

The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management

Fall 2022

September 28 – December 7, 2022

Grassroots Engagement

PMGT 6410.010

3 Credits

Wednesdays 6:10 – 8:00

1776 G Street, NW, Room C-119

Instructor Information

Instructor

Amy D. Meli

Contact Information

Phone Number: (703) 395-2817

Email Address: amymeli@email.gwu.edu

Communication

The fastest way to reach me is via email – I will respond to messages during the semester within 24 hours. I am generally on campus the hour before class and can be available to meet during that time or at another time by request. Please email me or call me to schedule a meeting in advance.

Expectations and Responsibilities

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 [GWU Blackboard](#). Please note that your access to this course on Blackboard will continue for one month after the course ends. If you wish to keep any work or materials, you must download or save them before the course closes. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or [IT Blackboard web page](#).

Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation

Over the course of the semester, students will spend approximately three hours per week in combined online class meetings (synchronous learning) and engaged in asynchronous instructional learning activities (done weekly on one's own time) over the 10-week term. In addition to these required asynchronous and synchronous activities, reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 8¼ hours per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 30 hours in instructional time (asynchronous and synchronous) and 82.5 hours preparing for class for a total of 112.5 hours. Hybrid and Online courses meet the total 112.5 hours of total instruction.

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. 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.” Copying information and pasting it into a paper without a quotation and citation is an act of plagiarism. You must cite each and every instance of paraphrasing or quoting text taken from elsewhere (citing the item earlier or listing it at the end with references is not enough). You are responsible for the content of your work, regardless of whether you *intend* to plagiarize or not, so check your work thoroughly. Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. For the first offense, the student will receive an “F” for the assignment and formal charges will be filed with the Office of Academic Integrity. For the second offense, charges will again be filed and the student will receive an “F” for the final course grade. Penalties for academic dishonesty are not negotiable. You will not be offered a “do-over” or resubmission. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>

Attendance Policy

Attendance in class is mandatory, as is participation in classroom discussions. However, since we are all working professionals, I understand that students may occasionally need to miss a class. **In order to receive credit for a class, students must notify me in advance of the class being missed.** In order to receive full credit, select one of the course materials for the week and write one double-spaced page about how the reading connects with the topic that we are discussing this week. You should send this to me via email by the end of the week of the missed class.

University Policy on Observance of Religious Holidays

Students must notify faculty as early as possible, but no later than three weeks prior to the absence, of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. If the holiday falls in the first three weeks of class, the student must inform the faculty within the first week of the semester that they are enrolled in the course.

To the greatest extent possible, faculty must continue to extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.

Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday must arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities.

For the full text of the policy and calendar of religious holidays, please see the [Office of the Provost’s Policies web page](#) (Religious Holidays document).

Online Classroom Conduct Policy

You should behave in class as if you are in a professional setting. Unless you are having connection difficulties, you are expected to activate your camera and to be present, attentive, and engaged during online course meetings. Please do not attempt to multitask, as it is almost impossible to read something

while simultaneously listening to something else. Please observe the following rules of netiquette for communicating online:

- Remain professional, respectful, and courteous at all times.
- Remember that a real human being wrote each post and will read what you write in response. It is easy to misinterpret discussion posts. Let's give the benefit of the doubt.
- If you have a strong opinion on a topic, it is acceptable to express it as long as it is not phrased as an attack. Please be gracious with differing opinions.
- When upset, wait a day or two prior to posting. Messages posted (or emailed) in anger are often regretted later.
- Proofread and use the spell check tool when you type a post. It makes the post easier to read and helps your readers understand what you are saying.

Your instructor reserves the right to delete any post that is deemed inappropriate for the discussion forum, blog, or wiki without prior notification to the student. This includes any post containing language that is offensive, rude, profane, racist, or hateful. Posts that are seriously off-topic or serve no purpose other than to vent frustration will also be removed.

Technology Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the required technology to fully participate in this course. The minimum technology requirements for learning online at GW are outlined on the [Technical Requirements and Support](#) web page. If you have any problems with the technology in this course, you can seek technological support from GW in a variety of ways, outlined on the [IT Support](#) website. GW is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment that is accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities. The following links provide more information about the accessibility of technologies that may be used in this course (delete all not needed):

- [Blackboard accessibility](#)
- [Microsoft Office accessibility](#)
- [Adobe accessibility](#)
- [Vimeo accessibility](#)
- [YouTube accessibility](#)
- [VoiceThread accessibility](#)
- [Webex accessibility](#)
- [Zoom accessibility](#)

If you have any issues regarding the accessibility of the technology used in this course, please contact your instructor. You may also explore the [Disability Support Services](#) website (see above).

