

The Graduate School  
of Political Management  

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**M.P.S. in Legislative Affairs**

Semester: Spring 2020

Jan 14 to Apr 27, 2020

**Running and Representing<sup>1</sup>: A Member's  
Perspective**

LGAF 6240.LH2

3 Credits

Syllabus version: 7.0.1

Syllabus date: 1/1/2020

**Class Sessions**

Tuesday evenings, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Hall of the States

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**BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**Instructor**

M. Robert Carr

+1-202-251-7755 (best to text first)

bcarr@gwu.edu

**Communication**

I may be reached either by text or email. I prefer text messages. They are usually answered quickly. Emails will be answered usually within 24-48 hours. **Important:** My email client sorts and alerts me based on your gwu.edu domain name. If you use another email domain name/account, I may not see it. For critical communication please only use the gwu.edu domain. Also, I will answer **only** to the gwu.edu email address I have for you. I am available for meetings by appointment, preferably one hour before 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. 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).

**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.

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<sup>1</sup> Prior to 2016 the course title was Running & Ruling.... It took two years to make the change in the GW system!

- 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/>.

**In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class**

If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave here, we will meet in **the parking lot whose entrance is SE of the intersection of North Capital and E St NE** in order to account for everyone and 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/>.

**Attendance Policy**

Unless otherwise excused in advance, class attendance is mandatory. I expect to be notified via text (preferable) or email at least by the day of the class session. Punctuality is important as well. Similarly I expect to be notified via text if your arrival will be delayed. Finally, I will excuse the occasional early departure, if I am alerted in advance as to the cause.

**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:

<p>Dr. Steven Billet                  Director, Legislative Affairs Program  <a href="mailto:sbillet@gwu.edu">sbillet@gwu.edu</a>   202-994-1149</p>	<p>Dr. Jack Prostko                  Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development                  College of Professional Studies  <a href="mailto:jackp@gwu.edu">jackp@gwu.edu</a>   202-994-3592</p>	<p>Ms. Suzanne Farrand                  Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  <a href="mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu">sfarrand@gwu.edu</a>   202-994-9309</p>
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## THE COURSE

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### Legislative Affairs Program Objectives

Upon completion of the Master's degree in Legislative Affairs, students will:

1. Gain both theoretical and practical knowledge related to the U.S. Congress, general issues in the legislative arena, and how to effectively advance legislation;
2. Hone their oral and written communication skills in both theoretical and technical aspects of legislative affairs;
3. Be able to conduct cutting-edge research and engage in effective problem solving by learning critical thinking skills;
4. Learn how to work effectively with others, the value of collaborative work, and will understand ethical issues involved in the legislative arena.

### Course Description and Overview

There are as many definitions of the job of a member of Congress as there are actors in the political process. Most of these definitions tend to be self-serving or at least agenda driven. They tend to affirm or deny that the subject member is meeting acceptable, accountability standards for job performance. In coming from a position or point of view these definitions easily obscure, if not totally ignore the real, practical job environment of a member of Congress. In short, helpful as these definitions try to be, they frequently are not.

This course takes a different approach to examining the job of a member of Congress. Most political analysts and commentators, indeed most academics, start with the member as elected. We will start at a much earlier stage with the decision to seek office. What conventional analysis often misses because they fail to ask, "how was the twig planted." We will start at the very beginning. Then in the second half of the course we will dissect the many, varied roles that the job requires. We will try to put ourselves in the member's shoes. From that perspective we will hopefully get closer to a better understanding of what the job requires in real, practical terms. And finally we will seek to assess and even improve on the standards for judging success both for the individual, representative democracy and the nation.

### Course Learning Objectives

1. To gain the perspective and professionally empathize with of the job of seeking and becoming a member of Congress.
2. To be able to independently assess the conduct of candidates for and members of Congress as reported by others.
3. To better assist members of Congress in pursuit of the member's goals.
4. To be in a position to help a member assess the risks and rewards of a course of action.
5. To offer advice and counsel to those who would undertake to become a member of Congress.

### Course Requirements

- Students will be required to attend class discussions as well as occasional discussion board postings throughout the course. Students will be occasionally required to respond to postings of a peer.
- Student will be required to complete two major writing assignments. The first writing assignment is in the format of a journal describing the candidate experience. The second writing assignment will be in the format of a journal describing the officeholder experience.
- In addition, each student must submit up to six short, one page essays on discrete elements of running for and serving in Congress. The latter will not be graded and will synchronize with the two main papers required for the course.
- There may be a final, take-home exam.

**Evaluation and Grading**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Memo/Journal #1	1 and 2		25%
Memo/Journal #2	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5		25%
Attendance and Participation	all		25%
Final Exam (subject to change in 2018)	all		25%
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**

Fenno, Richard F., *The Challenge of Congressional Representation* (Harvard University Press, 2013)  
 Mayhew, David R., *Congress: The Electoral Connection, 2nd ed.* (Yale University Press, 2004)  
*Life in Congress: The Member Perspective* (Congressional Management Foundation, March 2013). Note:  
 Download PDF free of charge from <http://congressfoundation.org/projects/life-in-congress/the-member-perspective>

**Optional Supplemental Texts and Learning Materials**

Keeping It Local, A Guide for Managing Congressional District and State Offices, (Congressional Management Foundation, 2010)  
*Setting Course: A Congressional Management Guide. 14th ed.* (Congressional Management Foundation, 2014).  
 Fenno, Richard F., *Home Style, House Members in Their Districts*, (Longman, 2003)  
 Frey, Lou, and Jewett, Aubrey, *Political Rules of the Road*, (University Press and USAFMC, 2009)  
 Frey, Lou, and Hayes, Michael T., *Inside the House*, (University Press and USAFMC, 2001)  
 Graber, Doris A., *Media Power in Politics. 6th ed.* (CQ Press, 2011)  
 Ignatieff, Michael, *Fire and Ashes, Success and Failure in Politics*, (Harvard University Press, 2013)  
 Lawless, Jennifer L., *Becoming a Candidate, Political Ambition and the Decision to Run for Office*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012)  
 Stearns, Clifford B., *Life in the Marble Palace (In Praise of Folly)*, (FriesenPress, 2016)  
 Strand, Mark, et al, *Surviving Inside Congress, 3rd ed.* (The Congressional Institute, 2011)

More optional, supplemental reading materials will be provided on a continuing basis.

