

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Summer (9 weeks)

2015

Capstone: Political Power & Practice

6495

3 Credits

Mondays, 7:10 PM - 9:30 PM

Gelman Library 609

May 18, 2015 – July 20, 2015

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructors: Michael Cornfield and Michael Edwards

Contact Information

Email Address: corn@gwu.edu, edwardsm@gwu.edu

Communication

Please contact us by email. If it is a general course question ask Cornfield; if it pertains to course material covered by Edwards (see the syllabus ahead) ask him. We will respond within 24 hours to all student e-mails, at least to acknowledge receipt.

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. The site will be especially important between weeks 8 and 9 as the interim location for the game simulation. Students can access the site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu>. Tech support 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. 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 have to leave here, we will meet at the lobby level of the Media & Public Affairs Building (805 21st Street, NW) 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 in its entirety is required. Should you find yourself with a scheduling conflict, please contact one of us as soon as you are aware of the issue to let us know that you will be absent for part or all of a session; otherwise, it will be considered an unexcused absence and it will negatively count against your participation grade. **Note: 3 or more class absences during the semester will result in a failing class 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:

Hon. Mark Kennedy
Director, Graduate School of Political Management
markkennedy@gwu.edu | 202-994-2482

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

This capstone seminar has been designed to enhance your ability to integrate knowledge of political strategies, tactics, and situations, and apply that knowledge to advanced political problems.

To achieve these aims, you will be asked to conceive and execute a campaign-relevant research report and slide presentation for a mock political client that you select. As you complete this project, you will draw upon concepts and skills you have learned during your coursework, add important people to your professional network, and produce deliverables for your career portfolio. You will be placed into one of four "account groups" for the purposes of helping each other through constructive criticism, especially in weeks 6 and 7, when each group will meet with Professor Cornfield.

In addition to this semester-long research project, you will be asked to comment in class about assigned readings that treat the topics of leadership & power (week 2), strategic thinking (week 3), allies & adversaries (week 4), and negotiations (week 5). Professor Edwards will lead these sessions.

Finally, in weeks 8 and 9 and the days between those sessions, you will play a role in a new policymaking simulation game. (No, it's not set in Florilandia.) You will be expected to keep a running diary and notes that will help you write an after-action report as your final written assignment. Both professors will run the game.

In essence, this course has been designed to teach you what Aristotle thought were the keys to being a successful politician: discernment and prudence. Knowing what questions to ask, what research to pursue, and what actions to recommend and pursue at any one time are hallmarks of a discerning and prudential political professional.

As historian H.W. Brands (*Andrew Jackson*, p. 371) adeptly explained:

"In politics perhaps more than in most other arenas of human endeavor, interests and convictions tend to coincide. Whether convictions produce interests, or interests produce convictions, differs from person to person. But whatever their genesis, convictions and interests almost invariably end up pointing in the same direction. Those who can't master the coincidence don't succeed in politics, and they leave the game to those who can."

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, you will:

1. Understand how time, process, and context both construct opportunities and impose constraints on the exercise of political power. Gain an appreciation for what one of the author's calls "heresthetics" and another "virtù," as well as the moral considerations related to manipulating public sentiments and competing actors.
2. Discover by doing how disciplined, systematic, and largely self-conducted research can help political clients to construct messages and engage people so as to advance a campaign (electoral or advocacy) strategy - Alongside this knowledge, you will develop your proficiency to create written and visual deliverables that communicate research results effectively to a political client. In short, you will learn what it takes to produce high-quality, portfolio-worthy deliverables.
3. Experience the wielding of power in a sustained, intense and complex policy battle. The hybrid game we will debut with you at the end of the semester is aimed at enhancing your sense of what it is like to win, lose, or not be sure of the outcome.

Course Requirements

The specifics of each of these deliverables will be sent to you by email and posted on Blackboard starting in week one. You will have at least one week to prepare each deliverable, and the entire session for the research report and slide deck.

(Note: Bolded items are those related to your semester-long individual research project.)

- (1) **Research Project Prospectus - 10 points (due week 2 – June 1) - 10% of grade**
- (2) Leadership or Heresthetics Exemplar Memo - 10 points (due week 4 – June 15) - 10% of grade
- (3) Coalition-Building or Negotiations Exemplar Memo - 10 points (due week 6 – June 29) - 10% of grade
- (4) **Status Report (Oral Presentation) on Research Project – 10 points (due week 6 or 7 – June 29 or July 6) –5% of grade.**
- (5) Participation Log and Performance in Policymaking Game -10 points (due weeks 8 and 9 – July 13 and 20) –10% of grade.
- (6) **Research Report - 35 points (due July 27) - 35% of grade**
- (7) **Client Slide Deck - 5 points (due July 27) - 10% of grade**
- (8) Policymaking Game After-Actions Memo – 10 points (due July 27) -10% of grade.

You can earn extra points in the course for thoughtful and pertinent comments during class discussions. Topics referenced in the course calendar below with the prefatory phrase "Come to class ready to talk briefly" is your signal that we may call upon you in that regard.

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 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.