Technology Expectations

Regarding technology skills, you should be able to:

- Create documents and presentation slides
- Upload files, including recordings and images
- Be open to learning and registering for new technologies
- Be flexible when technological glitches happen (which is a given)
- Seek technological help when necessary by contacting the Division of Information Technology

If you have any problems with the technology expectations in this course, please contact your instructor.

Use of Electronic Course Materials and Class Recordings

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials, including recorded class sessions, for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials

and recorded class sessions should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials and/or recorded class sessions. Please contact [Disability Support Services](#) if you need additional accommodations for accessing electronic course materials.

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. The Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. § 10) governs the rights attributed to owners of copyrighted work. Under certain circumstances, educational institutions may provide copies of copyrighted works to students. The copies may not be copied nor used for any other purpose besides private study, scholarship, or research. Users should not provide electronic copies of any materials provided on this course's Blackboard site to unauthorized users. If a user fails to comply with Fair Use restrictions, he/she may be held liable for copyright infringement. No further transmission or electronic distribution is permitted.

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 <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

Counseling and Psychological Services

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. For additional information call 202-994-5300 or visit the [Counseling and Psychological Services website](#).

Title IX: Confidentiality and Responsible Employee Statement

The George Washington University (GWU) and its faculty are committed to helping create a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. GWU strongly encourages all members of the community to take action, seek support and report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty members are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Mental Health Services through Colonial Health (counselors are available 24/7 at 202-994-5300 or you can make an appointment to see a counselor in person.). For more information about reporting options and resources at GWU and the community, please visit <https://haven.gwu.edu/>.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is located in Gelman Library at 2130 H St NW in Suite 221 and they can be reached at 202-994-3765 or via email at gwriter@gwu.edu. You can [schedule writing center appointments](#), both in-

person or by phone, in advance. Daytime and evening hours are available. Check for this semester's hours at the [writing center contact page](#). The Writing Center offers summer hours.

GWU Libraries

Off campus students have full access to all of the research resources, services, and assistance that the Library offers. The GW community has access to 500+ online subscription databases and to millions of items, electronic and print, in the library catalog. Off-campus students even have additional privileges because the Library will FedEx print materials to your home. For more information visit the [GW Libraries homepage](#).

Call the Ask Us desk at 202-994-6048 or [contact someone at the library](#) to answer any questions. For questions beyond “Do you have this book/article?” and “How do I login?” use the website mentioned to make a research consultation appointment with a librarian. Librarians are there to guide students through any aspect of the research process, from selecting and narrowing a topic, crafting a research strategy to citation management.

Safety and Security

- **In an emergency:** call GWPD at 202-994-6111 or call 911
- **For situation-specific actions:** review the [Emergency Response Handbook](#)
- **In an active violence situation:** [Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out](#)
- **Stay informed:** review [notification tools for staying informed during emergency and safety related situations](#)

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:

Dr. Todd Belt
Director, Political Management Program
tbelt@gwu.edu | 202-994-4363

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

In this course, students will learn how grassroots movements impact political outcomes and how to engage the public in order to make political change.

While President, FDR famously told a lobbyist after a meeting, “You’ve convinced me. Now go out and force me.” He knew that the lobbyist’s position was correct, but he needed to hear support from the public in order to move forward with the policy. Grassroots movements are often the driving force behind changes in public opinion on key issues, the success or failure of landmark legislation, and the election or defeat of public officials. Through the course of the semester, we will learn how the human brain drives how people think about issues, how cultural movements often manifest themselves through art or culture before they appear in politics, and how to leverage new technology and data to support grassroots work. But most importantly, we will examine how the most effective way to change minds is through human relationships, which is why building relationships through trust is the ultimate work of a grassroots organizer.

Course Learning Objectives

[Identify in specific and measurable terms what the student will know or be able to do as a result of participating in this course. Please note that there can be more than three learning objectives.]

