

MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF POLITICAL MANAGEMENT

Program Director: T. Belt

The master's degree in political management prepares students to be successful in meeting their goals, influencing the political process, and making a positive difference in their communities, whether it be at the local, state, national, or international level.

The program curriculum guides aspiring political professionals to take their place in the emerging profession of politics. Students have opportunities to get outside the classroom and gain hands-on professional experience that they can apply immediately in their careers. They learn the strategy, tactics, and ethical principles needed for success.

The degree may be tailored to a student's specific career goals. Optional focus areas include advocacy politics, electoral politics, and advanced political skills. Alternatively, students can work with their faculty advisor to select courses from several areas that meet individual aspirations. In addition, the program is offered with a concentration in global politics.

Classes may be completed on campus, meet Monday through Thursday evenings on GW's main campus in Foggy Bottom. The program also may be completed online or in a hybrid format. The program can be completed in as little as one year; however, students typically take two courses each semester, and finish in 18 months to two years.

Visit the program website (<https://gspm.gwu.edu/political-management/>) for additional information.

ADMISSIONS

Admission deadlines: Fall Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - April 1

Fall International Application Deadline - May 1

Fall General Deadline - July 1

Spring Priority Admission/General Scholarship Deadline - September 1

Spring International Application Deadline - September 1

Spring General Admission Deadline - November 1

Summer Priority Admission - March 15

Summer General Admission Deadline - April 15

Recommendations: Two (2) letters, preferably one academic letter from an instructor. For applicants who have graduated with their Bachelor's degree within five years of applying, one academic letter from an instructor is required.

Prior academic records: Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended should be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

Transcripts from institutions outside the United States must be accompanied by an official transcript evaluation from an accredited independent evaluating agency. Please be sure you request a detailed, course-by-course evaluation that includes all course titles, credit hours, grade-point average (GPA), United States degree equivalency, and date of degree conferral. Please see the list of acceptable foreign credential evaluation services: <https://www.naces.org/members> (<https://www.naces.org/members/>).

Statement of purpose: In an essay of 250-500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in this field and describe your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also, discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, as well as any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application form.

Additional requirements: A resumé.

International applicants only: Please review International Applicant Information (<https://www.cps.gwu.edu/international-student-admissions> (<https://www.cps.gwu.edu/international-student-admissions/>)) carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

College of Professional Studies – Office of Admission
George Washington University
805 21st Street, NW
Suite 301
Washington DC 20052

Contact for questions:

CPS Office of Admission
applycps@gwu.edu ~ 571-553-0025 (phone) ~ 202-242-1047 (fax)
8:30 am – 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled: 36 credits, including 12 credits in required courses, 18 credits in elective courses and 6 credits in either the thesis or non-thesis learning option.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Required | | |
| PMGT 6401 | Fundamentals of Political Management | |
| PMGT 6402 | Applied Political Communications | |
| PMGT 6403 | Political Data and Analytics | |
| PMGT 6404 | Principled Political Leadership | |
| Electives | | |
| Six courses from the following: | | |
| PMGT 6410 | Grassroots Engagement | |
| PMGT 6412 | Issues Management | |
| PMGT 6414 | Lobbying | |
| PMGT 6420 | Corporate Public Affairs | |
| PMGT 6422 | State and Intergovernmental Politics | |
| PMGT 6430 | Campaign Strategy | |
| PMGT 6432 | Managing Campaigns | |
| PMGT 6434 | Running for Office | |
| PMGT 6436 | National Campaign Dynamics | |
| PMGT 6438 | State and Local Campaigns | |
| PMGT 6440 | Targeting and Voter Contact | |
| PMGT 6442 | Campaigns Around the World | |
| PMGT 6450 | Rules, Laws, and Strategy | |
| PMGT 6452 | Digital Strategy | |
| PMGT 6454 | Fundraising and Budgeting | |
| PMGT 6456 | Speechcraft | |
| PMGT 6458 | Crisis Management | |
| PMGT 6460 | Audience Research | |
| PMGT 6462 | Opposition Research | |
| PMGT 6464 | Influencing the Media | |
| PMGT 6466 | Political Advertising | |
| PMGT 6468 | Digital Advertising and Action | |
| PMGT 6470 | Digital Content Creation | |
| PMGT 6472 | Maximizing Social Media | |

