

PSPR 6203PR – IoffredaSP21



M.P.S. in Strategic Public Relations
Spring 2021
February 1 – April 12, 2021

Research Methods for Public Relations and Public Affairs
PSPR 6203PR 3 Credits
Monday 7:00 – 9:30 pm
Arlington, VA (online)

Basic Information and Resources

Instructor

Angelo Ioffreda, MBA, MA, PCC

Contact Information

Phone: 703-338-6591

Primary email: aioffreda@gwu.edu

Secondary email: angelo@iospark.biz

Communication

Please use the primary GW email address above to contact the instructor. Students should expect a response within 24 hours. If needed, the instructor is available before and/or after class or by appointment.

Course Details

Strategic Public Relations Program Objectives

Upon the completion of the Masters in Strategic Public Relations, students will have an enhanced understanding and skills in:

1. The fundamentals of effective, strategic communications;
2. Best practices for writing, media relations, and strategic communications planning and implementation;
3. Leadership in communications on a sound ethical and financial basis;
4. Working with management, staff, and vendor/partners to develop and manage the implementation of effective communications strategies.

Course Description and Overview

The course will provide an overview of applied research techniques with an emphasis on planning and evaluating public relations and corporate communications campaigns in support of business strategies and goals. The course reviews essential qualitative and quantitative research techniques and methods, including focus groups, surveys, traditional and social media analysis, interviews, case studies, and experiential research. Students will gain an appreciation for using research to support and develop effective communication strategies that align with and support an organization's strategic plan.

Course Learning Objectives

As a result of participating in the learning activities in this course, you will be able to:

1. Develop a strong rationale / business case for research and measurement in public relations and corporate communications to support an organization's strategy.
2. Demonstrate the ability to devise a communication / public relations strategy that supports an organization's strategic plan.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods, their pros and cons, and how to incorporate them into your communication strategies and plans.
4. Recognize opportunities to apply research and measurement in a variety of communication, marketing, advertising, and public affairs settings.
5. Demonstrate the ability to design and present your research and evaluation program and move your organization or client towards implementing recommendations based on research and data analysis (i.e., data-informed decision making).
6. Learn core communication and executive skills

Course Requirements

Students are required to have completed all assigned readings for the week before coming to class. Participation is a key component of the course grade and, as such, students are required to actively engage in class discussions and in-class activities. Lack of participation in discussions or not being prepared will negatively impact a student's grade. Assignments are due as noted on the syllabus and late submittals will result in lost points on that assignment. Due dates may be revised based on class needs.

Course Readings

See Blackboard Course Readings folder for weekly course readings. These are updated regularly. Additional suggestions for applicable readings are welcome.

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer. (n.d.).

<https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer>

Anderson, F. W. (2014, January 6). Reputation, research, relationships and messages: 11 tips for doing more successful online surveys. <http://forrestwanderson.blogspot.com/2014/01/11-tips-for-doing-more-successful.html>

Bagnall, R. (2017, June 11). The definitive guide: why aves are invalid - amec.