1. Understand and execute a grassroots stakeholder analysis that identifies family, friends, foes, and strangers in an advocacy campaign.
2. Understand the three different types of grassroots advocacy (community advocacy, legislative advocacy, and campaign advocacy) and how the strategies employed by each type of campaign is driven by the issue’s location within the life cycle.

3. Understand how the use of data, technology, and messaging can all have an impact on the outcome of the campaign.
4. Demonstrate mastery of the above learning objectives by completing a semester-long grassroots engagement plan.

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete (1) a group project and oral presentation, (2) weekly assignments, both in class and asynchronously, and (3) attend and participate in class weekly.

Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Learning Objective(s) Addressed [#]	Due Date	Weight
Group Assignment – written submission	Design a grassroots campaign strategy and implementation plan	Throughout semester and December 7	40 points
Group Assignment - oral presentation and Power Point	Present campaign strategy and implementation plan to a panel of experts	December 7	10 points
Weekly Assignments	Weekly assignments due the night of class or completed in class (5 points per assignment for 8 assignments)	Throughout semester	40 points
Class Participation	Attendance in and participation in classroom discussions (1 point per class)	Weekly	10 points
Total			100 points

Group Project Grading Details

Throughout the semester, your group will submit portions of the written group assignment. Due date details are provided below and will also be provided on a calendar on the course's Blackboard page.

For each portion of the written submission, your group will have multiple opportunities to submit content. It is likely that upon the initial submission, your group will receive partial credit, as I expect that each submission be written as if it were to be submitted to a client. After the first submission, I will make editorial suggestions to improve the draft, including questions that need to be explored to complete the assignment.

Generally, the first draft submission is due on the Sunday of the week listed below. I will provide comments and an initial grade by Wednesday of that week, and final revisions are due on Friday of the

week listed. So for example, the project topic will be due on October 9, my edits will be provided by October 12, and your final edits will be due to me by October 14.

Once your group has made the appropriate edits, submit the second draft by the due date. I will review the updated submission and will re-grade as appropriate. I may allow additional submissions past the second draft if needed. **However, all assignments must be completed on deadline in order to receive full credit.**

The written assignment grading will break down as follows. Added together, the written portion of the group project will be worth 40 points (and 40% of your grade).

Part 1: Project Topic (3 points) – due the week of October 12

Part 2: Mission, Vision, and Background Statement (10 points) – due the week of October 26

Part 3: Grassroots Outreach Plan (15 points) – due the week of November 16

Part 4: Full plan with Executive Summary (2 points) – due the week of November 30

Part 5: Evaluation by Team Members (10 points) – due the week of December 7

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.

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

Required Text and Learning Materials

Note: All course materials will be made available electronically via the course’s Blackboard page.

Book Sections (you will read sections of these books as described in the course calendar below.

Alinsky, Saul D., *Reveille for Radicals*, Vintage Books, 1946

Bishop, Bill, *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart*, Mariner Books, 2009

Green, Donald P. and Gerber, Alan S., *Get Out the Vote!*, Brookings Institution Press, 2019

Greife, Edward A., *The New Corporate Activism: Harnessing the Power of Grassroots Tactics for Your Organization*, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1995

Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, Vintage, 2012 (Chapters 6, 7, and 10)

Han, Hahrie, *How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press, 2014.

Mason, Lilliana, *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*, University of Chicago Press, 2019.

Meli, Amy and Greife, Edward, "Public Affairs and Information/Science Systems," from *The Handbook of Public Affairs*, ed. Harris, Phil & Fleischer, Craig, Sage Publishing, 2017.

Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Touchstone Books, 2001

Articles and Reports

Broockman, David, and Kalla, Joshua, *Science*, April 8, 2016, "Durably Reducing Transphobia: A Field Experiment on Door-to-Door Canvassing"

Congressional Management Foundation, 2011, "Communicating with Congress: Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy on Capitol Hill"

Lohmann, Susanne, "The Dynamics of Information Cascades: The Monday Demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989-91," *World Politics*, Vol. 42, 1994.

Pollan, Michael, *The New York Times Magazine*, October 5, 2016, "[Big Food Strikes Back: Why Did the Obama Administration Fail to Take On Corporate Agriculture?](#)"

Movies, Podcasts, and Other Materials

Invictus: covers the events in South Africa before and during the 1995 Rugby World Cup, hosted there following the dismantling of apartheid.

