BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor: Evan Tracey, SVP National Media Inc.

As Senior Vice President at the political consulting firm, NMI, I oversee the company's outreach to political campaigns, PACs, issue campaigns, public affairs advertisers, and other public sector communications efforts; build relationships with advertisers to direct and craft communications solutions; work closely with our team of research, planning and placement professionals to develop new multiscreen solutions as well as client facing products aimed specifically at the political and public affairs marketplace.

Additionally, my responsibilities have me evaluating new technologies and possible partnerships to assist our clients to launch, measure and optimize the most effective communications campaigns possible.

More than two decades of experience building successful businesses in the advertising research industry. Mr. Tracey founded the nation's top strategic media data and research firm for politics and public affairs advertising Kantar Media's Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG). While leading CMAG, he designed a number of innovative media data and analytics services that were used by a diverse roster of political and public affairs and corporate clients. Prior to returning to National Media Inc., he was the Senior Vice President of Communications for the American Clean Coal Electricity where he managed and set the direction and strategy for a $42 million communications campaign to shape public opinion. In addition to my work with clients, he has been member of the faculty at George Washington University school of Political Management since 2006 teaching several different classes on campaign communications.

As president of CMAG, he became the leading voice on trends in politics and issue media as CNN's on-air media consultant. I was a featured speaker and lecturer at the Vicente Fox Center, Harvard's Kennedy School, and over 75 other forums on political and advocacy media.

Along with his work with and for the media, I presented and provided written commentary to a number of groups, including the American Advertising Federation, Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB),
National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), and the Radio Advertising Bureau. I also wrote a regular column for *Advertising Age* magazine.


**Contact Information**

Phone Number: (703) 683-4877 (O) 703-298-6229 (M)
Email Address: evantracey@live.com

**Communication**

For outside of class meetings, the best way to communicate with is via email at evantracey@live.com, or by telephone, 703-298-6229. I typically try and arrive 15 minutes before class starts and I am always happy to stay after class for any individual questions that you have. When needed, I can usually find a time to meet or talk by telephone if your matter requires more time.

**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.

**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**

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 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 a 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
You are expected to attend all classes and turn in assignments on the dates in which they are assigned. Participation in discussions is also appreciated and encouraged.

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. Lara Brown
Director, Political Management Program
larambrown@gwu.edu | 202-994-4545

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
THE COURSE

Political Management Program Objectives
1. Assess a political environment, develop an appropriate strategy to achieve specified goals, and execute that strategy.
2. Draw upon a repertoire of effective communication skills and techniques for use in a political environment.
3. Collect, evaluate and incorporate relevant empirical evidence to shape, optimize, and continuously inform the development strategy.
4. Find, engage and motivate the essential and appropriate leaders, professionals and citizens to achieve the developed strategy.
5. Recognize and work through recurring political dilemmas in a manner that upholds ethical standards in the profession and exhibits principled leadership.

Course Description and Overview

In politics, information is the raw material and communications are the derivative. Successful campaigns and candidates are usually the ones that understand the role of the candidate, the voters, the media, the competitive environment, strategy, tactics, and budget.

This course is designed for the GSPM students to learn the difference between specialized forms of communication, the class is designed to start the students out with a foundation build on the fundamentals, and then focus on specific tools and aspects of communications and then connect the dots on how to design a communications strategy to achieve specific campaign goals.

This will be an applied knowledge class. Students will be asked to utilize what they have learned to assess current campaign strategies and rhetoric to understand, interpret and advise on-going political campaigns, policy campaigns and work within crisis situations. Students will continue to learn how to evaluate opponents’ messages with a critical ad strategic eye.

