The Graduate School of Political Management
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management
Fall 2017
August 29 – December 5, 2017

Fundamentals of Political Management
6401.11
3 Credits

Tuesday, 7:10-9:40pm
1776 G Street, NW
Room C-103

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor: Michael D. Cohen, Ph.D.
Dr. Cohen is Assistant Professor and Interim Director of the Political Management program at the Graduate School of Political Management. He also serves as the Chief Data Scientist for GSPM's PEORIA Project, researching the interaction between social media and public opinion. Dr. Cohen is Founder and CEO of Cohen Research Group, a public opinion polling and market research firm in Washington D.C., which also publishes the award-winning suite of political directories under the brand Congress in Your Pocket.

He has served as Principal Strategist and Polling Team lead for Microsoft Corporation, Vice President of Public Affairs at Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates, and began his career at The Gallup Organization, rising to Senior Research Director. While completing his doctorate in 1996 at the University of Florida, he worked for the Republican Party of Florida, helping to lead races for the state legislature.

Contact Information
Mobile Number: 703-785-9094
Email Address: michaeldcohen@gwu.edu

Communication
Please contact me by e-mail, unless it is an emergency, in which case you may reach me on my mobile phone. I will respond within 24 hours to all student e-mails, generally sooner. If you would like to arrange an appointment to see me one-on-one, please e-mail me at least 48 hours in advance and we will arrange a meeting.

Blackboard Site
A Blackboard website has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to use the site to access readings, submit papers, engage in discussion board conversations, and obtain their grades. In short, Blackboard will be the **primary venue** for outside classroom communications. Students can access the site at https://blackboard.gwu.edu. Tech support is available at 202-994-4948 or http://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://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity.

Support for Students with Disabilities

George Washington University'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. Please also be sure to notify me of your disability, should 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 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 must leave here, we will meet at the lobby level of the Media & Public Affairs Building (805 21st Street, NW) 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

Attending class is required. Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact me as soon as you are aware of the issue 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. Simply put, you must attend class to participate. **Three or more class absences during the spring semester (1/5 of the classes) will result in a failing class participation grade.**

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 of the following:

Dr. Lara Brown
Director, Graduate School of Political Management
larambrown@gwu.edu | 202-994-4545

Suzanne Farrand
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

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

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND 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 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

Fundamentals of Political Management is as much an introduction to the field as it is to our program at GSPM. In this introductory class, you will get a feel for how modern politics is practiced as well as providing a foundation for your core classes and optional clusters where you might choose to focus: electoral politics, advocacy, and applied proficiencies.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will gain a foundation in the five key areas of political management. Additional GSPM courses in these areas are included in parentheses.

1. Research: To construct a solid strategy, communications and mobilization plans, you first need to understand the political environment in which you are operating. Effective modern political management are first grounded in data and analytics (PMGT 6403), qualitative and quantitative audience research (PMGT 6460), vetting and opposition research (PMGT 6462).

2. Strategy: Effectively managing campaigns (PMGT 6432), issues (PMGT 6412), or crises (PMGT 6458) in a political environment requires a foundation in strategic planning (PMGT 6430) and experience in the art of collaboration. This must begin from a foundation in principled leadership (PMGT 6404) and follow through all the way through the ethical application of power (PMGT 6495).

3. Communication: Deploying the strategy and core message with an increasingly long list of communication tools (PMGT 6402) is crucial to your success in political management. Modern political management includes crafting speeches (PMGT 6456) and political advertising (PMGT 6466) but has moved more into digital advertising (PMGT 6468), digital content creation (PMGT 6470), and maximizing social media (PMGT 6472).

4. Action: Smart research, enlightened strategy, and compelling communication are essential to successful political management at all levels. But we must remind ourselves

that winning remains about moving people to action. Political management relies on fundraising and budgeting (PMGT 6454), voter contact (PMGT (6440), grassroots engagement (PMGT 6410), and lobbying public officials (PMGT 6414/PMGT 6416) in order to make your vision a reality.

Course Requirements
Your course grade will be based 10% on classroom participation and 90% on deliverables. Points counting toward the course grade will be awarded as follows:

Classroom Participation (10%)

Oral communication skills are essential to political management. Accordingly, up to 10 participation points will be awarded for **smart, succinct, and on-topic comments** with the following criteria:

1. Depth of understanding of assigned material
2. Clear and pertinent comments during class discussions
3. Creative and insightful contributions during in-class activities
4. Effective collaboration with your during group activities
5. Relevant questioning of our guest lecturers

Our classroom reflects a staff meeting at a large multi-purpose firm that provides services in political consulting, research and analytics, government relations, and strategic communications in public affairs. We work at problems collaboratively. This is not a place where your political ideals are front and center and I will not tolerate filibustering of any kind.

