The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

BASIC INFORMATION

Instructors

GABE ROZSA has active in Washington public policy issues since graduating from law school in 1975. He has held positions involved in public policy at Federal agency, two congressional committees and two prominent government relations/public affairs firms. He has been responsible for designing and implementing government relations campaigns for corporations, trade associations and governmental entities at all levels in the fields of energy, environment, infrastructure development and agricultural policy. Most significantly he served as staff director or counsel to two congressional subcommittees and helped advance issues in the public policy debate leading to the enactment of major legislation including the Clean Water Act, the Superfund program, energy policy legislation and water resources development legislation.

CHRIS BENDER is Vice President at Adfero, one of Washington's leading strategic communications and public affairs firms, working with a driven, talented team to build and execute 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 expanding 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.

Contact Information

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Communication
Email contact is generally most efficient. However, we are happy to meet with students by appointment.

Blackboard Site
A Blackboard course site has been set up for this course. 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 www.helpdesk.gwu.edu.

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.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class
If we experience an emergency during class, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we need to leave, we will meet at **[fill in proximate location]** 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.

Course Evaluation
At the end of the semester, students will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important that you take the time to complete an evaluation. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the course of the semester by contacting any/all of the following:

Dr. Michael Cohen
Director, Political Management Program
michaeldcohen@gwu.edu |202-994-5512

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

GSPM EXPECTATIONS

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 to complete and submit assignments on time.
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.

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.

Attendance Policy
Students will be expected to read all assigned material in advance and be prepared to answer questions posed on the syllabus. Class participation will be graded in part on the quality of the student's response to the questions posed. Class participation will not include simply being present and discussing one's views on topics. Hence class attendance while not mandatory is essential for a grade on in-class participation.

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 text, messaging and/or other digital communication devices and apps while in class. We will ask anyone who refuses to respect this norm to step outside the classroom.

THE COURSE

Learning Objectives
Issues Management will help you learn and apply the principles necessary to identify, direct and/or overcome, and assess policy, political and public perception issues that pose opportunities or threats to an organization. Our approach will focus on creating a clear link between public affairs strategies and tactics and an organization's bottom-line goals.

If you contribute and get involved, by the end of this course, you will be prepared to:
1) **Apply** fundamental and sophisticated techniques for managing issues, recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities and preventing or countering threats;
2) **Map and identify** the landscape, spotting or anticipating conditions that presage issues or issues themselves before they arise;
3) **Design** an issues management approach rooted in organizational opportunities and/or needs;
4) **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners for maximum issues impact; and
5) **Assess and communicate** the effectiveness of issues management internally.

In terms of "designing an issues management approach" specifically, you will be prepared to:
- Assess a current political environment as being either a threat or an opportunity to the advancement of an organization;
- Develop a strategic plan to achieve a specific step towards the achievement of that vision and/or protect against an imminent challenge to that vision;
- Engage a champion and others to help deal with issue, as well as activate individuals or groups who may be reluctant to challenge the status quo; and
- Collect, evaluate, and incorporate relevant empirical evidence to shape, optimize, and continuously inform the developed strategy.

Course Requirements
1) Giving your best ideas for the benefit of your colleagues. Your insight and experience matters.

2) Participation in weekly in-class discussions, responding to questions relating to the assigned readings and/or presentations, as well as articles on issues that relate to class topics.

3) Completion of individual assignments to help internalize and apply learnings from class.

4) Participation in and completion of a group project to apply learnings in a public affairs team setting.

For individual assignment, students will assume the role of Congressional staffer, writing issue briefs on legislative initiatives for their Member of Congress. Briefs should summarize the issue from each perspective, describe the key players and make recommendations, as well as actions necessary to see those recommendations enacted.

For the group assignment, students will work as a team to solve or manage a major public policy issue (eg: Climate Change, trade agreements) and – over the course of several assignments – map out an engagement plan.

More detail on assignments will follow during class sessions.

Required Text and Learning Materials
We will assign short, timely readings each week to help drive class discussion. We will post readings to BlackBoard prior to class sessions.

Evaluation and Grading			
Assignments	**Learning Objective(s) Addressed**	**Due**	**%**
Individual assignment Plan to cover a scheduled or anticipated hearing are scheduled for the following week They will be asked to assume they represent work for one of the Members of the Committee or a business or NGO interest that would be affected by the issues raised. 1) Students will choose a topic from upcoming or anticipated hearings 2) They will be asked to prepare briefing materials for their boss (A Member of the Committee), including a) background of the issue; b) potential legislative action; c) a set of likely perspectives that will come up during the hearing; d) key issues for resolution; e) an opening statement for your boss or a statement for the record for your company or organization; and f) potential questions for witnesses.	1) **Analyze/evaluate** a public policy issue 2) **Assess threats/opportunities** presented by the issue toward achievement of you goals 3) **Anticipate** likely or possible outcomes depending on how the issue is handled 4) **Map** the roll of key stakeholders in shaping the outcome 5) **Develop** effective advocacy materials to advance you goals	June 15	15
Group assignment Apply Play to Win strategy to current issue and build out foundations of issues management plan, including ambition, objectives, audiences, key strategy elements and measures. Further details will be provided in class.	1) **Apply** fundamental and sophisticated techniques for managing issues, recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities and preventing or countering threats; 2) **Map and identify** the landscape, spotting or anticipating conditions that presage issues or issues themselves before they arise; 3) **Design** an issues management approach rooted in	June 29	15

	organizational opportunities and/or needs; 4) **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners for maximum issues impact; and		

Individual assignment
Students will be called upon to identify a legislative threat or opportunity and to prepare for legislative markup.
 	
