MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS

The master of professional studies in the field of strategic public relations prepares its graduates to work at major public relations firms or in communication roles with nonprofits, corporations, on Capitol Hill, or in the executive branch. The 30-credit program is offered at GW’s Alexandria Education Center as well as via distance learning.

Specific admission requirements are shown on the Graduate Program Finder. (http://www.gwu.edu/all-graduate-programs)

Visit the program website (http://gspm.gwu.edu/strategic-public-relations) for additional information.

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 30 credits, including 18 to 21 credits in required courses and 9 to 12 credits in elective courses.

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 30 credits in required and elective courses.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Required</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSPR 6201</td>
<td>Strategic Public Relations: Principles and Practice</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSPR 6202</td>
<td>Advanced Writing for Public Relations Professionals (see note below)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSPR 6203</td>
<td>Research Methods for Public Relations and Public Affairs Managers</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSPR 6204</td>
<td>Media Relations in a Digital World</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSPR 6205</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Business and Management for Public Relations and Public Affairs</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSPR 6206</td>
<td>Ethical Standards in Public Relations and Public Affairs</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPS 6300</td>
<td>Capstone Research Project</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Electives</strong></td>
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<td>9 to 12 credits in elective courses chosen in consultation with the program director.</td>
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Note: Students may place out of PSPR 6202 based on review of their transcript and required writing samples. Such students take an additional elective course.

FACULTY

**Director** L. Parnell

COURSES

**Explanation of Course Numbers**

- Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
- Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-division undergraduate courses that can also be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work
- Those in the 6000s and 8000s are for master’s, doctoral, and professional-level students
- The 6000s are open to advanced undergraduate students with approval of the instructor and the dean or advising office

**PSPR 6201. Strategic Public Relations: Principles and Practice. 3 Credits.**

Basic rules and strategies in public relations. Major trends, major firms, and types of business and expertise. Digital media and integrated media communications.

**PSPR 6202. Advanced Writing for Public Relations Professionals. 3 Credits.**

**PSPR 6203. Research Methods for Public Relations and Public Affairs Managers. 3 Credits.**

**PSPR 6204. Media Relations in a Digital World. 3 Credits.**

Media relations from the perspective of public relations and public affairs; the state of contemporary media, both on- and offline, and its impact on commerce, politics, and the social contract; key factors influencing reportorial and editorial coverage of business, government, and nonprofit interests.

**PSPR 6205. Fundamentals of Business and Management for Public Relations and Public Affairs. 3 Credits.**

**PSPR 6206. Ethical Standards in Public Relations and Public Affairs. 3 Credits.**

**PSPR 6207. Sustainability Communications Methods and Practices. 3 Credits.**

**PSPR 6208. Integrated Marketing Communications. 3 Credits.**

The evolution of integrated marketing communications as a means by which for-profit and nonprofit enterprises extend the reach and influence of public relations and public affairs; traditional and non-traditional communications approaches and technologies. Recommended background: degree candidacy in the MPS in the Field of Strategic Public Relations program and/or graduate status in the School of Business or School of Media and Public Affairs.

**PSPR 6210. Special Topics in Public Relations. 3 Credits.**
PSPR 6211. Strategy and Practice for Nonprofit and Association Communications. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to help communicators currently working or hoping to work in trade associations and nonprofit organizations become more effective in the planning and execution of their programs. By its very nature, this course will be practical and reality-based, with guest speakers drawn from many organizations and communications backgrounds. In the context of this class, effective communications means understanding the goals, environments, structures, constraints, opportunities and challenges facing associations and nonprofit organizations, and developing and implementing communication plans to achieve those goals. Effective also means working within the limitations communicators often face, such as (but by no means limited to): dwindling budgets, divided membership, fragmented boards and hesitant leadership, the decline of traditional news media, the rise of blogs, the surge of social media and more. In short, “effective” means being strategic, proactive, and smart. But while these attributes are necessary, they are not sufficient. Effective communicators must understand the roles communications play - internal as well as external - for their organizations. They must know the organization’s stakeholders and understand their “care and feeding.” In short, they must understand their institutional roles - and the expectations of their internal and external stakeholders and audiences. Restricted to students in the MPS strategic public relations degree program; permission of the program director may be substituted. Prerequisites: PSPR 6201, PSPR 6202, PSPR 6203, PSPR 6204, PSPR 6205 and PSPR 6206.

PSPR 6221. Consumer Behavior. 3 Credits.

PSPR 6222. Multicultural Marketing. 3 Credits.

PSPR 6223. Public Opinion and Political Socialization. 3 Credits.
The process by which people become engaged in public debates and politics; how they acquire and maintain attitudes, biases, and beliefs, and the decisions they make as a result. Discussion centers on the forces that influence public opinion and political socialization, including the power of the press and its impact on our major institutions. Prerequisites: PSPR 6201 and PSPR 6202.

PSPR 6224. Global Public Relations and Public Affairs: Strategy and Practice. 3 Credits.
How global public relations strategies are developed and implemented to support advocacy efforts; communications theories that enable insight into challenges arising from differences in language, culture, politics, and economics worldwide.

PSPR 6225. Nonprofit and Association Communications Strategies. 3 Credits.
How communicators working in trade associations, nonprofit organizations, and labor unions become more effective in the planning and execution of their programs to achieve organizational goals.

PSPR 6226. Digital Communication Platforms and Strategies. 3 Credits.
Theories and approach to digital communications and review of major digital platforms used by companies, government agencies, nonprofits and associations to accomplish strategic communications goals and objectives.

PSPR 6227. Applied Digital Communications for Public Relations and Public Affairs Professionals. 3 Credits.
In-depth and holistic study of digital communications using case studies and collaborative exercises; how to blend creative writing with graphics production, social media management with audience segmentation, and digital advertising channels with analytics.

PSPR 6230. Crisis and Issues Management. 3 Credits.
The intersection of communications and policy disciplines, including environmental scanning, public policy analysis, public policy advocacy, strategic communications, media relations, grassroots mobilization, coalition management and corporate reputation management. How these issues work together to further the broad strategic goals of organizations.