However, you will find that I operate an open, encouraging, environment in our classroom. Despite what we're discussing I also attempt to keep it light, reflecting my personality and the fact that our class is at night and you've already had a long day. Still, I recognize that not everyone feels comfortable addressing a group. If you are a behind-the-scenes communicator, you may submit comments and reflections on our sessions to me after class.

Deliverables (90%)

Students will be responsible for **six deliverables** during the semester, each of which will be worth 15% of the course grade. The number of days you have to complete each assignment will vary depending upon its nature, but you will have at least one week. Assignments will be introduced in class and will be due at 5pm on the day indicated.

Please **use Blackboard** to access and deposit the assignments. You may choose to use a variety of document formats but if it is not in Microsoft Office, please upload a .pdf. Submitting files to Blackboard that require me to download specialized software to open it will result in a zero grade. In political management, you will work with a variety of clients and will need to deliver content according to their file preferences. I am your client and I just relayed my preferences.

Bolded items are those related to your semester-long individual research project.

1. Collaboration (15%)
2. Research (15%)
3. Strategy (15%)
4. Communications (15%)
5. Action (15%)
6. Simulation (15%)
7. Classroom participation (10%)

Evaluation and Grading

Deliverable	Description and Learning Objective(s)	Due Date	Weight
Collaboration Week 1	Managing a candidate or issue is a collective enterprise. You will evaluate and discuss two previous campaigns, one successful and one not successful to draw lessons learned.	Sep. 5	15%
Research Weeks 2-3	Before managing a candidate or issue, it is important to evaluate the current situation and who to target. You will review a baseline poll from a real candidate and suggest a path to win.	Sep. 12	15%
Strategy Weeks 4-6	Based on what you learned in your research, what is the best strategy for achieving your goals? You will conduct a SWOT analysis of the field.	Oct. 3	15%
Communications Weeks 7-9	What is your core message and what are your best platforms to communicate your strategy to your targets? You will construct a communication grid to demonstrate your best options.	Oct. 24	15%
Action Weeks 10-12	What do you need people to do to implement your strategy? Do you need grassroots involvement to win? If not, who do you need to motivate?	Nov. 21	15%
Simulation Weeks 13-14	We will conduct a final simulation of a campaign in class during the final two sessions. You will be put on a team and work collaboratively to plan and execute a strategy to win.	Dec. 5	15%
Classroom Participation	Every discussion, activity, and simulation counts.	Continuous	10%
Total	**Six deliverables + Classroom participation**	**Semester**	**100%**

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 the requirements.
C+ 77-79	Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.
C 73-76	Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.
C- 70-72 (lowest grade to pass)	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.
F Below 70	Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

Late Deliverables

For each day a deliverable is late, it will be marked down one grade (e.g., from a B to a B-). An assignment that is <u>one full week</u> late will be counted as an "F." If you believe you have a legitimate "emergency" that makes it so that you will be unable to complete an assignment on time, please notify me as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

Required Text and Learning Materials

In most instances, you'll read approximately 75 pages per week. Listed below are the **4 books** you'll need to purchase. **ALL other readings are available on Blackboard (BB on syllabus).**

Books (in order of reading): For less than $35 you can get these titles electronically.
1. Research: *The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns* by Sasha Issenberg. Hardcover $14.87, Paperback $7.14, Kindle $8.99
2. Strategy: *Strategy: A History* by Lawrence Freedman. Hardcover $13.10, Paperback $15.29, Kindle $9.99
3. Communication: *The Political Campaign Desk Reference: A Guide for Campaign Managers, Professionals, and Candidates Running for Office* by Michael McNamara. Paperback New $19.93, Kindle $2.99
4. Action: *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout, Third Edition*, by Donald P. Green and Alan S. Gerber. Paperback $8.57, Kindle $9.99 (Optional to purchase; we'll read two chapters, which will be provided in Dropbox)

COURSE CALENDAR AND DELIVERABLE DUE DATES

Tentative Course Calendar*
I 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. **Note:** We will not hold class on October 10 (Fall Break) or October 31 (Halloween) because I hear ghosts (presumably hired by students) haunt professors who do such things.

1) AUGUST 29: INTRODUCTION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
    A. Understand what you will learn in this class.
    B. Learn about how much influence campaigns have.
    C. Experience how important collaboration is to political management.

CLASS AGENDA:
    A. Introductions and course syllabus
    B. Discussion on changing views of campaigns
    C. Collaboration activity

READINGS:
    1. This syllabus (Dropbox)
    2. Issenberg: *The Victory Lab*, Chapter 1 (Blinded by Political Science)
    3. Brady, Johnson, and Sides: Do Campaigns Matter? (Dropbox)
    4. Hillier and Dunn-Jensen: Groups Meet and Teams Improve (In-Class)

DELIVERABLE: Autobiographical statement and resume due by 4pm (non-graded).