<https://amecorg.com/2017/06/the-definitive-guide-why-aves-are-invalid/>

- Bailey, C., & Shantz, A. (2018). Building an ethically strong organization. <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/creating-an-ethically-strong-organization/>
- Barcelona Principles 2.0 - Updated 2015. (2015, September 3). Retrieved January 10, 2019, from <https://instituteforpr.org/barcelona-principles-2-0-updated-2015/>
- Berinato, S. (2019, January 1). Data science and the art of persuasion. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2019/01/data-science-and-the-art-of-persuasion>
- Crowe, Anna. (2018, September 19). A complete guide to Google Analytics. Search Engine Journal. <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/complete-guide-google-analytics/263087/#close>
- Gallo, A. (2018, October 31). 4 Analytics concepts every manager should understand. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2018/10/4-analytics-concepts-every-manager-should-understand>
- Hootsuite Media. (n.d.). Demystifying social roi. <https://hootsuite.com/resources/demystifying-social-roi>
- IPR Measurement Commission. (n.d.). <https://instituteforpr.org/ipr-measurement-commission/about/>
- Jackson, D. (2018, April 2). All of the social media metrics that matter. <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-metrics-that-matter/>
- Jeffrey, A. (2013, June 6). Social media measurement: a step-by-step approach. <https://instituteforpr.org/social-media-measurement-a-step-by-step-approach/>
- Kenny, G. (2016, June 21). Strategic plans are less important than strategic planning. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2016/06/strategic-plans-are-less-important-than-strategic-planning>
- Kochhar, S., & Perry, M. B. (2019, January 7). Top 10 public relations research insights of 2018. <https://instituteforpr.org/top-10-public-relations-research-insights-of-2018/>
- Lee, R., Ketter, S., & Perrin, A. (2019, July 22). Trust and distrust in America. Pew Research Center. <https://www.people-press.org/2019/07/22/trust-and-distrust-in-america/>
- Lindemann, W. (2011, February 6). Guidelines and standards for measuring the effectiveness of pr programs and activities. <https://instituteforpr.org/effectiveness-programs-activities/>
- Marx, W. (2017, August 6). PR measurement: 12 important pr metrics that you need to monitor. <https://b2bprblog.marxcommunications.com/b2bpr/pr-measurement-important-metrics>
- Michaelson, D., & Stacks, D. W. (2017). Professional and practitioner's guide to public relations research, measurement, and evaluation, third edition.

Page, J.T., & Parnell, L.J. (2021). Introduction to Public Relations. Second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (Chapters 4 and 5)

Paine, K. D. (2013). Measure what matters: online tools for understanding customers, social media, engagement, and key relationships. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

Peterson, A. (2018, September 26). The big deal about big data & pr.
<https://www.commpro.biz/the-big-deal-about-big-data-pr/>

Reichheld, F. (2003, December 1). One number you need to grow (HBR Onpoint Enhanced Edition).
<https://hbr.org/product/one-number-you-need-to-grow-hbr-onpoint-enhanced-edition/5534-PDF-ENG>

Shleyner, E. (2018, June 18). 19 social media metrics that really matter—and how to track them.
<https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-metrics/>

Stacks, D. W. (2011). Primer of public relations research (2nd ed). New York: Guilford Press.

Strategic planning. (2018, April 2).
<https://www.bain.com/insights/management-tools-strategic-planning/>

The pr professionals definitive guide to measurement. (n.d.). <https://prguidetomeasurement.org/>

Stalhkopf, Christina. (2019, October 18). Where Net Promoter Score Goes Wrong. Harvard Business Review
<https://hbr.org/2019/10/where-net-promoter-score-goes-wrong>

Troyanos, Kevin. (2018, October 25). How to make sure you're not using data just to justify decisions you've already made. Harvard Business Review
<https://hbr.org/2018/10/how-to-make-sure-youre-not-using-data-just-to-justify-decisions-youve-already-made>

Weiner, M., (2020, January 15). Dispel these nine measurement myths in 2020 en route to success.
<https://www.cision.com/us/2020/01/dispel-these-nine-measurement-myths-in-2020-en-route-to-success/>

Weiner, M. (2016, February 23). Eleven questions you must ask before conducting public relations research.
<http://prime-research.com/en/2016/02/eleven-questions-must-ask-conducting-public-relations-research/>

Weiner, M., & Kochhar, S. (2016, April 7). Irreversible: the public relations big data revolution.
<https://instituteforpr.org/irreversible-public-relations-big-data-revolution/>

Weiner, M. (2017, November 22). The importance of measureable public relations. <http://prime-research.com/en/2017/11/importance-measureable-public-relations/>

Optional Readings

HBR Guide to Data Analytics Basics for Managers. (2018). Harvard Business Review Press. Boston, Mass.

Kanter, B., Delahaye Paine, K., & Paarlberg, W. T. (2012). Measuring the networked nonprofit: using data to change the world (First edition). San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Imprint.

Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2018). Everybody lies: big data, new data, and what the Internet reveals about who we really are.

