE**

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### **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.

### **Course Description and Overview**

This course will examine the strategies, techniques, design and impact of paid political communication. It will focus on the role of political advertising in a campaign, including radio, direct mail and internet, with an emphasis on television and commercial advertising across platforms.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

We will review the operating elements of a campaign and how each element plays a role in building paid political communication. The course will initially explore the role of these elements in helping design message and creative development as well as the techniques employed. The course will focus on the mediums of paid political advertising, their impact, utility and construction.

Students will also be given the chance to hone campaign narrative and script skills and will be given the chance to create a paid media campaign and message strategy.

In addition, the course will include guest lecturers in areas such as quantitative and qualitative analysis, research, time-buying, targeting and various paid communication mediums.

### **Course Requirements**

There will be homework and projects due throughout the semester, generally each week. Assignments and deadlines will be provided for each class. The class will require two days of work for the purpose of editing outside of the regular class schedule and possibly one day of shooting outside of the regular class schedule.

Each group will be required to present ideas for a script package and a media campaign, for critique by the professor and by the class.

There will also be a presentation of final plans/ads and they will be ranked by classmates and guest professionals across several criteria.

Assignments should be turned in digitally and received by email prior to the beginning of class. Please email assignments to Raghu.

### **Evaluation and Grading**

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussion, master the literature assigned and think creatively about the application of media to campaigns. The final grade will be determined by a combination of peer and professor evaluations of the team projects as well as performance in class, tests and homework assignments.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Class Assignments	Political Writing, Reading Assignments, Quantitative and Qualitative Review.	20%
Script Package Project	Strategy and Scripting Package	30%
Additional Advertising Components Projects	Advertising and Creative Development	20%
Participation	Come Prepared to Discuss Assigned Readings, Script Reviews and Class Themes.	15%
Attendance	Attendance Policy Above	15%
Total		100%

Following is the grade scale for all GSPM classes:

<b>Grade*</b>	<b>Grading Standard</b>
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**

The Spot by Edwin Diamond and Steven Bates, MIT Press, 1992

### **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.

### **Feb. 4, 2021 - Week 1 – Thursday February 4 - Course Introduction and Operating Elements of a Campaign**

#### Learning Objective:

How advertising fits into a campaign. Why all the elements matter and which elements matter most directly to paid communication.

- I. Introduction of course – what is expected, weekly assignments, script writing
- II. Introduction of class participants – interests, past experiences, career goals
- III. Primary lecture – 14 Operating Elements of a Campaign
- IV. Review ads from a few select campaigns that illustrate the impact of advertising.

**Due Feb. 11** – Draft a 60-second introductory TV spot for a political candidate of your choice. Time the spot carefully, use a stopwatch, and pay attention to visuals. Read Chapters 1-5 of The Spot and write a memo on chapters 1-5. Be prepared to discuss the major points.

### **Week 2 - Feb. 11, 2021 - The Foundation of Paid Advertising: Landscape, Self and Opposition Research**

#### Learning Objective:

Research is the KEY. Understanding how research leads to information. How information informs a message. How a message informs a strategy. How a strategy communicates a message to voters. How research and message inform creative.

- I. What makes up a political spot – Focusing on the research components
- II. Understanding landscape, self and opposition research
- III. Ad review of research driven ads

**Due Feb. 18** – Draft two 30 second spots for your candidate, one positive and one negative. Write a memo on Chapters 6-11 of THE SPOT. Be prepared to discuss.

### **Week 3 - Feb. 18, 2021 – The Role of Earned Media in Paid Communication**

Learning Objective: Believability in advertising and the use of 3<sup>rd</sup> party validation to help build a brand and drive positive and negative character traits.

- I. Lecture: How earned press can help brand a candidate. 3<sup>rd</sup> party validation and the need for believability in advertising.
- II. Guest presenter on developing earned media campaign *for* better paid advertising campaign.
- III. Ad review focused on positive and negative press clips.
- IV. Pick groups for project
- V. Critique of 60 second scripts

**Due Feb. 25** – Write Positive Press release on your candidate accomplishment and write a negative press release against your opponent. Read Chapters 12-16 of THE SPOT and write a memo on those final chapters. Be prepared to discuss.

### **Week 4 - Feb. 25, 2021– Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis and its Importance in Media Campaign Design**

Learning Objective: Understanding the utility of paid research and how various poll designs can help build your campaign.

- I. Discussion of political and issue campaigns and the use of polling to help determine media strategy and narrative.
- II. Guest lecturer on poll design and need for qualitative along with quantitative and understanding crosstabs.
- III. Critique of 30 second scripts OR revisions of the 60's.

**Assignment(s) Due March 4<sup>th</sup>** : Individually, draft 10 questions for your pollster that you want in the benchmark survey (not including demographic questions) – use your candidate and be prepared to explain any batteries you think you need and why. Make revisions to your scripts.

**Week 5 - March 4, 2021 - Building Narrative: Authenticity in Advertising. Contrasting with your opponent. How to do it and why it's important.**

Learning Objective: Understanding the initial steps in a creative process to build a media campaign and effectively communicating a candidate brand.

- I. Review of Poll Question Exercise.
- II. Ad review. Successful narrative campaigns.
- III. Guest Q and A – Elected Official discussing their brand and advertising.
- IV. Continued Script Review
- V. Go over Script Package requirements for final project.

**Due March 11** – Write Candidate Bio's, long format and short.

**Week 6 - March 11, 2021 – The Art of Script Writing – The Use of Visual Imagery to Make Your Point.**

Learning Objective: The construction of writing in 30 seconds. The use of visual metaphors. Writing with a hook and writing for an inherent contrast.

- I. Review Candidate Bio's.
- II. Planning Your Advertising – Thinking through your campaign.
- III. The Chess Game: A single spot vs. a full campaign.
- IV. Script writing...unique and different. Writing vs. Speaking tone.
- V. Writing for different mediums. What's new in the creative process.

**Due March 25** – Draft Script revisions

**Week 7 – March 25, 2021 – Mail, Print and Radio in a Campaign**

Learning Objective: Understanding holistic campaigns how to choose a dominant medium and the intricacies of the creation of direct mail.

- I. How to decide what medium to use and when.
- II. What is a dominant medium of communication?

- III. Guest Lecture: How to write a mail piece
- IV. Continue discussion of script packages.

**Due April 1** – Direct Mail pieces.

### **Week 8 – April 1, 2021 – Media Buying and Campaign Budgeting**

Learning Objective: How media is strategically purchased and placed. How strategic media plans are considered.

- I. Guest Lecture: How to Media Buy
- II. How to Target
- III. How to List Match for Online Buying
- IV. How to Media Budget

**Due April 14** – Work on Final Script Packages

### **Week 9 - April 8, 2021 – Digital Communication. Social Media and How It Fits/Targeting**

Learning Objective: How media consumption habits are changing dramatically, and campaign communication must evolve. Learning the tactics and how to build creative that works online.

- I. The changing landscape of paid communication.
- II. How social media is paid communication.
- III. What platforms can you communicate on?
- IV. What works online?
- V. Guest Lecture: How do you buy it, target and how much does it cost?

**Due April 14** – Final Script Packages

### **Week 10 – April 15, 2021 – Final Presentation of Script Packages and Discussion/The Business Side of Media Consulting**

- I. Final Presentations

- II. Evaluation of Media Plans
- III. The Business Side of Media Consulting/Marketing/Building A Practice
- IV. Class Evaluation

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*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.*