M.P.S. in Political Management
Summer (10 weeks)
2015

Stereotypes and Political Strategy
6474
3 Credits
Tuesdays, 7:10 – 9:40 p.m.

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor
Matthew Kohut

Contact Information
Phone Number: (202) 731-1205
Email Address: matt@knpccommunications.com

Communication
Please contact me by e-mail, unless it is an emergency, in which case you may reach me on my cell phone. I will respond within 24 hours to all student e-mails. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss your work, I am available each week for an hour prior to class.

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://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.
Support for Students with Disabilities
GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class
If we experience some an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave here, we will meet at [fill in proximate location] in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University's operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.

Attendance Policy
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.

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 developed 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
At the broadest level, stereotypes are mental shortcuts that enable people to make split-second judgments of each other. Psychologist Daniel Kahneman has described these fast-thinking processes as “a machine for jumping to conclusions.” This in-depth look at stereotypes in politics will help political practitioners understand how both voters and candidates rely on judgments that often fill the gap between public image and personal character.

Course Learning Objectives
The goal of this course is to dispel the false notions by teaching the class how to perform campaign and policy research. By the end of the course, the students will:

1. Understand the Psychological and Neurological Draw Toward Stereotypes - Most people assume that they are consciously aware of how they process information and judge people. Research shows us how much both our psychology and our neurological wiring pull for narratives and look to simply thinking with stereotypes. This is especially true in the political world where personal connections to candidates are rare, social constructions of political parties are strong, and the media regularly convey political information through specific "frames."

2. Learn About and Differentiate Between Multiple Stereotypes – Identify and categorize the different stereotypes used by media as they relate information about candidates. Reflect on the stereotypes others perceive and use when they judge you. Trace through history the changing stereotypes about the political parties, and consider the causes of these shifts.

3. Be Able To Use Stereotypes to Enhance Rather than Detract From Your Candidate – Students will prepare four deliverables for a candidate over the course of the class where they will be expected to identify, upend, and deploy stereotypes strategically.

Course Requirements
In addition to the assignments, students are required to participate in two discussion board postings a week and respond to at least one posting from a peer. Students are also asked to bring each week to class an article or an image related to politics (no cartoons or satire) where the media frame includes stereotypical representations. Both of these activities will count towards your class attendance and participation grade.
## Evaluation and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objective(s) Addressed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>Choose either a Senator or Governor running for reelection, and then write a campaign strategy memo, detailing the media frames that have been used to describe that politician over the last four years. Your report should be 3-4 single-spaced typed pages that are formatted for &quot;high skim value&quot; (e.g., headers and bullet points, etc.)</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event and Image Schedule (Branding/Re-branding)</td>
<td>The purpose of this assignment is to put together a list of events (describe venue, target audience, program, and method for engaging media and gaining press coverage of the event) that will either enhance a positive stereotype or dispel a negative one. It will be expected that you describe four different events (enhance two positive stereotypes/dispel two negative ones) that your Senator or Governor should do to help ensure his/her reelection (or promotion).</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition Profile</td>
<td>It's time to size up the competition. Who is your incumbent running against? What are the stereotypes that are likely to be used to describe him/her? How do you think his/her campaign will attempt to exploit or minimize those stereotypes? Are any contrasts with your candidate particularly favorable? In short, it's now time to write the same campaign strategy memo you did on your incumbent, but now do it for the opposition. Identify 3 stereotype contrasts between your incumbent</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and the challenger that would seem to better suit your candidacy, given your state's constituency and targeted voters. In other words, what stereotypes do you want the campaign to be about?

**Advertising Campaign**

Develop and describe in writing (templates to be provided) 1 30-sec TV ad, 1 radio spot, and 1 video you hope goes viral (via social media) that play/reinforce, but don't offend and cross the somewhat arbitrary "PC" line with the positive/negative stereotypes of your candidate and his/her opponent. Students will present their advertising campaigns to the class in Weeks 9 and 10.

