

# The Graduate School of Political Management

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**M.P.S. in Political Management**  
Fall 2017  
August 31, 2017-December 7, 2017

**Grassroots Engagement**  
PMGT 6410.10  
3 Credits

Thursdays from 7:10 pm – 9:40 pm  
348 Phillips Hall

## **BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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### **Instructor Contact Information**

Amy Meli  
Phone Number: (703) 395-2817  
Email Address: [amymeli@email.gwu.edu](mailto:amymeli@email.gwu.edu)

### **Communication**

The fastest way to reach me is via email – I will respond to messages during the semester within 24 hours. I am generally on campus the hour before class and can be available to meet during that time or at another time by request. Please email me or call me to schedule a meeting in advance.

### **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>.

### **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/>.

### **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 at **[fill in proximate location]** 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**

Attendance in class is mandatory, as is participation in classroom discussions. However, since we are all working professionals, I understand that students may occasionally need to miss a class. In order to receive credit for a class, students must notify me in advance of the class being missed. In order to receive full credit, select three of the discussion questions for the week missed and submit your answers to me via email by the end of the week of the missed class.

### **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:

Dr. Michael Cohen  
Deputy Director, Political Management Program  
[michaeldcohen@gwu.edu](mailto:michaeldcohen@gwu.edu) | 202-994-5512

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

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**

In this course, students will learn how grassroots movements impact political outcomes and how to engage the public in order to make political change.

While President, FDR famously told a lobbyist after a meeting, “You’ve convinced me. Now go out and force me.” He knew that the lobbyist’s position was correct, but he needed to hear support from the public in order to move forward with the policy. Grassroots movements are often the driving force behind changes in public opinion on key issues, the success or failure of landmark legislation, and the election or defeat of public officials. Through the course of the semester, we will learn how the human brain drives how people think about issues, how cultural movements often manifest themselves through art or culture before they appear in politics, and how to leverage new technology and data to support grassroots work. But most importantly, we will examine how the most effective way to change minds is through human relationships, which is why building relationships through trust is the ultimate work of a grassroots organizer.

### Course Learning Objectives

1. Understand and execute a grassroots stakeholder analysis that identifies family, friends, foes, and strangers in an advocacy campaign.
2. Understand the three different types of grassroots advocacy (community advocacy, legislative advocacy, and campaign advocacy) and how the strategies employed by each type of campaign is driven by the issue’s location within the life cycle.
3. Understand how the use of data, technology, and messaging can all have an impact on the outcome of the campaign.
4. Demonstrate mastery of the above learning objectives by completing a semester-long grassroots engagement plan.

### Course Requirements

Students are required to complete (1) a group project and oral presentation, (2) a take-home final exam, and (3) participate in weekly classroom discussions.

### Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due Date	Weight
Group Assignment – written submission	Design a grassroots campaign strategy and implementation plan		40 points
Group Assignment - oral presentation and Power Point	Present campaign strategy and implementation plan to a panel of experts		10 points
Class Participation	Demonstrate preparation for class and understanding of concepts in reading and class discussions (3 points per class for 13 classes)	Weekly	39 points
Final Exam	Take-home exam consisting of 11 questions. Demonstrate understanding of concepts covered throughout the semester.		11 points

### Group Project Grading Details

Throughout the semester, your group will submit portions of the written group assignment. Due date details are provided below and will also be provided on a calendar on the course’s Blackboard page.

For each portion of the written submission, your group will have multiple opportunities to submit content. It is likely that upon the initial submission, your group will receive partial credit, as I expect that each submission be written as if it were to be submitted to a client. After the first submission, I will make editorial suggestions to improve the draft, including questions that need to be explored to complete the assignment.

Once your group has made the appropriate edits, submit the second draft by the due date. I will review the updated submission and will re-grade as appropriate. I may allow additional submissions past the second draft if needed. **However, all assignments must be completed on deadline in order to receive full credit.**

The written assignment grading will break down as follows. Added together, the written portion of the group project will be worth 40 points (and 40% of your grade).

- Part 1: Mission, Vision, and Background Statement (12 points) – due the week of September 21
- Part 2: Field Research (8 points) – methodology due the week of September 28, results due the week of October 12
- Part 3: Targeted Support/Audience Analysis (8 points) – due the week of October 26
- Part 4: Messaging and Media Plan (4 points) – due the week of – due the week of November 2
- Part 5: Budget (2 points) – due the week of November 9
- Part 6: Appendices and Bibliography (2 points) – due the week of November 16
- Part 7: Full plan with Executive Summary (2 points) – due the week of November 30
- Part 8: Evaluation by Team Members (2 points) – due the week of December 7

**Following is the grade scale for all 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, 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**

Instead of a single text, this course will use excerpts from a variety of different texts. We will also use articles, films, and other media described below. All course materials can be found on the class’s blackboard site (exceptions are noted below).