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| PMGT 6474 | Stereotypes and Political Strategy |
| PMGT 6476 | Political Consulting |
| PMGT 6490 | Special Topics |
| PMGT 6496 | Independent Study |
| PMGT 6497 | Graduate Internship |

Non-thesis option

Students who select the non-thesis option take either the Washington Residency, PMGT 6480, or the capstone course, PMGT 6495, and one additional elective in their penultimate or final semester.

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| PMGT 6480 | Washington Residency |
| PMGT 6495 | Political Power and Practice |

Thesis option

Students who select the thesis option take PMGT 6498 and PMGT 6499 over the course of their final two terms.

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| PMGT 6498 | Thesis I |
| PMGT 6499 | Thesis II |

COURSES

Explanation of Course Numbers

- Courses in the 1000s are primarily introductory undergraduate courses
- Those in the 2000s to 4000s are upper-level undergraduate courses that also may be taken for graduate credit with permission and additional work assigned
- 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

PMGT 1000. Dean's Seminar. 3 Credits.

PMGT 4101. Electoral and Legislative Processes. 3,4 Credits.

PMGT 4102. Washington, DC, and the Past, Present, and Future of American Democracy. 3-4 Credits.

Introduction to the U.S. capital's culture, history, and politics, exploring how it has been depicted in literature, art, and film and why many people see it either as a corrupt swamp or a place of idealism, hope, and public service.

PMGT 4107. Research Practicum. 3,4 Credits.

Students conduct original research in the study of the political system of the United States on a subject of their choosing. Restricted to students in the Semester in Washington program.

PMGT 4109. Special Topics. 3-4 Credits.

This course will examine the national campaigns unfolding in real-time in the summer of 2024 through several lenses: the rise of misinformation; the toxic tone of social media; campaign funding; conspiracy theories; and the January 6 insurrection.

PMGT 4187. Professional Internship. 3-4 Credits.

Faculty-led career advancement opportunity in which students learn to apply theoretical knowledge in an authentic work environment.

PMGT 4192. Tutorial in American Electoral and Political Movements. 3-4 Credits.**PMGT 4200. Civics and Presidential Leadership. 3-4 Credits.**

Students engage in a targeted study of civics, democracy, the presidency, and U.S. history. By examining the nation's history and engaging its leaders, students are empowered to become models of informed citizenship in local and national communities.

PMGT 6401. Fundamentals of Political Management. 3 Credits.

Main concepts, arenas, developments, roles, and practices in the field of political management. Assess rhetorical situations, write strategy memos, create and critique campaign messages, and engage citizens, professional colleagues and decision-makers. Taken in first semester of program. (Professors M. Cornfield and TBD.)

PMGT 6402. Applied Political Communications. 3 Credits.

Models and methods by which professionals plan, produce, and adjust strategic communication messages in democratic politics. Use a variety of communication forms and media, such as, fact sheets, blog posts, video releases, and public addresses, under typical constraints of time, money, information, reputation, talent, audience attentiveness, and institutional procedure. Students to enroll by their sixth course in the program. Core requirement. Must be completed before a student reaches 18 credits.

PMGT 6403. Political Data and Analytics. 3 Credits.

Introduction to the uses of quantitative data and statistics in politics. Learn to evaluate research designs, statistical associations, causal reasoning, methods for hypothesis testing, multivariate regression analyses, and data analytics. Consume and critique data and statistics for strategic purposes. Students to enroll by their sixth course in the program. Core requirement. Must be completed before a student reaches 18 credits.

PMGT 6404. Principled Political Leadership. 3 Credits.

Theory and practice of ethically grounded political leadership. Consideration of the recurrent dilemmas, philosophical principles, management techniques, codes of conduct, and professional norms in the political management field. Application through self-assessment exercises, case study analysis, and individual and group simulations. Students to enroll by their sixth course in the program. Core requirement. Must be completed before a student reaches 18 credits.

