

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Spring, 2020

January 15, 2020 – April 22, 2020

Capstone: Political Power & Practice

PMGT 6495.10, 3 Credits

Mondays, 7:10pm – 9:40pm

1776 G Street, C-106

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor

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Professor and Director of the Political Management Master's Program, GSPM

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Communication

I prefer to consult with students in person or on the telephone as it is much more efficient than the oftentimes protracted and delayed discussions across email. I simply want to give you the best and quickest feedback possible so that you can maximize your educational experience. Telephone and face-to-face communication is much quicker than email for follow-up questions. Moreover, "live" communication helps me to perceive whether you understand my comments and answers to your questions so that I can immediately clarify any misunderstandings. I am available by email for questions that are simple and easy to answer, but for anything more involved and pressing, please call or see me in person. I will try to respond within 24 hours to inquiries submitted by email or telephone, but inquiries submitted after business hours, on holidays, or on weekends may take longer for a response. I am also available in my office at the Graduate School of Political Management for consultation during regular business hours, except on days when our class meets, when I come in later (please call or email to schedule an appointment so that I can reserve time for you).

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 the distribution of course materials. Students can access the course site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu>. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or <https://it.gwu.edu/blackboard-students>.

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. 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 get a “do-over” or second chance on a plagiarized assignment. 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.

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 at outside the entrance to the classroom building 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/>

Classroom Conduct Policy

This class is (or will be close to) your last chance to practice proper skills and decorum for use in the professional world after you leave GSPM, so you should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. Use of electronic devices for purposes other than classwork (e.g. texting, social media) will not be tolerated (it is impossible to divide your attention between reading and attending to classwork). A student violating this policy will be asked to leave immediately. Students causing other disruptions, such as carrying on a conversation with another student, typing loudly, or having devices emit audible alerts, will also be asked to leave immediately. You would not do these things in the presence of a client or any other business situation, so don’t do it here. Do not approach the instructor during class time to discuss issues regarding your assignments. Class time is for group work, not the discussion of individual issues. Do not use social media to post classroom activities unless authorized by all present.

Attendance Policy

Attending class is required. If you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, contact me as soon as possible to let me know that you will absent. Otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and it will negatively count against your participation grade. You must attend class to participate. Three or more unexcused class absences during the spring semester will result in a failing class participation grade.

In recent years, there has been a growing tendency for some students to disappear from class, only to return at the very end of (or after) the semester and expecting to be accommodated. Students who do this will not be accommodated, and will not be given an opportunity to re-do missed assignments. If you disappeared on a client who expected regular meetings with you and only showed up at the time your deliverable was due, your client would be rightly upset. You would lose the client and any future referrals from the client. I understand that sometimes things happen in life, but if you fail to communicate with me about any issues you have with class attendance, you cannot expect to be accommodated.

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. Jack Prostko
Associate Dean for Learning and Faculty Development
College of Professional Studies
jackp@gwu.edu | 202-994-3592

Suzanne Farrand
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM
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.

THE COURSE

Course Description and Overview

As the capstone seminar represents the consolidation and application of knowledge acquired throughout your GSPM curriculum, students are encouraged to enroll during their last or penultimate term. This capstone seminar that develops and integrates knowledge of political strategies, tactics, and situational considerations, and applies that knowledge to advanced political problems. Topics include: gaining and wielding power, the complexity associated with making democracy work, positioning and posturing with regard to the rules, conflict resolution, negotiation and bargaining skills, grappling with the consequences of winning and losing. More generally, this course has been designed to teach you what Aristotle thought were the keys to being a successful political leader: discernment and prudence. Knowing what questions to ask, what research to pursue, and what actions to recommend at any one time are the marks of a prudent leader.

This capstone seminar has been designed to enhance your ability to develop and integrate knowledge of political strategies, tactics, and situations, and apply that knowledge to advanced political problems. To achieve these aims, you will be asked to conceive and execute an advocacy or electoral “campaign-relevant” research report and slide presentation for a mock political client that you select. As you complete this project, you will draw upon concepts and skills you have learned during your coursework, add important people to your professional network, and produce deliverables for your career portfolio. In addition to this semester-long research project, you will be asked to engage with assigned readings and produce shorter assignments designed to help you reflect on your leadership capacities and your vocation (opportunities, aspirations, and place) within the world of politics. This is (or should be close to) your last course prior to graduation, so you should consider your interactions with other students as colleagues and your professor as a potential client.

