

# The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**MPS in Political Management**  
Fall 2017

**Corporate Public Affairs**  
PMGT 6420.10/Sect 10  
3 Credits

Wednesday/7:10 – 9:40pm  
Duques 362

Mon, Aug 28/Mon, Dec 11

*Make-up day: Tue, Dec 13*

## **BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

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### **Instructor**

Chris Bender

Chris is Vice President at Adfero, one of Washington's leading strategic communications and public affairs firms. Working with a talented team, he builds and executes client campaigns that reach audiences and move needles. His team designs and executes policy, regulatory and public relations strategies to grow, maintain or expand markets critical to Adfero's customers. He sees public affairs as an essential business function, shaping the political and policy landscapes and guiding public perception. His approach includes quantifying public affairs work in financial terms, linking advocacy and communications strategies to organizational targets.

Chris' 15-year career spans the public, private and non-profit sectors and includes leadership roles in strategic communication, policy and advocacy. Before joining Adfero, he led North American public affairs for the global biotech company Novozymes, focusing on its energy, agriculture and household care portfolios. He helped craft the company's external narrative, turning complex science into compelling stories, and establishing connections with key third-party stakeholders from NGOs to academic institutions. Chris previously served as press secretary and speechwriter for United States Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ). He also served as communications director for Washington, DC Deputy Mayor Eric Price and speechwriter for Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams.

Chris serves on the Public Affairs Council's Executive Committee and is a member of the National Press Club. Previously he served as Chair of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization's Communications Committee, Vice Chair of the American Cleaning Institute's Communication Committee and on the Board of the American Danish Business Council. He is always ready to talk about the perennial title hopes of the San Diego Chargers (he knows they are in Los Angeles now; they are still the San Diego Charges to him) or the ideal wood to use in his smoker.

### **Contact Information**

[cbender@adfero.com](mailto:cbender@adfero.com) | 202-333-4444

[LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#)

### **Communication**

You are welcome to contact me by phone or email. Unless I am traveling, I will get back to you within 24 hours. Schedules permitting, we can also connect in person.

### **Blackboard Site**

A [Blackboard site](#) has been established 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. Blackboard support is available at (202) 994-4948 or [online](#).

### **Support for Students with Disabilities**

GW's [Disability Support Services](#) 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.

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

If we experience an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we need to leave, please meet at the lobby level of the Media & Public Affairs Building (805 21st St., NW) to account for and make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to [Campus Advisories](#) for the latest information on the University's operating status.

### **Course Evaluation**

At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate this course through GW's online course evaluation system. Please complete an evaluation. **Your feedback makes this course better.** Students can also provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting:

Dr. Michael Cohen  
Acting 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

## **GWU AND GSPM EXPECTATIONS**

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### **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 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.

### **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.

### **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. Read the [University Code of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required.

You are experts at what you do. Ideally, your classmates will learn from you as well as each week’s conversation, guest lectures and exercises (a large portion of this class will involve group work).

Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact me as soon as possible. Unexcused absences will affect your participation grade. Two or more unexcused absences during the semester will result in a failing participation grade.

**Social Media and Digital Devices in Class**

We understand that some students prefer to record class sessions and/or take notes on computers, tablets and smartphones. We do however respectfully ask – for everyone’s benefit – that all class participants refrain from using texting, instant messaging or other communication programs and apps while in class. We will ask anyone who refuses to respect this norm to step outside of the classroom.

## THE COURSE

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### Course Description and Philosophy

Corporate Public Affairs (CPA) is a course about strategy. It's important to be a good tactician. It's essential to be a great strategist.

In the private sector, every part of an organization is responsible for achieving the company's bottom-line business targets. Public affairs uses government relations, communications, advocacy and political engagement as business development tools to achieve that goal: Every tactic – from press releases to Hill meetings – is employed to grow, defend or preserve a market. There are no “soft” activities (work without a reason). Deliverables and measures are concerned with impact, not reach. Public affairs speaks the language of business, both in its strategy and how it articulates that strategy.

Our course is rooted in the idea that public affairs is a business function, not a service one: Public affairs is a company's primary tool for influencing policy and political decision-makers, industry and thought leaders and the general public toward a favorable view of an industry, as well as the company's solutions or positions. A company can leverage that sentiment for favorable policy, regulatory and public outcomes.

### Course Learning Objectives

Corporate Public Affairs will help you build, lead or work in a top-flight private sector public affairs operation, one squarely focused on driving business success with public affairs strategies, targeting, tactics, deliverables and measures.