Pride: a 2014 film depicting the partnership in 1984 between London-based gays and lesbians and striking Welsh coal miners.

[Astroturf](#), TV Show, *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, Episode 139, August 12, 2018

First Follower: Leadership Lessons from Dancing Guy, YouTube video, posted by Derek Sivers, February 11, 2010

[“A Union Drive at Amazon,”](#) *The Daily, The New York Times*, April 1, 2021.

The Newsroom, clip from Season 2, Episode 4, “Unintended Consequences.”

Optional Supplemental Text and Learning Materials

Meredith, Judith, *Lobbying on a Shoestring*, Auburn House, 2000 (Third Edition)

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.

Week 1 – September 28

Topic and Content Covered:

- Introduction/review of syllabus
- Types of grassroots campaigns
- Mission, vision, and strategy

Reading Due This Week:

- Newsroom clip (in class)
- *Invictus* (watch after class before completing vision statement assignment)

Assignment(s) Due This Week:

- Vision statement (asynchronous, due Sunday, October 2)

Week 2 – October 5

Topic and Content Covered:

- Audience Analysis
- Coalition Building
- Guest Lecturer – Meghan DiMuzio, Senior Director, Corporate Reputation, Anheuser-Busch

Reading Due This Week:

- Grefe, Chapter 4 and Smuggler Mountain Case
- Pollan article from the *New York Times Magazine*

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Complete audience analysis from Pollan reading (in class)

Week 3 – October 12

Topic and Content Covered:

- Power Mapping
- Influentials
- Guest lecturer: Genna Gent, Vice President of Global Public Policy and Government Relations, McDonald's

Reading Due Today:

- First Follower video
- Lohmann, "The Dynamics of Information Cascades"

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Group project: Project Topic due Monday, October 10
- Power map (work on in class, submit online for grading)

Week 4 – October 19 – CLASS WILL BE HELD ONLINE TODAY

Topic and Content Covered:

- Social trends
- Guest lecturer: Wade Balkonis, Director of Grassroots Advocacy, Association of Equipment Manufacturers (asynchronous)

Reading Due This Week:

- Bishop, Introduction and Chapter 3
- Putnam, Chapters 1 and 2

Assignment(s) Due This Week:

- Social trends article (bring to Zoom class and discuss)

Week 5 – October 26

Topic and Content Covered:

- Community advocacy
- Union organizing
- The importance of listening
- Guest lecturer: Zach Tatz, Senior Director of Government Affairs, Transport Workers Union

Reading Due This Week:

- Alinsky, pages 53-61, 64-69, and 93-131
- *The Daily* podcast

Assignment(s) Due This Week:

- Group project; mission, vision, and background due Monday, October 24
- Process recording: due Sunday, October 30

Week 6 – November 2

Topic and Content Covered:

- Grassroots technology

- Guest lecturer: Mike Young, Senior Vice President of Account Management, Aristotle International

Reading Due This Week:

- Meli and Grefe
- CMF Communicating with Congress report

Assignment(s) This Week:

- TBD

Week 7 – November 9

Topic and Content Covered:

- Grassroots for legislative campaigns
- Guest lecturer: Hannah Wesolowski, Chief Advocacy Officer, National Alliance on Mental Illness

Reading Due This Week:

- Han, Introduction and Chapter 1
- Astroturf video
- Meredith, Introduction and Chapter 1 (optional)

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Discussion of outreach plans: post a draft of your group's plan (or an outline) by Thursday, November 10 and comment on your classmates' plans by Sunday, November 13. Each student must comment at least three times for full credit.

Week 8 – November 16

Topic and Content Covered:

- Campaign grassroots
- Guest lecturer: Meghan Cox, CEO, HBS+

Reading Due Today:

- Green and Gerber, Chapters 1 and 2
- Brockman and Kalla

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Outreach plan due Monday, November 14

Week 9 – November 30

Topic and Content Covered:

- Political psychology
- Semester wrap-up

Reading Due Today:

- Haidt

- Mason
- Pride movie

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Executive Summary due Monday, November 28
- Political psychology assignment: post your example by December 1, comment on others' posts by Sunday, December 4

Week 10 – December 7

Topic and Content Covered:

- Presentations

Reading Due Today:

- None

Assignment(s) Due Today:

- Submit your Power Point before class on December 7
- Give oral presentation in class on December 7