The Graduate School of Political Management

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Political Management
Semester Spring 2017
Class start/end date: 01/17-5/3

Course Name: Targeting and Voter Contact
Course Number: PMGT 6440.80
Credits: 3

Class Day/Time Monday 7:10-9:40 p.m.
Monroe Hall, Room 114
2115 G Street, NW
Washington D.C. 20052

BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Instructor
Jim Green

Contact Information
Phone Number: (202) 495-1125
Email Address: greenjd@gwmail.gwu.edu

Communication
Email is the best way to communicate with me, and you can expect a response within 24 hours. If you need to call, please do so before 8pm. I will be available before and after class to answer any questions.

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 https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/.

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 in front of the Marvin Center's entrance on H Street 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
I expect you to be in every class and on time. I will take attendance at the start of every class. If you do have a legitimate excuse, please let me know as soon as possible. If you have more than three (3) unexcused absences during the semester, you will receive a failing grade in class participation (or 15% of total course grade.)

Late Policy
I expect every assignment to be turned in on time; for every day an assignment is late, your grade for the assignment will drop by one letter.

Out-of-Class/ Independent Learning Expectation
Over the course of the semester, students will spend at least 2 hours (100 minutes) per week in class. Required reading for the class meetings and written response papers or projects are expected to take up, on average, 7 hours (350 minutes) per week. Over the course of the semester, students will spend 25 hours in instructional time and 87.5 hours preparing for class.

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. Beatriz Cuartas
Deputy Director, Political Management Program
beatrizcuartas@gwu.edu | 202-994-6000

Suzanne Farrand
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM
sfarrand@gwu.edu | 202-994-9309

Dr. Jack Prostko
Associate Dean for Learning Faculty Development
College of Professional Studies
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THE COURSE

Course Description and Overview

Is big data the panacea for today's electoral challenges? Students will learn how to use big data to target voters in electoral and issue advocacy campaigns, learning how to shape communications to a target universe. This course will focus on three areas: email list building, persuasion and turnout. For each of these topics, students will learn how to pull lists from the voter file, manage them in Excel and identify the best mediums to reach a target universe.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Understand the main strategies and tactics of campaigns, paying close attention to how targeting and analytics can further those actions.
2. Understand how polling dictates messaging, persuasion and outreach.
3. Understand how voter contact impacts on-the-ground campaign decision-making.
4. Appreciate the uniqueness of a presidential campaign and understand the impact of the Electoral College on campaign decisions.

Course Requirements

Grades will be based on the following:

- **In-class assignments: 25%**
  During various classes (announced in advance), students will complete partnered computer assignments utilizing the voter file. One student will be in Excel while his/her partner will be using Word to documents their work and findings.

- **Three short reaction memos: 25%**
  Each student will write three (3) reaction memos based on select weekly readings. These memos should be between (1500-2000) words in length and will be due at the beginning of class. Students should provide a detailed critical analysis and personal perspective on the compelling arguments found within the weekly readings.

- **Final presentation: 35%**
  As a final presentation, students will have to develop and present a campaign plan showing an allocation of resources. In other words, students will need to show where and how the campaign's money is being spent based on their base and persuasion universes.

  This final presentation will consist of two (2) parts: a (1500) word written memo outlining the proposed plan of action (worth 20%), and a PowerPoint presentation (worth 15%) that each student will use to defend his/her thoughts/perspectives in front of their peers and some of our guest speakers. Final memos will be due on Monday, May 1st, and presentations will take place on Monday, May 1st and Wednesday, May 3rd. These presentations should be no more than 15 minutes in length and after you present, I will open the floor to discussion and questions.

- **Classroom participation: 15%**
  I expect students to attend class and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Additionally, it will be important that students stay up to speed on current political issues and trends, especially as they relate to the 2017 Virginia and New Jersey Governor races.

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

There will be one textbook required for this class, and the remainder of assigned readings will come from current and relevant articles, clippings and broadcast segments.

Hersh, Eitan D. 2015. *Hacking the Electorate: How Campaigns Perceive Voters*

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.