Watson, T. (2012). The evolution of public relations measurement and evaluation. Public Relations Review, 38(3), 390–398. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.12.018>

- Additional readings as assigned

Additional Resources

- Blackboard course site

Public Relations & Communications

- Institute for Public Relations – <http://www.instituteforpr.org/> and IPR’s Research, Measurement, and Evaluation page – <http://www.instituteforpr.org/category/research/measurement-and-evaluation/>
- International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication, <https://amecorg.com/> and <https://amecorg.com/amecframework/>
- Generally Accepted Practices (GAP), Strategic Communication and Public Relations Center, The Annenberg School, University of Southern California, <http://ascjweb.org/gapstudy/>
- Paine Publishing – <http://painepublishing.com>
- PR Guide to Measurement: <https://prguidetomeasurement.org>
- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) – Measurement Resources: <http://apps.prsa.org/intelligence/businesscase/measurementresources>
- PRIME research: www.prime-research.com

Public Opinion

- Census: <http://census.gov/data.html>
- Edelman Trust Barometer: <https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer>
- FiveThirtyEight: <https://fivethirtyeight.com/>
- Gallup: www.gallup.com
- Pew Research Center: <http://www.pewtrusts.org>

Data Analytics

- U.S. Government data: www.data.gov / www.usafacts.org
- McKinsey&Company: www.mckinsey.com
- Wharton Customer Analytics Initiatives: <http://wcai.wharton.upenn.edu/about-us/>

Social Media Measurement Tool sites

- Google Analytics – <https://analytics.google.com>
- Hootsuite - <https://hootsuite.com/>
- Meltwater - <https://www.meltwater.com/>
- NetBase - <https://www.netbase.com/>

Research & Survey Tools

- AskWonder: <https://askwonder.com/>
- Brandwatch: www.brandwatch.com
- Qualtrics: www.qualtrics.com
- Survey Monkey: www.surveymonkey.com

Graduate School of Political Management – Social Media handles and hashtags

You are welcome to use social media to promote course discussion and with the express permission of our guest speakers.

Facebook: @GSPMgwu

Twitter: @GSPMgwu

Instagram: @gspmgu

LinkedIn: @The Graduate School of Political Management

Hashtags: #OnlyAtGSPM and #InTheRoom

Tentative Course Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress and availability of guest speakers. Students are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar. Final dates and details will be found on the Blackboard course site.

Week	Date	Topics to be covered
1	February 1	Introduction to the Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Overview • Introductions • The importance of research and measurement • Key Concepts • Introduction to Quantitative and Qualitative Methods • Defining the line of inquiry – Problem Statements • How to develop a strategic plan

		<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come to class prepared to discuss an idea for a research project. • Bring your organization’s strategy and mission statements.
2	February 8	<p>Primary and Secondary Research Approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy & strategic planning • Primary and secondary approaches to research and benchmarking • Asking questions <p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a SWOT analysis for your organization. • Be prepared to discuss in class.
3	February 15	<p>Research, Measurement, and Metrics to Ensure Business Impact Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring business impact • Aligning public relations metrics to business goals • Trust <p>Guest Speaker: John Friedman, Manager, Sustainability, WGL Holdings, Inc.</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edelman Trust Barometer • Pew Research Center: Trust & Distrust in America
4	February 22	<p>Surveys and Focus Groups Net Promoter Score Other Research Approaches Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing good questions • Net Promoter Score • Ethnographic Approaches • Ethics in Research
5	March 1	<p>The Many Worlds of Communication Research</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Justin Greeves, Managing Director, Research Partner Success, EAB</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an ad of any type that catches your eye or one that you think is awful

6	March 8	Social Media Metrics Guest speaker: TBD
7	March 15	Spring Break – No Class
8	March 22	Conduct a Focus Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams to conduct a focus group on a topic of choice • Set the context • Gather feedback
9	March 29	Strategic Research Approaches – Cutting Edge Research Techniques and Tools Guest Speaker: TBD*
10	April 5	Present Research Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present findings or final research plan + your metrics dashboard (10 minutes total) • Respond to questions • Receive feedback
11	April 12	Present Research Plan (Continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present findings or final research plan + your metrics dashboard (10 minutes total) • Respond to questions • Receive feedback • Summary Discussion

