

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Semester

May 16- July 18

Course Name

PMGT 6403.10 Political Data and Analytics

3 Credits

Mondays 7:10-9:40pm

OM 312

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor

Patrick M. Bell, PhD

For over 25 years Dr. Patrick M. Bell has consulted, worked in or taught about government and politics. An alumnus of the Graduate School of Political Management (GSPM '98) Dr. Bell has been appointed to serve in both the US Treasury and Defense Departments; first as Policy Advisor and later as Special Assistant. His current research focuses on comparative politics, political methodology and the use of social media in protest movements include the current crisis in Ukraine.

Contact Information

Phone Number: 786-395-2735

Email Address: gman95@email.gwu.edu

Communication

The best way to reach me outside of class is via e-mail above. Barring exigent circumstances I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours. We can also set up a time to meet outside of class if the need arises. If you need to contact me about an urgent matter I can be reached at the phone number above.

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 the GSPM offices 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

As this is a highly interactive class, please make every effort to attend class. In the unlikely event that I must cancel class, I will do so in writing as soon as possible.

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

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 so as 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.

Course Description and Overview

Today’s political managers are awash in a sea of data. Which “data” you use is of critical importance for both you and your clients as you develop your message. To help you accomplish this task this course provides students with an introduction to political data and analytics. Students undertake an in-depth review and critical investigation of quantitative research methods. They will be exposed to various tools and techniques and learn how to consume and utilize data in the political management context.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Select and apply various quantitative tools to political management research project.

- Formulate a research problem, hypotheses, a research plan, and conduct a literature review.
- Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data.
- Identify and discuss the implications of analysis, formulate recommendations, and write up a research report.
- Present and discuss data analysis in intuitively understandable ways.

In addition students will be able to demonstrate the following skills

- Learn how to spot valid and manipulative use of data analysis.
- Become familiar with major trends influencing quantitative and qualitative research.
- Understand trends and developments in data research and how they will influence the future of political management.

Course Requirements

This will be a highly interactive class that will include class lectures, in class assignments and multimedia presentations. As such class participation will be an integral of this course. The instructor will attempt to provide a variety of information and learning activities intended to stimulate in-depth learning and reflection. These activities will provide an opportunity to engage in so called “double loop” learning which research has shown leads to greater retention of material¹ **Emphasis will be placed on relating theory to practical application and current issues.**

Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed	Due Date	Weight
Strategic memo 1: Data Visualization	Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data	June 6	15%
Strategic memo 2: Misuse of Statistics	Learn how to spot valid and manipulative use of data analysis.	June 20	15%
Strategic Memo 3: Focus Groups	Become familiar with major trends influencing quantitative and qualitative research.	July 11	15%
Final Project	Present and discuss data analysis in intuitively understandable ways.	July 18	40%

¹ For more information on this subject see Svendsen, L. in Wankel, L and Blessinger, P. eds, 2012, Increasing Learning and Retention using Social Technologies, Emerald, p. 60-61

	Identify and discuss the implications of analysis, formulate recommendations, and write up a research report.		
Attendance and Participation	Formulate a research problem, hypotheses, a research plan, and conduct a literature review. Understand trends and developments in data research and how they will influence the future of political management.		15%
Total			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 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	Poor performance. Major errors, too many misspellings, problems with

grade to pass)	accuracy, etc.
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

- Pollock III, Philip, The Essentials of Political Analysis, 4th Edition, Sage/CQ Press, Washington, DC (2012) ISBN# 978-1608716869
- Readings assigned 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: May 16

Week 1 Fun and Games with Numbers! Course Overview and Why Political Data Matters

Topic and Content Covered:

- How data and statistics tell stories, shape our world, and influence politics.
- Understanding the parlance of data from Word Clouds and Scatterplots to Infographics and numbers.
- The process of political research
- Why do political managers need quantitative skills?

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

Become familiar with major trends influencing quantitative and qualitative research.

Reading Due Today: Pollock III, Chapter 1

Assignment(s) Due Today:

Class Date: May 23

Week 2: Thinking about Research: Why research questions and hypotheses are so important to your success

Topic and Content Covered:

Building theories and hypotheses; reviewing literature;
Formulating a research question and hypothesis; choosing methods;

Measuring variables and defining and constructing measures;

Examining the relationship between measurements and quantitative analysis methods;

In class assignment: Asking the “right” questions

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Formulate a research problem, hypotheses, a research plan, and conduct a literature review.

Reading Due Today: Reading: Pollack III, Chapter 2 and 3

Assignment(s) Due Today:

Class Date May 30 NO CLASS: Memorial Day Holiday
Week 3

Class Date June 6

Week 4: Decisions, Decisions: Investigating a Research Problem

Topics and Content Covered:

Research Design, Making Comparisons, Direction and Strength of Relationships, Cross tabulation

In class assignment: performing a cross tabulation

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data.

Reading Due Today: Pollock III, Chapters 4-5

Assignment(s) Due Today: Strategic Memo One: Data Visualization

Class Date June 13

Week 5 Analyzing Data I: Describing Patterns present and how to interpret them

Topic and Content Covered:

Analyzing Populations and Samples; Measures of Central Tendency and Variability

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

- Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data.

Reading Due Today: Pollock III, Chapters 6-7

Assignment(s) Due Today:

Class Date June 20

Week 6: Analyzing Data and Making Inferences I

Topic and Content Covered: Survey samples; Measures of Association

Objective(s) Addressed: Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data.

Reading Due Today:

Assignment(s) Due Today: Strategic Memo 2: Use and Misuse of Statistics

Class Date June 27

Week 7: Analyzing and Making Inferences II

Topic and Content Covered: Regression Analysis

Learning Objective(s) Addressed: Identify, collect, analyze and interpret data.

Reading Due Today: Pollock, Chapters 8-9

Assignment(s) Due Today:

Class Date: JULY 4 NO CLASS: INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY

Reading during the break: Reading and video available on Blackboard about qualitative research and focus groups

Class Date July 11

Week 9: Qualitative Research: Using focus groups and interviewing to better understand the dynamics of opinion in your target population

Topic and Content Covered: Qualitative methodology; Use of Focus groups

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

Become familiar with major trends influencing quantitative and qualitative research.

Reading Due Today: Handout on Qualitative analysis

Assignment(s) Due Today: In class assignment; Strategic Memo Three: Focus Groups

Class Date July 18

Week 10: Big Data; Big Decisions

Topic and Content Covered: Big Data, Use of Experiments, Political Marketing

Learning Objective(s) Addressed:

Become familiar with major trends influencing quantitative and qualitative research.

Reading Due Today: Reading posted and assigned on Blackboard

Assignment(s) Due Today: Final Assignment

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.