Monday, January 23
Week 1
- Topic and Content Covered: Intro to micro-targeting and the voter file
- Readings Due Today:
    o Hacking the Electorate – Introduction (pages 1-23)
    o Sides, John. 2015. "*The real story about data*" (available on Blackboard)
- Guest Speaker: Paul Westcott, Director of Marketing and Communications, L2

Monday, January 30
Week 2
- Topic and Content Covered: Why don't campaigns listen to their pollsters?
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Chapters 2-4 (pages 24-87)
- Guest Speaker: Stefan Harkins, President, Lincoln Park Strategies
- In-class Assignment: Analyze polling data

Monday, February 6
Week 3
- Topic and Content Covered: Is direct mail still effective?
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Chapter 5 (pages 88-122)
- Guest Speaker: Joe Lestingi, Partner, The Chadderdon Group
- In-class Assignment: Create a persuasion direct mail universe

Monday, February 13
Week 4
- Topic and Content Covered: TV – A campaign's biggest expenditure
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Chapter 6 (pages 123-140)
- Guest Speaker: Kelly Gibson, Partner Hamburger Gibson
- In-class Assignment: Create a persuasion TV universe for both broadcast and cable

Monday, February 20
Week 5
- **NO CLASS DUE TO PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY**

Monday, February 27
Week 6
- Topic and Content Covered: Can digital move poll numbers?
- Reading Due Today: TBD
- Assignment Due Today: First Reaction Paper – President Donald Trump, what is his agenda and can he work at the pace of the Government?
- Guest Speaker: Theresa Mueller, Director of Political and Advocacy, Rubicon Project
- In-class Assignment: Create a digital advertising plan in Excel hitting your base and persuasion universes.

Monday, March 6
Week 7
- Topic and Content Covered: Analyzing and manipulating data
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Chapter 7 (pages 141-167)
- Guest Speaker: Dan Scarvalone, Associate Director of Research and Data, Bully Pulpit Interactive
- In-class Assignment: TBD

Monday, March 13
Week 8
- **NO CLASS DUE TO GWU SPRING BREAK**

Monday, March 20
Week 9
- Topic and Content Covered: Modeling the voter file
- Reading Due Today: TBD
- Assignment Due Today: Second Reaction Paper – Will Democrats keep Virginia and win New Jersey Governor races? Does Trump have coattails for these races?
- Guest Speaker: Brad Lippmann, Director of Accounts Management, Catalist
- In-class Assignment: TBD

Monday, March 27
Week 10
- Topic and Content Covered: GOTV in the era of social media
- Reading Due Today: Aldrich, John. 2014. *"Getting out the vote in the social media era: Are digital tools changing the extent, nature and impact of party contacting in elections"* (available on Blackboard)
- Guest Speaker: Braden Wright, Senior Account Executive of Marketing Solutions, LinkedIn
- In-class Assignment: Devise a plan on which social media sites to spend advertising dollars

Monday, April 3
Week 11
- Topic and Content Covered: Why email is still king?
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Chapter 8 (pages 168-195)
- Guest Speaker: Laura Packard, Partner, Power Thru Consulting
- In-class Assignment: Draft a fundraising email to your base and persuasion universes

Monday, April 10
Week 12
- Topic and Content Covered: Politics and Corporate America: Who is following whom?
- Assignment(s) Due Today: Third Reaction Paper – Control of the Senate: Will the Democrats take back the Chamber in 2018?
- Guest Speaker: Jeff Cosgrove, Director at Conversant
- In-class Assignment: TBD

Monday, April 17
Week 13
- Topic and Content Covered: Who is winning the Big Data arms war, Democrats or Republicans?
- Reading Due Today: Hacking the Electorate – Conclusion (pages 196-219)
- Guest Speaker: Chris Casey, Freelance Digital Strategist, Casey.com
- In-class Assignment: TBD

Monday, April 24
Week 14
- Topic and Content Covered: The economic and psychological impact of big data
- Reading Due Today: Nickerson, David. 2014. "*Political Campaigns and Big Data*" (available on Blackboard)
- Guest Speaker: Peter Casey, Data Analyst, Democratic National Committee
- In-class Assignment: TBD

Monday, May 1 and Wednesday, May 3
Week 15
- **FINAL PRESENTATIONS** – written memos due on Monday, May 1; presentations will be spread over Monday and Wednesday's (May 3) classes.

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.