In sum, there are two tracks of knowledge that you will gain through this course. The first track is general knowledge about leadership and the practice of wielding political power. This knowledge will be acquired and expressed through reading groups, class discussions, and other class activities. The second

track is specific knowledge, which includes applying general knowledge from this and other courses into a specific research project, client presentation and related assignments.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the students will:

1. Understand how time and context structure (provide opportunities and impose constraints) on political strategy. Learn to perceive and account for strategically those factors under one's control and gain an appreciation for heresthetics. Delve into the nature of power, and learn about the methods for effectively acquiring as well as wielding it. Weigh the ethical and moral considerations related to manipulating public sentiments and political outcomes.
2. Be able to align strategy and tactics through time to achieve long-term goals. Learn how to perceive and exploit the longer-term political opportunities which exist in the American political system.
3. Understand and express the countervailing paradoxes of leadership within our current political climate, economic conditions and social concerns.
4. Be able to align strategy and tactics through time to achieve long-term goals. Learn how to perceive and exploit the longer-term political opportunities which exist in the American political system.
5. Discover by doing how disciplined, systematic, and largely self-conducted research can help political clients to construct strategies and tactics to win a campaign (electoral or advocacy). Develop proficiencies related to creating written and visual deliverables that communicate research results effectively to a political client.
6. Develop analytical, strategic, and professional skills with regard to your passion for specific partisan political and advocacy issues. Cultivate skills for better sizing up situations, plotting strategies, aligning and executing tactics, grappling with setbacks, negotiating favorable terms, reducing (and when necessary instigating) conflict to achieve your aims, and maintaining humility.

Required Text and Learning Materials

The following course book is required in addition to readings that will be posted on Blackboard (BB). Additional readings may be supplemented on an ongoing basis. If you have difficulty getting the readings off of Blackboard, notify me immediately and I will email them to you (don't wait until the last minute to have to deal with technical glitches).

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. 2016. *The Craft of Research*, 4th ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Earlier editions of this book are OK. Page numbers in assigned readings refer to current editions. Sections also provided for earlier editions.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

<i>Component</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Due Date, Learning Objectives, and Evaluation</i>
Reading Group Preparation Assignments	20%	Throughout the semester (see course schedule for specific days) you will be tasked with preparing notes on readings prior to class. The objective is to summarize, critically analyze, integrate, and apply course readings to other material within and outside of the course. Points will be awarded based upon the GSPM Grading Scale along the criteria set out in the Reading Groups Section (see p. 8 of Syllabus).
Class Participation	10%	Throughout the semester you will be evaluated on the quantity and quality of your verbal remarks shared with the class. The objective is to cultivate your verbal communication and extemporaneous analytical skills. Participation will also include the Week 12 Quiz.
Political Purpose	5%	This is your mission statement, which will be due Week 2. The objective is to clarify your goals for the rest of the course. Details provided Week 1.
Project Prospectus	10%	The goal is to produce a research prospectus with four components: (1) Research Question and Rationale; (2) Campaign Context; (3) Literature Review; (4) Proposed Sources and Methods. Each component will be 20% of the grade calculation, and 20% will be determined based upon grammar, spelling, and organizational clarity. Due Week 5, further details will be provided.
Revised Prospectus	10%	The goal of this assignment is to improve your prospectus based upon feedback from the class and the instructor. Due Week 7.
Final Report	30%	The goal of this assignment is to prepare a formal report with six components: (1) Argument and Thesis; (2) Situational Description/Context; (3) Research Results; (4) Political Analysis; (5) Campaign Recommendations; (6) Strategic Positioning and Message Development (Content & Delivery). Each one of these components will be worth 15% points, and an additional 10% will be based upon grammar, spelling, voice, and overall clarity. This report should be approximately 3000 words, excluding back matter. Due Week 12.
Client Slide Deck	10%	The purpose of this assignment is to summarize and make compelling the topic and findings of your research. Along five dimensions (20% each): (1) Sequence, (2) Highlighting, (3) Visuals, (4) Persuasiveness, and (5) Grammar and Language Clarity. You should produce no more than 15 slides, along with no more than 7-10 minutes of talking points that you can place in the accompanying "notes" section. Due Week 13.
Oral Presentation of Client Research	5%	On the last two days of class, we will have individual presentations. Students will present to other students in the audience who will pretend to be the client. The objective of this requirement is to develop skills in preparing and presenting a compelling proposal.