Assignments

The assignments are designed to help you learn the thought process and elements that go into developing a comprehensive research plan. You will receive a great deal of feedback throughout the course. As you gain practice and confidence, you will be ready to put the elements together to create and share your own research and evaluation plan. You may work with a partner on a research project throughout the course. Please let the instructor know if you will be partnering with someone on a research project.

For each of the assignments below, I strongly encourage you to adapt it to your actual job or interests as long as you meet all requirements of the assignment.

Assignment 1: Management Memo – Justification for Research

- Memo presenting the business case for research
- Maximum 1000 words

Use your own work or situation in your area of interest to draft the memo.

Write a memo (maximum 1,000 words) in the first person to your boss laying out your argument why it's important to spend some of the organization's limited funds on communications research. Your business memo must include the following elements:

- An Objective Statement for your research:
 - Why do this research?
 - What is the specific, critical knowledge that you hope to develop?
 - How will this knowledge inform important decisions for the organization?
 - How does it fit into your business strategy?
- What topics your research will need to explore and why?
- Relevant communications expert knowledge and benchmarking that supports your argument for research.
- Your planning process for developing the research and gaining organizational buy-in.

Name your memo as follows: **Your Name + Management Memo + Topic**
 e.g., Jana Smith + Management Memo + PRSA Membership

You should be prepared to present your argument for funding in class.

Assignment #2. Develop Interview Questions and Conduct an Interview

Individual interviews are useful to both gather information and to help hone other research and evaluation tools like surveys and focus groups. Develop a short set of interview questions and conduct an interview with someone on your topic of choice.

Post your completed interview with a summary of the responses on Blackboard.

Name your interview as follows: **Your Name + Interview + Topic**

Assignment #3. Develop a Survey

- Develop a 10-Question Survey on a topic of your choice.
- Develop an introduction for your survey (e.g., email, script for a phone interview, or letter to participants, etc.)
- Develop a cover memo for the survey to send to your boss for approval.

The survey should include an opening introduction laying out the intent of the survey, how long it should take, as well as closing comments to wrap up the survey.

You will need to subscribe to a free version of the Survey Monkey software at SurveyMonkey. It is user-friendly. The software has prompts for creating a questionnaire. Also, read SurveyMonkey's tips and guides on developing good questions. SurveyMonkey has a variety of templates that you can use for reference. However, your survey should help you achieve your research goals.

- Prepare a Cover Memo to your boss to accompany the survey.

The memo should be no more than 300 words. The memo should demonstrate a clear understanding of the research need and methodology. The goal of the memo is to brief your boss on the proposed survey.

You will submit your cover memo, invitation to your survey, and your survey as a single document to Blackboard for a grade.

Name your survey assignment as follows: **Your Name + Survey + Topic**

You will also post a link to your survey in the Survey discussion forum on Blackboard for others to take and provide feedback on your survey.

- Each student should take and comment on five (5) surveys by your classmates.
- Your comments on others' surveys count towards your class participation.
- Provide useful and specific feedback.

Assignment #4: Conduct a Focus Group

For this assignment, you will conduct a focus group. As part of this assignment, you will:

- Conduct a focus group in class
- Develop focus group questions
- Develop an invitation to participants
- Develop a follow up communication

In pairs or trios, you will devise a scenario for your focus group. You will set up the classroom, welcome participants, introduce yourselves, and conduct a short online focus group (approximately 20 minutes each, followed by a 10 minute debrief during which you will receive constructive feedback).

- After completing your focus group, you will upload your complete focus group materials (your focus group invitation, your focus group guide, i.e., questions + probes, and follow up thank you note) as a single document to Blackboard. Each member of the team should upload the assignment so that you can each receive a grade.