The course will help you better communicate internally and externally within the context of a political or issue campaign. We will look back on the previous elections as well as on-going campaigns and public policy efforts as our case studies.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Analyze and understand the construction of campaign messages and the dynamics of political communication in an election
2. Develop effective political messages that consider issues, such as strengths, weaknesses, vocabulary, and timing.
3. Adapt political communications to respond to events, while continuing to align and reinforce longer term goals and strategies.
4. Write well-organized documents intended to effectively communicate your point of view and be more influential inside a campaign structure.
5. Formulate and execute political communications and strategies using paid, earned and owned media across traditional, digital and social media channels.
Course Requirements
Every week, students must show up prepared to discuss what you have read in relevant political blogs and news sites (these should be part of your daily reading), as each class will begin with a discussion of the previous week’s events and happenings. In these discussions, you will be asked to evaluate events and predict their impact on party and election politics. You may also be asked to share something you read that week that you feel was beneficial to your on-going understanding of political campaigns and/or campaign rhetoric, tactics and the use of images.

Evaluation and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memo #1</td>
<td>Will be assigned at the first class</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo #2</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo #3</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>A final project will be due at the last class. Your project will have several elements that will be turned in during the semester.</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>60% (the plan will be assigned in stages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following is the grading scale for all GSPM classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade*</th>
<th>Grading Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100 Your work is outstanding and ready for submission in a professional environment. Your material, effort, research, and writing demonstrate superior work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93 Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89 Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82 You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72 (lowest grade to pass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that you may be penalized for late submission of assignment(s).

**Required Text and Learning Materials (I will likely assign an additional book at our 1st class)**

*The Responsive Cord,*

By Tony Schwartz

*Campaign Communication and Political Marketing*

By Philippe J. Maarek (Author)

*Campaigning for President 2012, Strategy and Tactics*

Edited by Dennis W. Johnson

**Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials**

*Losers*

By Michael Lewis

*Targeted: How Technology is Revolutionizing Advertising and the Way Companies Reach Consumers*

By Mike Smith

**Tentative Course Calendar**

*The instructor reserves 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.

In consulting the schedule below, please note that guest availability may lead to juggling a couple of sessions. Also, this class is often dictated by political events, thus discussion of current events may be more relevant to the class than the proposed topic.
Week 1: Introduction

What is applied political communications? Where and how does your communications and campaign strategy intersect?

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Overview of the course, books and outside readings
- In-class expectations and assignments
- How should you think about communications
- What is the messaging environment and how does it impact your plans
- What are the communication tools and channels

Reading Due Today: None

Assignment(s) Due Today: None

Week 2 Building Blocks of your Communications Strategy & Message Development

In this class we will discuss the elements of communications planning, and how these determine who you need to reach, influence, and target. Additionally, the class will explore topics related to the message space and how you should construct a winning narrative.

Topic and Content & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Communication planning and the situation analysis
- Who are the voters you have, who are the voters you need?
- Demographics and Geographic’s
- Apply your candidates to the race, identification of strengths and weaknesses
- Framing the race and strategies for forming a winning narrative/ Framing
- Budget and how it impacts communications

Reading Due Today: Pages 1 – 79 the Responsive Cord

Assignment(s) Due Today: Memo #1 “What Should They Be Saying to Us”

Week 3 Thinking about the Brand – Cornflakes vs. Candidates

How branding works with consumers, and voters alike.

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Corporate vs. Political Branding
- Building, maintaining and defending your brand
- The Party Brand vs. the Candidate Brand
• Social media, branding and social awareness
• Brands change with user experience & the death of a brand
• Hispanic and Ethnic Targeting and the Brand

Reading Due Today: Pages 80-161 the Responsive Cord

Assignment(s) Due Today: Select a Candidate for your Final Project and Explain Why You Selected This Person

**Week 4 Elements of your communication plan & building your communication model.**

In this class we will start to connect the dots on building a communication plan to achieve the campaign goals. We will introduce the topics like campaign structure, planning and execution.

**Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:**

• Role of research (opposition and polling)
• Who is on the communications team
• Construction of a message grid
• Creating and managing your content roadmap and editorial calendar
• Role of social media
• Can you cultivate, produce and leverage “super friends”

Reading Due Today: Campaign Communication and Political Marketing Part(s) 1 & 2

Assignment(s) Due Today: Memo #2/ Final Project Topic Choice

Class Date Pivot to Tools of the Trade:

Model of Influence – Communication Strategies Paid, Earned Owned

**Week 5 You are in the Content Business: Paid, Earned and Owned Communications.**

Campaigns are now in the content business; with new digital distribution channels the campaign must now create more content than ever before.

**Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:**

• The power of image and words and how not to misuse this power
• Emotion, storytelling and other ways to get your content to stick
• Content production
• Content placement and media channels

Reading Due Today: Campaign Communication and Political Marketing Part 3
Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 6 Media Consumption and Content Delivery**

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Communications ecosystem
- How are your voters consuming media
- Using your content for maximum impact
- Syncing the content with the distribution channels
- What's the role of social & digital media
- Storytelling with content

Reading Due Today:

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 7: The Press & Communications (Part 1)**

The post-Watergate and twitter addicted media makes dealing with the press harder and more complicated, we will discuss strategies for working with the press and getting the most favorable coverage possible in this brave new and changing world.

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Role of the press in your campaign
- Why (good) writing matters
- Overview of the tools of the trade
- Strategies for working with the press and influencing the voters using pop-culture.
- The political news cycle
- Communicating with the press
- Pitching the press/good press
- Reacting to bad press
- Social media and the press
- Understanding the point of view of journalist
- Media Training And Preparing Materials

Reading Due Today: Campaign Communication and Political Marketing Part 4

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 8 The Press & Communications (Part 2)**

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:
• Press calendar/crafting plans and executing press events/media tours
• Creating “carry forward” from your events
• Message discipline & rapid response
• Pitching negative stories
• The art of the leak

Reading Due Today: Campaign Communication and Political Marketing

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 9 Paid Media**

We will study how you can determine which media connects best with your coalition of voters, and how this fits within your budget.

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

• Use of big or small data
• Understanding media lingo and currency
• Buying & planning media
• Building your media campaign

Reading Due Today:

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 10 Applying Tactic to a Strategy**

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

• Define your campaign goals
• Message space and political culture and how this impacts communications
• Lock in on your objectives
• What are the variables you must overcome
• What is the game plan?
• Process + Tactics + Timing = Outcome
• Types of strategies and what work for your campaign

Reading Due Today: Campaign Communication and Political Marketing

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 11 Campaign Timing and Tactics**
We study how optimizing the measured communications and contacts across paid, owned & earned channels with the goal of reducing waste of the resources within a campaign.

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

We will discuss strategies to enter a political campaign. The do’s and Don’ts around your communications rollout. How to create the maximum amount of carry-forward to your initial campaign message.

- How and when to enter the race.
- Announcing a campaign
- Candidate rollout
- Communications efforts during inspection time (Pre and Post Announcement)
- Surfacing Issues

Reading Due Today:

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 12 Negative Campaigning**

Negative politics are a fact of life, so in this class we will discuss how, when and why to go negative and what to do when you’re attacked.

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Introducing and driving a negative message
- Negative attacks and why voters secretly love them
- Negative attacks do’s and don’t
- What to do when your campaign is attacked
- The press and negative attacks
- Tools for going negative

Reading Due Today:

Assignment(s) Due Today: Brand Media Strategy

**Week 13 Closing out the campaign**

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- The pivotal moments that count the most
- Momentum and voter enthusiasm
- The endless loop of zingers talking points, and one liners
- Winning the attention economy
- Preparing for the shocking moments that can dramatically transform the race
- Making your closing argument
Reading Due Today: Brand Media Strategy

Assignment(s) Due Today:

**Week 14**

Topic and Content Covered & Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

**Oral presentation from the student’s final project.**

Reading Due Today: None.

Assignment(s) Due Today: **Final Project written and oral presentation.**

---

**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.*