Grade scale (for all GSPM classes):

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>	<i>Grading Standard</i>
A	94-100	4.00	Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.
A-	90-93	3.67	Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.
B+	87-89	3.33	Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.
B	83-86	3.00	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	2.67	You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all the requirements.
C+	77-79	2.33	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C	73-76	2.00	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- (lowest grade to pass)	70-72	1.67	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F	< 70	0.00	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

Assignments are due at the time of the course meeting. If your assignment is not ready by the beginning of the course meeting, you will be penalized a full course grade for each course period it is late. Extensions will not be given except in cases of a verified emergency.

Don’t ever neglect an assignment or turn it in with a comment such as “I hope this is right” or “I didn’t know what to do.” This only underscores your unpreparedness to the instructor (would you ever say something like that to a client). It is your responsibility to find out what is required of you, and if you have any questions, you must ask them well in advance so that you can get a timely answer to help you. Failure to do so is a mark of procrastination. This responsibility is yours alone.

Points earned for each assignment will be multiplied by weight, then all weighted components summed together to calculate your final grade points out to two decimal points. The letter grade associated with the final grade point calculation will be your final grade.

Reading Groups

The purpose of this assignment is to develop a semester-long dialogue that interrogates the readings and benefits your general knowledge about leadership and the practice of wielding power as well as your final project. For each assigned week, your task will be one of four roles. You are to type or handwrite your prepared comments for submission on hard-copy **before** you arrive (not after you arrive). If you do not show up with your *completed* submission, **you will be asked to leave class until discussion is over** and your assignment will be treated as late. If you have not thought-out and written-out your comments, you are not prepared. Do not procrastinate—plan ahead to anticipate technological or other difficulties. Submissions will be collected at the end of discussion and you should make them available to your group members (hard copy or electronically). Late submissions will be deducted 10 points per class meeting they are late. Include your name, group number, and assigned role for the week on your submission. You would not ask your client to print your work for you, so don't do that to the instructor.

1. Discussion Director

You are the leader of your group, and it is your responsibility to begin the discussion, to keep it moving, and maintain a focus on the readings for the duration of the discussion. It is your job to elicit (make the other people in the group discuss) a brief summary of the assigned reading. Be prepared with a list of at least **five (5) questions** (at least one per reading) to guide discussion in such a way as to get the most out of your conversation (don't just ask: "What did you think about X?"). Do not do the job of the other members of the group (see below). You are responsible for ensuring a polite and respectful conversation, and to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak and that no student dominates the conversation or is left out. Make sure everyone has a chance to share their prepared comments.

2. Methodologist

Your job is also to help your group as a political analyst. Identify at least **five (5) choices** (at least one per reading) the author(s) made in order to convince the audience of the validity of the piece's thesis. The choices you identify can deal with data and evidence (most important), examples, and logical arguments. Cite the page and line numbers of the examples you've chosen so that others can find it, and offer a brief explanation as to why you think the writer made the methodological choices s/he did. Finally, evaluate the strength of this choice — is it persuasive? Your submission should invite agreement and/or disagreement among group members in order to create a critical evaluation of the piece.

3. Connector

Your job is to ensure that this continues to be a semester-long conversation that builds on prior knowledge. You must refer specifically to previous readings (more than just one), and to specific passages in those readings, as they pertain to the current week's readings. Identify at least **five (5) connections** (at least one per reading) between the current reading and previous readings (use more than just one), and cite them by author, page number, and line number. You don't have to copy down the whole passage that "connects," just the key words. You must construct a **question** to stimulate discussion regarding each connection (something more sophisticated than "what do you think of this?").

4. Applier

You must integrate the course material by reference to real-world situations. You must develop a list of at least **five (5) applications** (at least one per reading) where the material from the reading applies to a political issue, current (preferably) or past. You must explain why and how it applies. Be sure to reference where you found the applied external material (not the week's reading) with a **full citation and/or web link**. Your applications should be phrased in a way that stimulates discussion or even disagreement among your group.

Tentative Course Calendar

The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress, including the addition of guest speakers and additional readings. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar.

Week 1: 1/15. Course Introduction and Background.

Readings: None.

Assignments Due: None.

Objectives Covered: 4.