CPA will help you learn and put into practice:

1. **Foundations:** The minimum skills and competencies necessary to run an effective public affairs shop, including strategic planning, narrative construction and deployment, and futurecasting.
2. **Operations:** Day-to-day management. Building a responsive but flexible strategic plan, using technology to your advantage and establishing and growing critical partnerships.
3. **Execution:** Strategy at work, with an emphasis on unique contributions and impact.

If you contribute and get involved, by the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Apply** business basics to public affairs;
- **Build** a public affairs operation that drives and helps deliver on company goals (and, in some cases, identifies them);
- **Design** a public affairs portfolio rooted in business opportunities and/or needs;
- **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners needed for public affairs impact; and
- **Assess and communicate** the effectiveness of public affairs in terms of return on investment.

## TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR\*

\*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.

### Week 1 – August 30

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Case study and discussion</i></p> <p><i>Welcome and introductions:</i> Syllabus and expectations. A day in the life.</p> <p><i>Foundations: PA's business purpose</i> Examining a company's need for PA: Why doesn't the good or service sell itself? How does a PA team establish and maintain trust? Deep dive on PA's unique role and what is required for success in the private sector, including key roles.</p>	<p><a href="#">Ford Motor Company</a></p> <p>Edelman Trust Barometer <a href="#">executive summary</a></p> <p><i>State of Corporate Public Affairs 2014 – 15</i></p> <p>McKinsey: <a href="#">Organizing</a> the government affairs function for impact</p>	<p>150-word personal biography: August 29 at 5pm</p>

### Week 2 – September 6

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker: Business basics for PA</i> Understanding company financial performance, reading a balance sheet, communicating to the market.</p> <p>Karen Vahouny, Investor Relations/Communications consultant</p> <p><i>Foundations:</i> Explaining how policy, regulatory, political and perception shifts affect the bottom line. Calculating PA ROI.</p>	<p>GE CEO <a href="#">letter</a></p>	<p>None</p>

### Week 3 – September 13

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Case study and discussion</i></p> <p><i>Foundations: Becoming a strategist, Pt 1</i> Play to Win and futurecasting: What is a <i>strategic</i> public affairs plan? Exploring strategy and how strategists think differently about the current – and future – landscape.</p>	<p>Amazon and the <a href="#">Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</a></p> <p><i>Playing to Win:</i> Introduction, Chapters 1, 2</p>	<p>ROI calculations and explanations: September 12 at 5pm</p>

**Week 4 – September 20**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker: Becoming a strategist, Pt 2</i> Taking big ideas and grounding them in a strategic plan. Anticipating roadblocks. Getting stakeholder, especially internal, buy-in.</p> <p>Melissa Habedank, Health Care Industry Strategist</p> <p><i>Foundations: How do we achieve the five-year headline? How do we take big ideas and root them in a PA plan?</i></p>	<p><i>Playing to Win: Chapters 3, 4</i></p>	<p>None</p>

**Week 5 – September 27**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Group presentations, analysis and key learnings for public affairs</i></p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Strategy memo: 9/26 at 12pm</p> <p>Board presentation: 9/27 at 5pm</p>

**Week 6 – October 4**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Case study and discussion</i></p> <p><i>Foundations: Narrative construction and deployment: How do we draft and deploying a public affairs story – internally and externally – with emotional appeal? The Golden Circle.</i></p>	<p>Ram Truck <a href="#">Superbowl ad</a></p> <p>Lululemon <a href="#">recall</a></p>	<p>None</p>

**Week 7 – October 11 (class ends at 8:30p)**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker:</i> Engaging with external stakeholders, from NGOs to academic institutions and journalists. Why do companies need partners? What value do they create that a company cannot create on its own? What type of narrative is necessary to rally them to your cause?</p> <p><a href="#">Kimberly Flowers</a>, Director Global Food Security Proejct, Center for Strategic and International Studies</p>	<p><i>Playing to Win:</i> Chapters 5, 6</p>	<p>Narrative: October 10 at 12pm</p>

**Week 8 – October 18**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker:</i> Engaging government. An overview of local, state and federal differences, as well as shifts in where companies are focusing.</p> <p><i>Operations/Execution:</i> What are the key operating principles for companies?</p>	<p><i>Playing to Win:</i> Chapter 7</p>	<p>None</p>