**Attendance and Participation**

The only way to be hands-on is to appear in person and participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade*</th>
<th>Grading Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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><strong>A-</strong></td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Represents solid work with minor errors. Overall, excellent work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B+</strong></td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very good. Represents well-written material, research, and presentation, but needs some minor work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>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><strong>B-</strong></td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You’ve completed the assignment, but you are not meeting all of the requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C+</strong></td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs improvement in content and in effort. Shows some motivation and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needs reworking, improved effort, and additional research. Shows minimal motivation and concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C-</strong></td>
<td>70-72 (lowest grade to pass)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with accuracy, etc.</td>
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**Total**

100%
F Below 70 | Unacceptable performance, or inability to submit the assignment.

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

**Required Text and Learning Materials**

In most instances, you'll read approximately 40-60 pages per week. Additional readings may be assigned. **ALL readings except the required text are available on Blackboard.**


**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.

**Class Date 5/19**

**Week 1**

**Topic and Content Covered:** 1: Introduction/Overview: What are Stereotypes & Why Do They Matter?
Class Date 5/26  
Week 2  
Topic and Content Covered: What are Stereotypes & Why do they Matter - Part II?

Reading Due Today:


Class Date 6/2  
Week 3  
Topic and Content Covered: Stereotypes of Liberals and Conservatives

Reading Due Today:

George Lakoff, Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think  


Neffinger and Kohut, Compelling People, “In Politics,” pp. 222-225

Take the Pew typology quiz:  
http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/

Assignment(s) Due Today: Research Report on your candidate

Class Date 6/9  
Week 4  
Topic and Content Covered: Generational Stereotypes

http://www.people-press.org/2015/04/30/a-different-look-at-generations-and-partisanship/


Neffinger and Kohut, Compelling People, “Age,” pp. 52-54

Guest speaker: David Rosen, First Person Politics

**Class Date 6/16**
Week 5
Topic and Content Covered: Gender

Reading Due Today:
Danny Hayes
When Gender and Party Collide: Stereotyping in Candidate Trait Attribution
Politics and Gender, 7 (2011)
133-141, 155-161

[http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/01/14/women-and-leadership/](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/01/14/women-and-leadership/)

Neffinger and Kohut, Compelling People, “Gender,” 28-42

**Assignment(s) Due Today: Event and Image Schedule**

**Class Date 6/23**
Week 6
Topic and Content Covered: Racial and Ethnic Stereotypes

Reading Due Today:


Vesla M. Weaver, The Electoral Consequences of Skin Color: The “Hidden” Side of Race in Politics
Political Behavior March 2012, Volume 34, Issue 1, pp. 159-192.

Neffinger and Kohut, Compelling People, “Ethnicity,” pp. 43-52

**Assignment(s) Due Today: Opposition Candidate Profile**

**Class Date 6/30**
Week 7
Topic and Content Covered: Religious Stereotypes

Reading Due Today:

Jonathan Haidt, The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion

Monika L. McDermott
“Religious Stereotyping and Voter Support for Evangelical Candidates"

David E. Campbell, John C. Green, J Quin Monson
The Stained Glass Ceiling: Social Contract and Mitt Romney’s “Religion Problem"
Political Behavior (2012) 34:277 277-299

pp. 25-47

Class Date 7/7
Week 8
Topic and Content Covered: Stereotypes, Leadership Qualities, and Voter Decisions

Reading Due Today:


May 19, 2014
http://www.people-press.org/2014/05/19/for-2016-hopefuls-washington-experience-could-do-more-harm-than-good/

https://gspp.berkeley.edu/assets/uploads/research/pdf/22pcSpk75ku0dncq.pdf

Assignment(s) Due Today: Advertising Campaign

Class Date 7/14
Week 9
Topic and Content Covered: Candidate Impressions and Public Image. Student presentations, part 1.

Reading Due Today:


Class Date 7/21
Week 10

Topic and Content Covered: Student presentations (continued) and closing discussion: What does it mean for us all to have a stereotype? What does it mean to rise above, go along, or break out?

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.