Topics:

- Discussion of Course Expectations.
- Discussion of Political Purpose Assignment

Week 2: 1/22. Research I

Readings: Booth et al., pp. 1-84 (Sections I-II.5).

Assignments Due: Political Purpose (BB),
Email me your favorite meme.

Objectives Covered: 4, 5.

Topics:

- Understanding Scientific Research.
- Mastering the Building Blocks of Scientific Research.
- Discussion of Logic and Fallacies
- Trial run of Discussion Group Preparation and Execution.
- Discussion of Political Purposes.

Week 3: 1/29. Research II

Readings: Booth et al., pp. 85-172 (Sections II.6-III).

Assignments Due: Reading Group Preparation #1.

Objectives Covered: 4, 5.

Topics:

- Causality.
- Making Claims.
- Dismissing alternative explanations.
- Warrants.
- Individual Reading Group Response Meetings

Week 4: 2/5. Classical Understandings of Leadership

Readings: Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Introduction & Chapters XIV-XXV (BB),
Plato, *Apology of Socrates* (BB).

Assignments Due: Reading Group Preparation #2.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2.

Topics:

- Leadership and the Classics.
- Leadership and Political Realism.
- The Concerns of a Leader.
- The Paradoxes of Leadership.
- Discussion of Project Prospectuses

Week 5: 2/12. Prospectus Discussions

Readings: None.

Assignments Due: Project Prospectus and Brief Presentations.

Objectives Covered: 1, 4, 5.

Topics:

- Discussion of Topics (very brief, just a couple sentences).
- Advise for Revisions.
- Additional Q&A.

Week 6: 2/19. Wielding Power and Dealing with Rivals

Readings: Riker, *Art of Political Manipulation*, Preface, Chapters 2, 12, and Conclusion (BB),
Caro, "Master of the Senate," pp. 383-419 (BB).

Assignment: Reading Group Preparation #3.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3.

Topics:

- Sources of Power.
- Means of Wielding Power.
- Competition and Power.
- Creating a need and filling it.

Week 7: 2/26. Alternative Models of Leadership

Readings: Krippendorff, *Outthink the Competition*, pp. 1-84 (BB).

Assignment: Revised Prospectus Due.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Topics:

- Power Games.
- Thinking Deep into the Game.
- Military Models of Leadership.
- Business Models of leadership and strategic thought.

Week 8: 3/4. Losing

Readings: Brown, "Mistaking the Moment & Missing the Opportunity" (BB),
Shepsle, "Losers in Politics (And How They Sometimes Become Winners)" (BB).

Assignment: Reading Group Preparation #4.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3.

Topics:

- What Failure Teaches about Politics.
- What Failure Teaches about Leadership.
- Recognizing Opportunity

Week 9: 3/11. Negotiations I

Readings: Freund, *Smart Negotiating*, pp. 13-89 (BB),
Fisher and Ury, *Getting to Yes*, pp. 15-57 (BB).

Assignment: Reading Group Preparation #5.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3.

Topics:

- Negotiations and Bargaining.
- Sources of Bargaining Leverage.

- Prospect Theory.
- Dealing with Loss Aversion.

No Class 3/18 (Spring Break)

Week 10: 3/25. Negotiations II

Readings: Freund, *Smart Negotiating*, pp. 91-112 (BB),
Tinsley et al., “Women at the Bargaining Table” (BB).

Assignment: Reading Group Preparation #6.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3.

Topics:

- Preparing Alternatives.
- Preparing for the Unexpected.
- Assessing Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Week 11: 4/1. Opportunity Structures

Readings: Genovese, Belt, and Lammers, Ch. 1 (BB).

Assignment: Reading Group Preparation #7.

Objectives Covered: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Topics:

- The Opportunity Structure of Presidential Leadership.
- Applications of Opportunity Structure to Other Domains.
- Final Discussion of Final Report Guidelines and Q&A

Week 12: 4/8. How to Put Together a Powerful Presentation

Readings: None.

Assignment: Final Report Due (by 5pm ET),
View “Presentation on Presentations” (BB) and answer Quiz.

Objectives Covered: 4, 5.

Week 13: 4/15. Presentations

Readings: None.

Assignment: Slide Decks Due (by 5pm ET),
Individual Research Presentations.

Objectives Covered: 4, 5.

Week 14: 4/22. Presentations

Readings: None.

Assignment: Individual Research Presentations.

Objectives Covered: 4, 5.

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.