Name your focus group assignment as follows: **Your Name + Focus Group + Topic**

Assignment #5: Analyze a Survey or Poll of Interest to you

Find a poll or survey of interest to you. Write a 2 – 5 page paper analyzing the survey or poll. Be sure to answer these questions as part of your analysis:

- What were the sponsors of the survey attempting to learn?
- How is the survey data being used to support the sponsor’s position or strategy or inform the public?
- What do you like / dislike or want to know more about this poll or survey?
- How has your analysis of this poll / survey affected your thinking about research and evaluation?
- What are your key takeaways from the poll/survey?

You will do this paper on your own. Post your paper to Blackboard.

Name your writing assignment as follows: **Your Name + Analysis + Topic** (i.e., the name of your topic such as Views on Health Care, Attitudes on Climate Change, etc.)

Assignment #6: Present Research Plan & Findings

- Develop and present a Research Plan

Students will provide a short (5-10 minute) overview of their research and evaluation plan for class discussion and comment. The discussion is intended to help students finalize their approach and brainstorm ways to address any questions about an appropriate approach.

- Present final plan / findings to include making recommendations based on findings.
- This should be presented as both a document and a presentation.

Name your research project as follows: **Your Name(s) + Name of Research Project**

If you worked with a partner, you should each upload the Research Plan & Findings to Blackboard.

Assignment #7: Develop a Measurement Dashboard

- Develop a communication dashboard. This can be a 2 – 3 page slide presentation.

Develop a dashboard to measure the desired outcomes and effectiveness of your communication strategy, program, campaign or initiative for presentation to executives. The dashboard should:

- Feature a set of core metrics
- Allow you to draw conclusions about impact
- Identify areas where additional information or research would be useful
- Be easy to read.

You will present your communication dashboard in class and receive feedback in conjunction with the presentation of your research plan.

(Note: You may want to develop a more extensive dashboard that would be used by a public relations / communications team along with the shorter, more concise version of the dashboard to share with executives.)

Name your dashboard as follows: **Your Name(s) + Dashboard + Topic**

Assignment #8: Listen to a Podcast

This is part of your class participation.

Find a podcast or TED Talk on a course-related topic such as PR research, data analytics, data storytelling, polling, surveys, the state of trust, etc. Share your reflections on the podcast on the Podcast Discussion Forum along with a link to the podcast or TED Talk. This will allow the class to create a resource library

Summary of Assignments and Dues Dates for Uploading to Blackboard

Assignment	Points	Due Date
#1 Management Memo	5	Feb. 8
#2 Conduct an Interview	5	Feb. 15
#3 Develop a Survey	10	March 9
#4 Conduct a Focus Group	10	March 23
#5 Analyze a Poll or Survey	10	March 30
#6 Present Research Plan & Findings	25	April 16
#7 Develop a Measurement Dashboard	10	April 16
#8 Listen to a Podcast (Class Participation)	5	March 31
Class Participation	20	April 6
Total	100	100%

Grading

Assignment	Points	Percentage
#1 Management Memo	5	5%
#2 Conduct an Interview	5	5%
#3 Develop a Survey	10	10%
#4 Conduct a Focus Group	10	10%
#5 Analyze a Poll or Survey	10	10%
#6 Present Research Plan & Findings	25	25%
#7 Develop a Measurement Dashboard	10	10%
#8 Listen to a Podcast (Class Participation)	5	5%
Class Participation	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Grading Scale

Following is the grade scale for all CPS classes:

Grade	Range	Grade 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	Good work, but needs reworking and more effort.
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).

Instructor Biography

Angelo Ioffreda is a strategic communications and management consultant and an ICF (International Coach Federation) certified leadership coach (PCC). He is the founder and chief engagement officer of io spark communications (www.iospark.biz) of Arlington, VA.

He has more than 25 years of experience helping leaders and organizations more effectively lead, manage, and navigate change, innovate, and engage employees. Angelo has held leadership roles with NII Holdings, IFC, the private sector arm of The World Bank Group, Sodexo, AOL & AOL Time Warner, RLM Strategic Communications, and the U.S. Department of State.