2) SEPTEMBER 5: POLITICAL RESEARCH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
    A. Learn the difference between qualitative and quantitative research
    B. Become acquainted with relatively new methods of data collection
    C. Learn how to read cross-tabulations to gain insight

CLASS AGENDA:
    A. Traditional qualitative and quantitative
    B. Online research and social media monitoring
    C. Discussion: Identify major insights from the latest GW Battleground Poll

READINGS (All in Dropbox):
1. Roper Center: Polling Fundamentals (Glossary)
2. Pew: Assessing the Representativeness of Public Opinion Surveys
3. Pew: Improving Likely Voter Models
4. ETR: Focus Groups Best Practices
5. Kruger: Focus Group Interviewing

DELIVERABLE #1: Memo focusing on one winning and one losing campaign, for the same office, in terms of **COLLABORATION**. Due 4pm.

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3) SEPTEMBER 12: OPPOSITION RESEARCH AND TARGETING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Gain an understanding of available methods of vetting and opposition research.
B. Learn how to connect the data from basic research with opposition research.
C. Experience sifting through this type of research to determine what is useful.

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Opposition research
B. Opportunity identification
C. Speaker: Lloyd Miller, Delve
D. Activity: Find three interesting things about a candidate/issue/company

READINGS:
1. Issenberg: *The Victory Lab*, Chapter 2 (A Game of Margins)
2. Tringali: Message Testing in the Twenty-First Century (Dropbox)
3. Zillox: The Opposition Research Handbook, read the chapters on *Political Research* and *Online Research* (Dropbox)

DELIVERABLE #2: You will review a baseline poll from a former client of mine and suggest a path to win. This is an applied **RESEARCH** exercise. Due 4pm.

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4) SEPTEMBER 19: PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand the difference between strategy and tactics
B. Apply fundamentals of strategy to political management
C. When to trust the data and when to trust your gut

CLASS AGENDA
A. Discuss various ways of approaching strategy.

B. Compare military and corporate to political strategy.
C. Speaker: Chris Bender, Adfero
D. Activity: Debate between the Geeks and the Gurus

READINGS
1. Lafley: Chapter 1 (Strategy is a Choice) (Dropbox)
2. Lafley: Chapter 7 (Think Through Strategy) (Dropbox)
3. Freedman: Chapter 1 (Evolution)
4. Freedman: Chapter 3 (The Greeks)
5. Freedman: Chapter 4 (Sun Tzu and Machiavelli)
6. Freedman: Chapter 6 (The New Science of Strategy)
7. Issenberg: The Victory Lab, Chapter 6 (Geeks vs. the Gurus)

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5) SEPTEMBER 26: CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand what goes into an election campaign plan
B. Identify strategic mistakes and successes
C. Be able to draft a campaign-directed SWOT analysis

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Break down components of campaign plans
B. Discuss key strategic decisions in a campaign for public office
C. Activity: Map a SWOT analysis based on the readings for one candidate

READINGS (All in Dropbox):
1. NDI: Pages 1-17 (Research, Strategy, and Targeting)
2. 2014 Michelle Dunn Campaign Memo
3. 2008 Penn: Hillary Clinton Campaign Strategy Memos: The Plan and Path to Victory
4. 2016 Trump Campaign Pollster and Strategist, Tony Fabrizio, Frontline Interview

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6) OCTOBER 3: PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand what goes into a public affairs campaign plan
B. Identify strategic mistakes and successes
C. Be able to draft a public affairs campaign plan

CLASS AGENDA
A. Break down components of a public affairs campaign plan
B. Discuss key strategic decisions in a public affairs campaign plan

C. Activity: Draft a plan for a public affairs client

READINGS
1. TCW: The Complete Guide to Advocacy (Dropbox)
2. PAC: Building and Managing a Global Public Affairs Function (Dropbox)
3. Mehlman: Anticipating 2017 (Dropbox)
4. FTI: Public affairs case studies (Dropbox)

DELIVERABLE #3: You will deliver a SWOT analysis of your candidate or issue directed at achieving the goals from your **STRATEGY**.

OCTOBER 10: FALL BREAK – NO CLASS!