**Week 9 – October 25**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker:</i> Sales and negotiation techniques. BATNA. Closing the deal.</p> <p><a href="#">Gary Willingham</a>, Alumedix</p> <p><i>Foundations:</i> How do we apply these strategies and tactic to PA? Tying PA wants to stakeholder needs, creating partnerships.</p>	<p><i>Measuring and Communicating the Value of Public Affairs</i></p> <p><i>Playing to Win:</i> Chapter 8</p>	<p>None</p>

**Week 10 – November 1**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Group presentations, analysis and key learnings for public affairs</i></p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Strategy memo: 10/31 at 12pm</p> <p>Board presentation: 11/1 at 5pm</p>

**Week 11 – November 8**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker:</i> Trends in digital and social media and their relationship to/impact on advocacy and communications.</p> <p><a href="#">Gary Nuzzi</a>, Adfero</p> <p><i>Operations/Execution:</i> How is technology changing the way we conduct public affairs? What do those changes suggest for our operations, personnel, strategy and tactics?</p>	<p><i>Beyond Control: How Social Media and Mobile Communication Are Changing Public Affairs</i></p>	None

**Week 12 – November 15**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Guest speaker:</i> Becoming politically active, focusing on legal, ethical, financial and impact considerations. When and why companies should consider political giving? Can companies get politically involved without giving money?</p> <p><a href="#">Steve Roberts</a>, Holtzman Vogel Josefiak Torchinsky PLLC</p> <p><i>Foundations/Operations:</i> How do we reconcile performing our duties and moving the needle with ethical considerations?</p>	[TBD]	None

**November 22 – Thanksgiving holiday – No class****Week 13 – November 29**

Discussion plan	Reading due	Assignment due
<p><i>Case study and discussion</i></p> <p><i>Class wrap-up:</i> What's the future of our profession? What does that suggest for how we train ourselves, staff our organizations and prepare for future shifts? Tying it all together.</p> <p><i>Group work on final presentations</i></p>	<p><i>Playing to Win: Conclusion</i></p>	None

**Week 14 – December 6**

<b>Discussion plan</b>	<b>Reading due</b>	<b>Assignment due</b>
<i>Final presentations, analysis and key learnings for public affairs</i>  <i>Guest review panel to be announced</i>	None	Strategy memo: 12/5 at 12pm  Board presentation: 12/6 at 5pm

## **REQUIRED READING AND/OR AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS**

Articles and videos as linked in the course calendar.

A.G. Lafley and Roger L. Martin, [Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works](#)

Public Affairs Council publications (available via Blackboard):

- *State of Corporate Public Affairs 2014 – 2015*
- *Measuring and Communicating the Value of Public Affairs*
- *Beyond Control: How Social Media and Mobile Communication Are Changing Public Affairs*

Additional materials as assigned (news articles, thought leadership pieces and/or videos).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EVALUATION AND GRADING**

We will talk through each assignment in more detail. All assignments have a maximum 100 points.

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Weight (%)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Personal biography</b> What's your story in 150 words? Please share a unique detail about yourself and your goals for the class.	August 29 at 5pm	-
<b>3</b>	<b>ROI calculation and explanation</b> Take a financial scenario and a) calculate ROI and; explain its meaning to a variety of stakeholders.	September 12 at 5pm	<b>15</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Strategic plan and presentation, part 1</b> Detail your plan for achieving your company's bottom-line business goals using public affairs strategies and tactics.	Strategy memo: September 26 at 12pm  Board presentation: September 27 at 5pm	<b>15</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Narrative</b> Turn a policy, regulatory or public perception problem into an emotional and compelling story.	October 10 at 12p	<b>15</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Strategic plan and presentation, part 2</b> Detail the external stakeholder groups necessary to accomplish your company's goals and your plan for generating these relationships.	Strategy memo: October 31 at 12pm  Board presentation: November 1 at 5pm	<b>15</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Final assignment and presentation</b> Assignment prompt to be revealed on November 15.	Strategy memo: October 31 at 12pm  Board presentation: November 1 at 5pm	<b>25</b>
	<b>Class participation</b> Attendance and active participation, advancing discussion and learning based on your ideas and experience.		<b>15</b>

**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.

**Late Assignments**

For each day an assignment is late, it will be marked down one grade (e.g.: B to B-). An assignment that is one full week late will be counted as an “F.” If you believe you have a legitimate emergency that renders you unable to complete an assignment on time, please notify me as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

**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.*

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