Students will be asked to prepare a briefing memo to their boss and to prepare for legislative action. Specific tasks include:
  a. A briefing memo summarizing the key legislative and policy issues that the bill will need to address;
  b. Which interests or groups advocate for and against those key issues;
  c. Key message points used for or against your boss or organizations position; and
  d. Recommendations to your boss on the positions he/she should take on those issues and why, including political and constituent impact and impact on party loyalty
 	
Extra credit: identify an amendment that your boss/organization can champion that presents a unique opportunity to advance a goal or prevent potential harm
	1) **Analyze/evaluate** a public policy issue using
	2) **Assess threats/opportunities** presented by the issue toward achievement of you goals
	3) **Anticipate** likely or possible outcomes depending on how the issue is handled in the context of a legislative setting
	4) **Map** the roll of key allies/opponents/stakeholders in shaping the outcome in legislative/ rulemaking context
	5) **Develop** effective advocacy materials to advance you goals
		July 13	15

Group assignment Build out group's issues management plan to include strategies and tactics to identify and engage with Champions Further details will be provided in class	1) **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners for issues impact	July 20	15

Final presentations Further details will be provided in class	1) **Apply** fundamental and sophisticated techniques for managing issues and turning potential threats into opportunities; 2) **Map and identify** the landscape, spotting conditions or issues before they arise; 3) **Design** an issues management approach rooted in organizational opportunities and/or needs; 4) **Identify and network** with traditional and non-traditional partners for issues impact; and 5) **Assess and communicate** the effectiveness of issues management internally.	5pm July 26	20
Class Participation		Ongoing	20

Standard Grade Scale for 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.

*Assignments submitted up to two days after deadline will be penalized 1/3 letter grade. Assignments submitted more than two days after deadline will be penalized an additional 1/3 letter grade per day.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

Most days, we will break class down into three sections:
- **"Morning business:"** Topics you'd like to discuss that further themes from class or group work, readings or assignments
- **Topic of the day:** Discussion of key learnings as outlined in this syllabus
- **Group work/guest speaker:** Application of class learnings in practical terms

*Instructors reserve 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	Date	Class Outline	Assignment
1	May 25	Discussion: Spirit Airlines • What are the fundamental lessons we can learn about issues management? Welcome and introductions • A day in the life: Gabe and Chris and what their jobs teach us about issues management Syllabus and expectations What is issues management? • What is an issue? • What are you actually *managing?* • What's the difference between issues and crisis management? • When should you be reactive versus proactive?	150-word biography (please post to Blackboard by 5pm on 5/23)
2	June 1	Discussion: GMO labelling Building an issues management plan: Play to win strategy • How do we articulate the issues management in terms non-public affairs personnel can understand? Group exercise	

Week	Date	Class Outline	Assignment
3	June 8	Discussion: The role of the leader How to identify and engage a "Champion" and others to deal with issue and the process for dealing with potential individual/groups who may fear challenging the status quo. Key motivators and marks of leadership How a leader leads; organizing/energizing the followers	
4	June 15	Discussion: Identifying the Players Stakeholder mapping: Who are the players that care and how are they affected. Engaging allies in the process of becoming activists on behalf of one's issue. Identifying the opponents, including opposition research. Learning Objective(s) Addressed: • How to begin building trust among prospective volunteers/advocates. • How to cement internally the notion of "starting from where people are, not where we want them to be. Group exercise	First Personal Assignment Due

Week	Date	Class Outline	Assignment
5	June 22	Discussion: Congress as a model for issue management Understanding the legislative process and its role in the history of the issue. • Answering question "Cui Bono?" Who benefits? • Committees/subcommittees. • The role of hearings and floor action • The role of the Executive Branch • How do stakeholders influence the process. • Effective/ineffective advocacy. • The role of think tanks and Member caucuses and organizations	
6	June 29	Discussion: Renewable Fuel Standard Understanding the regulatory process in dealing with an issue. • The rulemaking process • The Administrative Procedure Act • Public comment/public hearings • Agency decision-making • OMB oversight in the regulatory process • How issues are advanced within and from outside the agency • The role of the Congress and the courts • Need to answer question "Cui Bono?" Who benefits? Guest Speaker: Agency regulatory official	Group Assignment Status Check Due
7	July 6	Discussion: The role of activism • How to get citizens to engage • Why are they important • Interacting with local/national activists Guest speaker: NGO/advocacy group issues management	

Week	Date	Class Outline	Assignment
8	July 13	Ethics, public disclosure and fundraising. • What are the rules? • Do they work? • How do they impact how issues are managed?	2nd Personal Assignment Due
9	July 20	Syntheses of class/wrap-up Open Q & A Work on final presentations	Group Project Status Check
10	July 27	Presentation of final projects	Final Group Projects Due