

# The Graduate School of Political Management

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**M.P.S. in Political Management**  
Spring 2021

**Campaigns Around the World**  
PMGT 6442  
Three Credits

Wednesday 7:10 – 9:10 pm  
Online

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## **BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **Instructor**

Gary Nordlinger, MA, JD, a “career” political campaign and public affairs consultant (specializing in media and message) who has 35+ years of experience in working with campaigns and public officials in more than 40 countries on six continents.

### **Contact Information**

Phone Number: (202) 255-2434

Email Address: Nordling@gwu.edu

### **Communication**

Mr. Nordlinger is available via phone or Skype. He is happy to discuss the class, politics in general, or your career goals. Once good weather returns, we can schedule outdoor “meet ups” for those interested.

### **Course description and Overview**

This is a course originally designed for graduate students by graduate students (Yeonathan Abelson, Ricardo Castillo and Florencia Filadoro; now successful campaign consultants who remain senior course advisors).

Each week, we study a recent national election of international significance through a case study given by a senior “insider” from that election. To permit comparability among nations studied, each speaker is asked to follow the “Case Study Outline” on pages 4-5.

Plenty of time is available for questions and discussion.

We will use remaining class time for discussion on a broader topic – like “Why are political attitudes in the US different from other industrialized countries?,” Mr. Nordlinger’s “Five Universal Political Common Denominators,” or guest speakers on topics “Life in the US Foreign Service,” or “What life is like for a ‘back bench’ Member of Parliament.”

Your questions and discussion are an important component of this course. While campaign techniques (polling, advertising, etc.) are discussed, no in-depth knowledge of these techniques is needed.

### **Course goals**

Whether your career interests are political, policy, international business or diplomacy; this course will hopefully be useful in helping you analyze future events on the world stage.

By the end of this course, you will understand that:

1. A nation's electoral process plays a key role in determining its public policy and "political personality."
2. Most of the world does not use a US style "separation of powers" model. You will be familiar with systems that use parliamentary style governments, proportional representation and "party lists" in lieu of single member districts (among others).
3. Campaigns laws dictate what techniques of voters contact are used, and campaign styles must fit within the culture of the county.
4. The United States is not the center of the political universe – US consultants are relatively "minor players" on the world stage and campaign techniques and technology are evolving throughout the world in real time. We have as much to learn from elections in other countries as they have to learn from us.
5. The US president is a relatively weak chief executive by world standards and, especially by European standards, the US Republican and Democratic parties are so weak that it is most useful to think of them as "party coalitions."

### **Relationship to GSPM Political Management Program Goals**

1. Assessing a political environment, developing a strategy to achieve specified goals within that environment, and acting to carry out that strategy through a campaign.

*You will see and learn from the specific case studies how this is done in different political systems and cultures.*

2. Drawing upon a repertoire of effective campaign communication skills.

*Please see points 3 and 4 above.*

3. Collecting, evaluating, and incorporating empirical evidence to shape and optimize a campaign.

*You will see how this is done throughout the world. My own experiences have taught me that the process of message development translates worldwide while the process of message delivery differs based on election laws and culture.*

*You will also be part of a team doing this yourself. Please see "class project" under Course Requirements below.*

4. Finding, engaging, and motivating the right people –leaders, professional colleagues, and citizens-- to join and contribute to a campaign.

*Again, you will see and learn from the specific case studies how this is done in different political systems and cultures.*

5. Addressing the recurring dilemmas of political life in a manner that upholds ethical standards as they practice the profession.

*One of my “universal political common denominators” is “we all want a political process of which we can be proud.” You will see examples of countries where people both have and lack confidence in its basic electoral fairness and rule of law.*

### **Countries studied**

Countries for 2021 are still being selected. In past years we have case studied elections in Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Ghana, México, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Russia, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Venezuela.

### **Course requirements**

The good news is there will not be a final exam. Given the condensed ten week class schedule (and terms of our accreditation for a three credit hour course) you will be expected to devote at least three hours a week outside of class preparing your memos and other assignments.

Your grade will be based on:

*Weekly written assignment (65%):* Most weeks before class you will submit a memo of at least 1,500 words (not counting sources or headers) on the political/electoral system of the nation we will analyze. More specifics will be provided, but this is essentially a “briefing memo” I would ask a staff member to give me in preparation for the initial meeting with a potential client.