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7) OCTOBER 17: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand the importance of a core message in political management
B. Identify various communications strategies
C. Be able to construct a communication grid

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Aligning core message and campaign strategy
B. Leveraging messaging to define your opponents
C. Activity: Design a core message for your campaign

READINGS:
1. Freedman: Chapter 26 (Frames, Paradigms, Discourses, and Narratives)
2. Freedman: Chapter 38 (Stories and Scripts)
3. McNamara: Chapter 3 (Message and Strategy)
4. McNamara: Chapter 6 (Defining the Candidate and the Opponent)
5. Allen and Wilson: Heuristics: Shortcuts Voters Use to Decide Between Candidates

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8) OCTOBER 24: MEDIA

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand the difference in public perception of the power of media and the limited academic evidence of its influence
B. Understand the interaction of all earned media, traditional paid media, and social media as the main platforms for driving content
C. Be able to identify the right media for the right message under specific circumstances

READINGS:
1. Mutz: The Great Divide: Campaign Media in the American Mind (Dropbox)
2. Tyndall: Why Donald Trump Is King of All Earned Media (Dropbox)
3. Institute of Politics: Campaign for President: The Managers Look at 2016: Chapter 2 (The Media and the Election) (Dropbox)
4. Duggan and Smith: The Political Environment on Social Media
5. Prodan: How Social Media May Have Influenced the 2016 Presidential Election
6. Chaffey: Global Social Media Research Summary 2017 (In class)

OPTIONAL READINGS:
1. Price: Beyond Control (Dropbox) (Optional)
2. Green and Issenberg: Inside the Trump Bunker, With Days to Go (Optional)
3. Cohen: The Failure of Stronger Together (Optional)
4. McNamara: Chapter 7 (Message Delivery) (Optional)

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Discuss the varying power of campaign media in political management
B. Review social media map and user demographics
C. Speaker: Zac Moffatt, Targeted Victory
D. Activity Choice 1: Review paid video advertising from the 2016 presidential campaign
E. Activity Choice 2: "Buy" a Facebook ad for your campaign

DELIVERABLE #4: You will deliver a **COMMUNICATION** grid with specific message examples targeted to earned media, traditional media, or online media.

OCTOBER 31: HALLOWEEN – NO CLASS!

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9) NOVEMBER 7: FUNDRAISING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand the current rules of raising money for political management
B. Identify the ways fundraising changed post-*Citizen's United*
C. Be able to construct a basic fundraising plan

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Review the basic rules governing money in politics
B. Discuss the *Citizen's United* case and what it means for money in politics
C. Speaker: Lisa Spies, fundraiser for Jeb Bush and Mitt Romney
D. Debate: Do you always need to outspend your opponent? How do we know who is spending what and to what purpose?

READINGS:
1. McNamara: *The Political Campaign Desk Reference*, Chapter 5 (Fundraising)
2. Garecht: Political Fundraising the Smart Way (Dropbox)
3. Garecht: How to Write a Fundraising Plan (Dropbox)
4. CRP: Citizens United Decision Profoundly Affects Political Landscape
5. CRP: Seven Years Later- Blurred Boundaries, More Money
6. Bai: How Much Has Citizens United Changed the Political Game?
7. Israel: Confessions of a Congressman (Optional) (Dropbox)

10) NOVEMBER 14: ORGANIZING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Understand what motivates people to join a campaign or grassroots movement
B. Identify the correct medium for reaching out to potential supporters
C. Be able to spot compelling grassroots organizing content

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Discuss grassroots vs. grasstops
B. Compare methods of grassroots organizing and engagement
C. Speaker: Sean Gagen, Grassroots SG
D. Activity: Write an organizing ad or script for your campaign

READINGS:
1. McNamara: *The Political Campaign Desk Reference*, Chapter 8 (Grassroots and Internet Campaigning)
2. Gerber: *Get Out the* Vote, Chapter 7 (Electronic Mail, Social Media, and Text Messaging)

11) NOVEMBER 21: MOBILIZATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
A. Learn how data scientists utilize data to mobilize the public, elites, and elected officials
B. Analyze options for voter turnout based on experimental research

CLASS AGENDA:
A. Compare political and public affairs campaigns in terms of mobilization
B. Discuss how Ted Cruz learned from and misunderstood Gerber research
C. Field Trip: Blue Labs

READINGS:
1. Gerber: Chapter 1 (Why Voter Mobilization Matters)
2. Issenberg: *The Victory Lab* Chapter 3 (The New Haven Experiments)
3. Issenberg: *The Victory Lab* Chapter 4 (The Two Percent Solution)
4. Quorum: Identifying a Legislative Champion (Dropbox)
5. Quorum: Stakeholder Engagement (Dropbox)

DELIVERABLE #5: You will write an **ACTION** plan for energizing your supporters to achieve your strategic objectives.

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12) NOVEMBER 28: THE CAMPAIGN SIMULATIONS

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13) DECEMBER 5: SIMULATION DISCUSSION

CLASS AGENDA:
A. What did you learn from the simulation?
B. What did you learn from the class?
C. What classes will you take next?

DELIVERABLE #6: **SIMULATION** evaluation and key takeaways.

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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.