Angelo brings insights and experience from having worked across sectors, industries, and organizations. Areas of expertise include leading and managing change, strategic and leadership communications, strategy development, strategic planning and alignment, metrics and measurement, leadership development, team building, facilitation, organizational effectiveness and transformation, employee and brand engagement, global and cross-cultural communications, and social media and digital strategies. Angelo is certified in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), The Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI), The Leadership Circle Profile 360, FIRO-B, and DiSC. He is a fluent Spanish speaker.

Angelo has presented widely on communication topics at conferences by The Conference Board, Melcrum, The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), J. Boye, Marcus Evans, and the Key Leadership program on a variety of communication and leadership topics. During 2011, he served as president of the DC Metro Chapter of IABC, the largest in the U.S. and the second largest in the world.

Angelo is also an adjunct professor in American University's Key Executive Leadership Program for senior government executives and Key's MPA program. He authored the chapter on "Communicating to Drive Engagement and Trust" in [The Handbook of Federal Government Leadership and Administration: Transforming, Performing, and Innovating in a Complex World](#).

He has an M.B.A. from the Wharton School, a M.A. in International Affairs from the University of Chicago, and certificates in both Leadership Coaching and Change Leadership and Organizational Consulting from Georgetown University. Angelo was both a Presidential Management Fellow and a Thomas J. Watson Fellow. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa with majors in Anthropology (Honors) and Biology from Grinnell College, Iowa.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Blackboard Site

A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site regularly throughout the semester to review weekly course content, view announcements, and submit assignments. Students can access the course site through [GWU Blackboard](#).

Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or the [IT Blackboard web page](#).

Please note that your access to this course on Blackboard will continue for one month after the course ends. If you wish to keep any work or materials, you must download or save them before the course closes.

Technology Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the required technology to fully participate in this course. The minimum technology requirements for learning online at GW are outlined on the [Technical Requirements and Support](#) web page.

If you have any problems with the technology in this course, you can seek technological support from GW in a variety of ways, outlined on the [IT Support](#) website.

GW is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment that is accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities.

The following links provide more information about the accessibility of technologies that may be used in this course:

- [Blackboard accessibility](#)
- [Microsoft Office accessibility](#)
- [Adobe accessibility](#)
- [Vimeo accessibility](#)
- [YouTube accessibility](#)
- [VoiceThread accessibility](#)
- [Webex accessibility](#)

If you have any issues regarding the accessibility of the technology used in this course, please contact your instructor. You may also explore the [Disability Support Services](#) website.

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/>.

Technology Expectations

Regarding technology skills, you should be able to:

- Create documents and presentation slides

- Use a webcam and microphone
- Use a digital camera or scanner
- Upload files, including recordings and images
- Be open to learning and registering for new technologies
- Be flexible when technological glitches happen (which is a given)
- Seek technological help when necessary by contacting the Division of Information Technology

If you have any problems with the technology expectations in this course, please contact your instructor.

Getting Started

Everything you need to get started in the course is contained within the Blackboard course site. You can use the menu links on the left side panel to view different components. The content for each learning unit is divided into folders—one for each week. More unit folders will unlock as weeks in the course progress.

Participation Policy

All students are expected to learn and contribute by being a positive participant in discussions, activities, presentations, and assignments. If you have an unavoidable conflict or become ill, in a way that will affect your participation in a given week, please notify your instructor immediately.

Attendance Policy

Attendance and participation are critical components of the learning process and are a key factor in student grades. Students are expected to attend each class and should notify the instructor in advance of any planned absences. Students' participation scores will be negatively affected by unexcused absences and by not participating in class discussions or in-class activities. Students may miss up to two classes during the semester due to illness or work responsibilities. Students who miss more than two classes for any reason should speak with the professor about making up class time.