*Discussion thread on Blackboard (30%):* We will “crowd source” learning through Blackboard. On Thursdays, discussion questions will be posted on the class Blackboard site. Each student will post an answer by Noon on Monday. By Noon on Wednesday, each student will have posted a thoughtful response at least two other postings. By class Wednesday evening, each student will have read all the postings and replies in preparation for that class.

*Class participation (5%):* This will be based on your contribution to the intellectual curiosity and discussion within the classroom.

## Readings

*Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) Copyright © 2005. This free publication can be downloaded at [www.idea.int/publications/esd](http://www.idea.int/publications/esd) or from the class Blackboard.

Recommend but not assigned: *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword*, Seymour Martin Lipset (W.W. Norton, 1996). (This is the single most useful book I have ever read on why we in the US are inherently anti-statist, suspicious of government, and right of center by world standards.)

Resources for your weekly case study memos:

Must use: "Political Handbook of the World 2018-2019" available through the GW library on-line within the CQ Political Reference Suite within the political science section of the "Articles and Data Bases".

While you will need to login to the GWU library to view this, the link is <https://sk-sagepub-com.proxygw.wrlc.org/cqpress/political-handbook-of-the-world-2018-2019>

For reasons we will discuss, each cases study memo must include at least one reference from this source.

Also useful: <http://www.electionguide.org/>

<http://aceproject.org/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

<http://www.state.gov/>

<http://www.economist.com/topics/>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country\\_profiles/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm)

<http://www.americasquarterly.org>

<http://www.politicsabroad.com/>

Websites of Transparency International, Freedom House, and Reporters Without Borders

Websites of major "in country" newspapers

**Case Study Outline that guest speakers are asked to follow:**

Please use the following questions to structure your presentation and allocate your time. This will help the audience to understand the strategy and tactics used on the campaign, why they were used, and to maintain consistency between the nations studied.

Thanks for your cooperation!

The “Ground” Rules (20 minutes or less):

1. Is it a parliamentary or a presidential system?
2. Who are the major non-governmental powers (including business, labor, or religious interests)? Is there a King or Queen? Are there NGO’s which can influence the politics of a given country or area? What role does the “free press” play? What about social media?
3. What are the major elected offices?
4. Is reelection permitted?
5. Is there a second “round” if no one gets more than a certain percentage?
  - a. If so, how does this encourage alliances?
6. How important are political parties?
  - a. Do people actually become dues paying members of the party?
  - b. Who selects the party leaders?
7. How do parties select their candidates?
8. Is voting mandatory?
9. Are legislators elected from districts (constituencies) or from party list?
  - a. If from districts, who draws the boundaries and what are the criteria? Are partisan/political factors taken into account?
10. How do parties raise their money? How do campaigns raise their money?
11. Do campaigns have time limits for when money can be spent?

Political Climate (10 minutes):

1. What party won the last elections?

2. What were the dynamics of the last campaign for national office?
3. What was the mood of the voters during the campaign? What were the major issues?
4. Were polling and focus groups important for this election? Was there any other type of research used?

Campaign strategies and tactics (30 minutes):

5. What was the main strategy? How did you craft such a strategy?
6. What was the targeted group?
7. What was the main message of the campaign? How did you arrive to this message? How the campaign messages were developed?
8. Were there any coalitions in place?
9. How were campaign messages delivered (in-person, paid radio and/or TV, telephone/cell phones, outdoor posters, mail, newspapers, magazines, on-line)? Was digital and social media used?
10. How was the grassroots mobilization strategy? How did you do it? Was it effective? Are citizens living outside the country allowed to vote? If so, are they an important element? Are persuasion or voter turnout messages delivered to them?
11. How did the campaign manage the fundraising?

Conclusion (10 minutes)

1. What would be the best lessons to be learned from this campaign?
2. What are your predictions about the next campaign for national office?

Questions and discussion (20 minutes)

### **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://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>.

### **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 [www.gwu.edu/~dss](http://www.gwu.edu/~dss).

### **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 is mandatory for this class. Any individual unable to attend class should email Gary Nordlinger prior to the beginning of that class. Repeated absences will be considered in your final grade.

### **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 Gary Nordlinger and any/all of the following:

Dr. Todd Belt  
Director, Political Management Program  
[tbelt@gwu.edu](mailto:tbelt@gwu.edu), 202-994-4363

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

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).

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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.*