**THE COURSE CALENDAR**

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The schedule is tentative. Guest lecture visits are in the process of being booked. Additionally, I will opportunistically seek to use current events as teaching opportunities. Obviously, these externalities cannot be scheduled and may move certain topical elements or assigned readings temporally.

Therefore, I reserve the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar posted to Blackboard and/or posted via revisions to the syllabus, also posted on Blackboard.

**Week 1 - January 14<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content Covered: Class organization, brief overview and introduction to concepts.

Reading Assignment: None.

Assignment(s) Due Today: Send an email to me with the following three items included.

- A short bio or recent résumé of yourself to me. An old, slightly out of date one will due. Do not make a new one for this purpose. If the document does not include your current position, please put that in the body of the email
- Identify the current congressional district you live in, the congressional district where you have spent most of your time, and the congressional district you call “home.” To reiterate, there should be three separate CD ST-##’s even if they are redundant.
- Tell me whether you identify as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or other (Green, etc.).

Also, not in an email, but in person, advise me of special needs that you now have or expect to have. For example, if you have a disability, a known scheduling conflict or any other matter that is appropriate at the beginning of the course, now is the time.

## **Phase One: Getting There - Week 2 to 6**

### **Week 2 - January 21<sup>st</sup>**

Topic and Content: Nascent ambition; are you a candidate to be a candidate?

Reading: (From Gelman Library) Lawless, Jennifer L., *Becoming a Candidate, Political Ambition and the Decision to Run for Office*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012) chapter 2 (posted to Blackboard)

Assignment due today: Please write and email a short paragraph telling me which congressional district you've chosen to run in and why. Also include a short paragraph that describes the fictionalized person you'll be assuming in your papers. Be prepared to discuss this in class. Title the piece [last name] - Bio-Dist (ST-#).docx.

### **Week 3 – January 28<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: Expressive ambition; executing on a decision to run.

Reading Assignment: Fenno, Chapters 1 & 7.

Assignment due today: Please write and email a short paragraph telling me why you sometimes think about running for congress and what things would weigh on your decision to do so. Be specific. Be prepared to discuss this in class. Title the piece [last name] - Nascent Ambition.docx. Deadline for submission is Monday, Jan. 28, 2019.

### **Week 4 – February 4<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: Learning the district.

Reading Assignment: Fenno Chapter 2 (Conable).

Assignment due today: Please write and email a short paragraph telling me how you express your ambition to run for congress. Be specific. Be prepared to discuss this in class. Title the piece [last name] - Expressing Ambition.docx. Deadline for submission is Monday, February 4, 2019.

### **Week 5 – February 11<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: Running for Congress: campaigning.

Reading Assignment: Fenno, Chapter 3, Glenn Poshard.

Assignment due today (if not already done): Write a short paragraph telling me how you plan to win your campaign for congress. Be specific. Be prepared to discuss this in class. Title the piece [last name] - Win Theory.docx. Deadline for submission is Monday, February 11, 2019.

## **Week 6 – February 18<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: The election.

Reading Assignment: Posted to Blackboard Files section are two articles.

The case of Richard Blumenthal

The case of Kevin McCarthy

## **Phase Two: Staying There - Week 7 to 14**

### **Week 7 – February 25<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: Staffing and setting up your office, getting committee assignments.

### **Week 8 – March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Topic and content: Dilemma: service and campaigning (fundraising): how will I be evaluated?

Reading assignment: Stearns, Chapters 2 & 8 (posted to Blackboard)

- **March 6** – Paper due: 1st Journal (as a candidate). Note: If you wish to have an automatic extension of three more days until COB Monday, March 9th you must send an email notifying me. Further, I may grant such an extension **for cause** until COB Friday March 13th. I cannot grant further extensions.

### **Week 9 – March 10<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: What are the time pressures? What are the temptations?

Reading Assignment: Mayhew, Chapter 1 and Fenno, Chapter 6 (Lofgren).

### **Week 10 – March 24<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: What is my style of representation?

Reading Assignment: Fenno, Chapter 5 (Greenwood).

### **Week 11 – March 31<sup>st</sup>**

Topic and content: The mature legislator.

Reading Assignment: Mayhew, Chapter 2.

### **Week 12 – April 7<sup>th</sup>**

Topic and content: Serving different constituencies

Reading Assignment: Fenno, Chapter 4 (Thurman).

### **Week 13 – April 14<sup>th</sup>**

Special Note: This class session will be held in the Hall of the House, aka the House Floor.

Assignment: Prepare a one-minute statement for delivery on the House Floor.

### **Week 14 – April 21<sup>st</sup>**

Topic and content: Winding down and heading for retirement. Wrap-up and review.

#### **• April 24<sup>th</sup>**

Paper due: Journal #2 (as a member). Submit with the following file format [Last name] - Journal2.docx.

Note: If you wish to have an automatic extension of three more days until COB Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> you must send an email notifying me. I may grant such an extension until COB Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, **for cause**. I cannot grant further extensions.

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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.*