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:

Professor Lawrence Parnell Director, Strategic Public Relations Program
lparnell@gwu.edu | 703-299-4150

Melissa Feuer, Acting Dean, Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs
mfeuer@gwu.edu | 202-994-8310

Suzanne Farrand, Assistant Dean of Students, CPS
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

Netiquette

Please observe the following rules of netiquette for communicating online:

- Remain professional, respectful, and courteous at all times.
- Remember that a real human being wrote each post and will read what you write in response. It is easy to misinterpret discussion posts. Let's give the benefit of the doubt.
- If you have a strong opinion on a topic, it is acceptable to express it as long as it is not phrased as an attack. Please be gracious with differing opinions.
- When upset, wait a day or two prior to posting. Messages posted (or emailed) in anger are often regretted later.
- Proofread and use the spell check tool when you type a post. It makes the post easier to read and helps your readers understand what you are saying.

Your instructor reserves the right to delete any post that is deemed inappropriate for the discussion forum, blog, or wiki without prior notification to the student. This includes any post containing language that is offensive, rude, profane, racist, or hateful. Posts that are seriously off-topic or serve no purpose other than to vent frustration will also be removed.

Credit Hour Policy

For this **10-week, 3-credit course** there will be an average of **9-10 hours** of combined direct instruction and independent learning per week. More information about GWU's credit hour policy can be found at [the Office of the Provost's Policies](#) web page (Under: Assignment of Credit Hour Policy).

University Policies & Services

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an integral part of the educational process, and GW takes these matters very seriously. Violations of academic integrity occur when students fail to cite research sources properly, engage in unauthorized collaboration, falsify data, and in other ways outlined in the Code of Academic Integrity. Students accused of academic integrity violations should contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) to learn more about their rights and options in the process. Outcomes can range from failure of assignment to expulsion from the university, including a transcript notation. For more information, please refer to the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#), email (rights@gwu.edu), or call (202-994-6757).

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.

The Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. § 10) governs the rights attributed to owners of copyrighted work. Under certain circumstances, educational institutions may provide copies of copyrighted works to students. The copies may not be copied nor used for any other purpose besides private study,

scholarship, or research. Users should not provide electronic copies of any materials provided on this course's Blackboard site to unauthorized users. If a user fails to comply with Fair Use restrictions, he/she may be held liable for copyright infringement. No further transmission or electronic distribution is permitted.

Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact [Disability Support Services](#) if you need additional accommodations for accessing electronic course materials.

University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays

In accordance with University policy, 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. For details see the current religious holiday policy on [the Office of the Provost's Policies](#) web page.

Disability Support Services (DSS)

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services. They can be contacted by phone at 202-994-8250 or in person at Rome Hall, 801 22nd Street, NW, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information visit the [Disability Support Services](#) website.

Counseling and Psychological Services

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. For additional information call 202-994-5300 or visit the [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) website.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is located in Gelman Library at 2130 H St NW in Suite 221 and they can be reached at 202-994-3765 or via email at gwriter@gwu.edu. You can [schedule writing center appointments](#), both in-person or by phone, in advance. Daytime and evening hours are available. Check for this semester's hours at the [writing center contact page](#). The Writing Center does offer Summer hours.

GWU Libraries

Off campus students have full access to all of the research resources, services, and assistance that the Library offers. The GW community has access to 500+ online subscription databases and to millions of items, electronic and print, in the library catalog. Off-campus students even have additional privileges because the Library will FedEx print materials to your home. For more information visit the [GW Libraries](#) homepage.

Call the Ask Us desk at 202-994-6048 or [contact someone at the library](#) to answer any questions. For questions beyond “Do you have this book/article?” and “How do I login?” use the website mentioned to make a research consultation appointment with a librarian. Librarians are there to guide students through any aspect of the research process, from selecting and narrowing a topic, crafting a research strategy to citation management.

Safety and Security

- **In an emergency:** call GWPD at 202-994-6111 or call 911
- **For situation-specific actions:** review the [Emergency Response Handbook](#)
- **In an active violence situation:** [Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out](#)
- **Stay informed:** review [notification tools for staying informed during emergency and safety related situations](#)

Date: January 29, 2021

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