Late Assignments

For each day that an assignment is late, it will be marked down one grade (e.g., from a B to a B-). An assignment that is one full week 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 one of the instructors as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

Required Text and Learning Materials

Listed below are the **8 books** you'll need to purchase.

Books:

- Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition, University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated and introduced by Harvey Mansfield, second edition. University of Chicago Press, 1998. (Other editions are acceptable.)
- John Neffinger and Matthew Kohut, *Compelling People*. Hudson Street Press, 2013.
- William H. Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation*, Yale University Press, 1986.
- Kaihan Krippendorff, *Outthink the Competition: How a New Generation of Strategists Sees Options Others Ignore*, Wiley Publishers, 2011.
- Martin A. Levin (editor), *Building Coalitions, Making Policy: The Politics of the Clinton, Bush, and Obama Presidencies*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012.
- James Freund, *Smart Negotiating*, Simon & Shuster, 1993.
- Robert Mnookin, *Bargaining with the Devil: When to Negotiate, When to Fight*, Simon & Shuster, 2011.

Course Calendar

The instructors reserve the right to alter course content and/or adjust the pace to accommodate class progress. You are responsible for keeping up with all adjustments to the course calendar as posted on Blackboard and emailed to you.

May 18 -- Week 1 INTRODUCTION

Overview of course via a review of the syllabus.

Come to class ready to talk briefly (about one minute) about the course deliverable you are proudest of in your time at GSPM.

Readings :

1. Booth, et al., *Craft of Research* (Parts I - III, pp. 1-170).
2. Capstone Research Guidelines Memo, entire. (On Blackboard.)

May 25 – Memorial Day -- NO CLASS

June 1 -- Week 2 LEADERSHIP AND POWER

An exploration of the characteristics of leadership and the use and responsibilities of power: gaining it, wielding it, losing it. Changing dynamics of leadership and governance in the 21st century.

Come to class ready to talk briefly about a paragraph or short passage from *The Prince* which you find suitably unprincipled enough to merit the common pejorative use of the word “Machiavellian.” Are there circumstances, processes, and behaviors that might redeem such unprincipled political leadership?

Assignment Due Today – Research Prospectus

Readings:

1. Machiavelli, *The Prince*.
2. Neffinger and Kohut, *Compelling People*.

June 8 -- Week 3 STRATEGIC THINKING

Strategic thinking well done enables you, in effect, to win before you start. An analysis of the elements of strategic thinking and an overview of the processes, tools, and techniques necessary to set meaningful strategic goals and harness the appropriate resources and tactics to accomplish them.

Come to class ready to talk briefly about a heresthetic move that you have used or observed at close hand.

Readings:

1. Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation*.
2. Krippendorff, *Outthink the Competition*.

June 15 -- Week 4 ALLIES & ADVERSARIES

The art and science of coalition building involves both winning friends and neutralizing adversaries. Tools and techniques for relationship-building in the advocacy and electoral arenas. Understanding organizational and group dynamics in the pursuit of policy outcomes.

Come to class ready to talk briefly about an effective and non-traditional alliance in which you have participated or observed at close hand, including your account of the impact the coalition had.

Reading:

1. Levin, *Building Coalitions, Making Policy*.

Assignment Due Today – Leadership or Heresthetics Exemplar Memo

June 22 -- Week 5 NEGOTIATIONS

The craft of getting a political deal done, including examination of the differences between positional (distributive/hard) bargaining and interest-based (integrative/principled) negotiations. Strategies, processes, styles, tools, and tactics; the dynamics of multi-player multi-issue situations. When to close, when to fight, and when to exit.

Come to class ready to talk briefly about a political stalemate you have witnessed or studied, and what you believe might have broken the stalemate to achieve a positive resolution in a deal.

Readings:

1. Freund, *Smart Negotiating*.
2. Mnookin, *Bargaining with the Devil*.

June 29 --Week 6 RESEARCH PROJECT WORKSHOPS (A)

Groups I and II will meet separately with Professor Cornfield to discuss and critique individual projects. The purpose of this class is to (a) answer any questions you may have about your research, (b) learn about what your colleagues are doing, and (c) make sure that your projects are on the right track!

Readings:

1. Booth, et al., *Craft of Research*, Parts IV and V (pp. 171-276)

Assignment Due Today – Coalition-Building or Negotiating Exemplar Memo (all students)

July 6 -- Week 7 RESEARCH PROJECT WORKSHOPS (B)

Groups III and IV will meet separately with Professor Cornfield to discuss and critique individual projects. The purpose of this class is to (a) answer any questions you may have about your research, (b) learn about what your colleagues are doing, and (c) make sure that your projects are on the right track!

Readings:

1. Booth, et al., *Craft of Research*, Parts IV and V (pp. 171-276)

July 13 -- Week 8 POLICYMAKING SIMULATION GAME, PART ONE.

Readings:

1. Rules and Roles Memo will be distributed to you individually.

BETWEEN CLASSES, THE GAME CONTINUES ONLINE in PART TWO.

July 20 --Week 9 POLICYMAKING SIMULATION GAME, PART THREE.

Assignments due July 27: Research Report, Slide Deck, and After-Actions Memo

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.