Book Excerpts:

Alinsky, Saul D., *Rules for Radicals*, Vintage Books, 1971 (original publ. 1969)

Bishop, Bill, *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart*, Mariner Books, 2009

Gladwell, Malcolm, *The Tipping Point*, Little Brown & Co., 2006 (Chapter 2, The Law of the Few)

Green, Donald P. and Gerber, Alan S., *Get Out the Vote!*, Brookings Institution Press, 2015

Grefe, Edward A., *The New Corporate Activism: Harnessing the Power of Grassroots Tactics for Your Organization*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995 (Chapter 6, Mobilizing the Troops)

Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, Vintage, 2012 (Chapters 6, 7, and 10)

Harris, Phil & Fleischer, Craig, *The Handbook of Public Affairs*, Sage Publishing, 2017 (Chapter 9, Public Affairs and Information/Science Systems)

Issenberg, Sasha, *The Victory Lab*, Broadway Books, 2012

Lakoff, George, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant, Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2014 (Chapter 1, Framing 101: How to Take Back Public Discourse)

Meredith, Judith, *Lobbying on a Shoestring*, Auburn House, 2000 (Third Edition)

Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Touchstone Books, 2001 (Chapters 1-3)

Turkle, Sherry, *Reclaiming Conversation, the Power of Talk in a Digital Age*, Penguin Books, 2016 (The Flight from Conversation p. 19-56 and The Public Square p. 293-301)

Articles:

Broockman, David, and Kalla, Joshua, *Science*, April 8, 2016, "Durably Reducing Transphobia: A Field Experiment on Door-to-Door Canvassing"

Hamburger, Tom, *The Washington Post*, December, 13, 2015, "[Cruz Campaign Credits Psychological Data and Analytics for its Rising Success](#)"

Pollan, Michael, *The New York Times Magazine*, October 5, 2016, "[Big Food Strikes Back: Why Did the Obama Administration Fail to Take On Corporate Agriculture?](#)"

Movies:

*Invictus*: covers the events in South Africa before and during the 1995 Rugby World Cup, hosted there following the dismantling of apartheid.

*No*: a 2012 Chilean film regarding the 1988 plebiscite on Pinochet.

*Pride*: a 2014 film depicting the partnership in 1984 between London-based gays and lesbians and striking Welsh coal miners.

Other Media:

[For Your Reconsideration](#), podcast, *This American Life*, Episode 584, April 8, 2016 (Act One only – until the 27 minute mark)

[First Follower: Leadership Lessons from Dancing Guy](#), YouTube video, posted by Derek Sivers, February 11, 2010

[Generous Orthodoxy](#), podcast, *Revisionist History*, Season 1 Episode 9 (start at minute 17:00 and listen until 28:00 – the story about Princeton University)

[The Newsroom](#), YouTube video,

[Millennials Don’t Exist! Adam Conover at Deep Shift](#), YouTube video, March 19, 2016

Supplemental Materials:

Diaz, Junot, *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, Riverhead Books, 2007

Hamid, Mohsin, *Exit West*, Riverhead Books, 2017

Henriquez, Cristina, *The Book of Unknown Americans*, Knopf, 2015

Nguyen, Viet Thanh, *The Sympathizer*, Grove Press, 2015

Vance, J.D., *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of Family and Culture in Crisis*, Harper, 2016

*Hidden Figures*: a 2016 film about women working as “computers’ for NASA in the American South in the 1960s.

*Milk*: a 2008 American biographical film based on the life of gay rights activist and politician Harvey Milk, who was the first openly gay person to be elected to office.

**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.

**August 31, 2017**

Week 1

Topic and Content Covered:

- Introduction to grassroots engagement
- The importance of building trust in grassroots campaigns
- Introduction to Group Project, review examples, meet group members

Reading Due Today:

- Turkle, Sherry, *Reclaiming Conversation, the Power of Talk in a Digital Age*, Penguin Books, 2016 (The Flight from Conversation p. 19-56 and The Public Square p. 293-301)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**September 7, 2017**

Week 2

Topic and Content Covered:

- Types of grassroots campaigns
- Understanding vision, strategy, and tactics
- Vision Statement
- Group Project: Introduction to Research/Background statement

Reading Due Today:

- Podcast: [For Your Reconsideration](#), podcast, *This American Life*, Episode 584, April 8, 2016 (Act One only – until the 27 minute mark)
- Movie: *Invictus*: covers the events in South Africa before and during the 1995 Rugby World Cup, hosted there following the dismantling of apartheid.
- Article: Broockman, David, and Kalla, Joshua, *Science*, April 8, 2016, “Durably Reducing Transphobia: A Field Experiment on Door-to-Door Canvassing”

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**September 14, 2017**

Week 3

Topic and Content Covered:

- Introduction to Audience Analysis
- Broadcast/Narrowcast

Reading Due Today:

- Grefe, Edward A., *The New Corporate Activism: Harnessing the Power of Grassroots Tactics for Your Organization*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995 (Chapter 6, Mobilizing the Troops)
- Pollan, Michael, The New York Times Magazine, October 5, 2016, “[Big Food Strikes Back: Why Did the Obama Administration Fail to Take On Corporate Agriculture?](#)”

Assignment(s) Due:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**September 21, 2017**

Week 4

Topic and Content Covered:

- Authoritarian vs. nurturing model of political engagement
- Influencers
- Issue life cycle
- Group Project: Survey research/focus groups

Reading Due Today:

- Gladwell, Malcolm, *The Tipping Point*, Little Brown & Co., 2006 (Chapter 2, The Law of the Few)
- [First Follower: Leadership Lessons from Dancing Guy](#), YouTube video, posted by Derek Sivers, February 11, 2010

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)
- Submit Vision/Background/Research document prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)

**September 28, 2017**

Week 5

Topic and Content Covered:

- Types of grassroots organizations
- Technology in grassroots campaigns
- Guest lecturer on the use of technology in grassroots campaigns – Melissa Horn, National Association of Realtors
- Group project: Targeted Support/Audience Analysis

Reading Due Today:

- Harris, Phil & Fleischer, Craig, *The Handbook of Public Affairs*, Sage Publishing, 2017 (Chapter 9, Public Affairs and Information/Science Systems)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit field research methodology prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**October 5, 2017**

Week 6

Topic and Content Covered:

- Coalition Building
- Demographics

Reading Due Today:

- The works listed under Supplemental Materials books/movies will be divided so that each group is assigned a portion of the readings. Then we will do an exercise in class to share what each group learned. Details and rubric to be provided a few weeks prior to this class session.

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**October 12, 2017**

Week 7

Topic and Content Covered:

- Psychographics
- Polling and research
- Guest lecturer on polling, psychographics, and the use of microtargeting in grassroots campaigns: Brett Loyd, The Polling Company

Reading Due Today:

- Bishop, Bill, *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart*, Mariner Books, 2009
- Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Touchstone Books, 2001 (Chapters 1-3)
- Hamburger, Tom, *The Washington Post*, December, 13, 2015, "[Cruz Campaign Credits Psychological Data and Analytics for its Rising Success](#)"

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit field research results prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**October 19, 2017**

Week 8

Topic and Content Covered:

- Community Advocacy

Reading Due Today:

- Alinsky, Saul D., *Rules for Radicals*, Vintage Books, 1971 (original publ. 1969)
- [Generous Orthodoxy](#), podcast, *Revisionist History*, Season 1 Episode 9 (start at minute 17:00 and listen until 28:00 – the story about Princeton University)
- [The Newsroom](#), YouTube video,

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**October 26, 2017**

Week 9

Topic and Content Covered:

- Legislative Advocacy
- Guest lecturer on the intersection between lobbying and grassroots advocacy: Josh Habursky, Independent Community Bankers Association

Reading Due Today:

- Meredith, Judith, *Lobbying on a Shoestring*, Auburn House, 2000 (Third Edition)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit Targeted Support/Audience Analysis prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**November 2, 2017**

Week 10

Topic and Content Covered:

- Campaign Advocacy
- Guest lecturer on field organizing in a political campaign (TBD)

Reading Due Today:

- Issenberg, Sasha, *The Victory Lab*, Broadway Books, 2012
- Green, Donald P. and Gerber, Alan S., *Get Out the Vote!*, Brookings Institution Press, 2015

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit Messaging and Media Plan prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**November 9, 2017**

Week 11

Topic and Content Covered:

- Message and storytelling
- Guest lecturer on political archetypes – Josh Hedaya, Aristotle International

Reading Due Today:

- Lakoff, George, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant, Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2014 (Chapter 1, Framing 101: How to Take Back Public Discourse)
- *No*: a 2012 Chilean film regarding the 1988 plebiscite on Pinochet

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit Budget prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**November 16, 2017**

Week 12

Topic and Content Covered:

- Political psychology
- Fear and political decision-making

Reading Due Today:

- Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, Vintage, 2012 (Chapters 6, 7, and 10)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit Appendices and Bibliography prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**November 30, 2017**

Week 13

Topic and Content Covered:

- Tying it all together
- Final exam review
- Prepare for group presentations – taking place on Week 14

Reading Due Today:

- Pride (movie)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- NOTE: Any revisions to any other part of the written submission MUST be submitted by today in on Blackboard in the appropriate slot for the appropriate portion of the project
- Submit Executive Summary prior to class (submit the Monday before class, comments returned to each group by Wednesday, opportunity to resubmit by Friday)
- Discussion questions (to be posted on Blackboard the Sunday before class)

**December 7, 2017**

Week 14

Topic and Content Covered:

Final presentations given in class

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

Reading Due Today:

None

Assignment(s) Due Today:

Final presentations PTT submitted via Blackboard (due before class)

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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.*