PMGT 6410. Grassroots Engagement. 3 Credits.

Strategies and techniques to build advocacy support among and across general civic populations. Identification of potential supporters through database targeting and individual outreach. Motivation and training of interested supporters for grassroots action in campaigns, at public forums, and before decision-makers. Coalition and protest options; analytics of ongoing efforts. (Professors E. Grefe, S. Gagen)

PMGT 6412. Issues Management. 3 Credits.

Track, influence, and alter politically significant issue-related discourses and policy developments. Legislative, executive, and judicial venues and processes for policymaking; state referendum, initiative, and recall ballot opportunities; organizational structures, including digital procedures, for issue management. (Professors M. Edwards, E. Grefe)

PMGT 6414. Lobbying. 3 Credits.

Survey of and training for lobbying in the U.S. federal system. Students design a detailed lobbying plan for implementation and practice a variety of influence techniques, including those associated with digital media and communications technologies. Legal compliance, organizational and public accountability, professional standards and practices. (Professor J. Hobson)

PMGT 6416. International Lobbying. 3 Credits.

Survey of international lobbying practices, analysis of strategic models and best practices in a variety of different countries and political systems (e.g., EU, China, Brazil, and Turkey). Trends and innovations in lobbying techniques and communications technologies. Investigation and application of appropriate research to improve practice. (Professor TBD by AGE program) (Same as PSAD 6240)

PMGT 6420. Corporate Public Affairs. 3 Credits.

Exploration of major functional areas in corporate public affairs with a focus on the political and policy dynamics operating in the United States and other democracies. Development and deployment of appropriate strategies, research, and tactics for corporations managing the complexities related to a global economy and shifting political alliances.

PMGT 6422. State and Intergovernmental Politics. 3 Credits.

Examination of the electoral pressures on state and local legislators. Methods and techniques for advocacy in various state capitals. The governing responsibilities of constitutionally-delegated to states and the ever-changing historical relationship between states and the federal government. (Professors C. Shank)

PMGT 6424. Comparative Politics. 3 Credits.

Operating rules, customs, and processes by which laws are enacted and regulations written in countries around the world; governance systems and influencers; systems within which legislators, administrators, bureaucracies, and stakeholders work. Restricted to graduate students.

PMGT 6428. Cultural Aspects of Global Engagement. 3 Credits.

Understanding multicultural communities and diverse institutions, customs, and practices; effective and ethical public engagement on behalf of global organizations; communicating issues and commitments to diverse audiences and the general market; engagement strategies and techniques. Restricted to graduate Students.

PMGT 6430. Campaign Strategy. 3 Credits.

Orientation to the basic systems and technologies that must be created and managed to produce electoral victory. The campaign plan and campaign budget as the foundation for management of campaigns. Focus on development of a campaign plan. (Professor M. Meissner)

PMGT 6432. Managing Campaigns. 3 Credits.

Understanding the role of a campaign manager in staffing and running a campaign, while executing the campaign plan. Candidate handling, fundraising, website and technology, geographic and demographic targeting, field organization, canvassing, get-out-the-vote, press operations, budget control, and liaison with the party and interest groups. (Professors TBD) Prerequisites: PMGT 6430.

PMGT 6434. Running for Office. 3 Credits.

Electoral politics from the perspective of the candidate, strategic and personal factors involved in the decision to run and the consequences of victory or defeat. (Professor R. Faucheux)

PMGT 6436. National Campaign Dynamics. 3 Credits.

Examination of the historical and systematic patterns in national elections. Differences between presidential and midterm elections; House and Senate contests; party nomination races and general elections; primaries and caucuses; Democratic and Republican party delegate selection rules; causes for "wave" elections; effect of the economy on election outcomes; and standard vice presidential selection models. The political and partisan structural conditions that exist before any of the candidates or the campaigns get involved.

PMGT 6438. State and Local Campaigns. 3 Credits.

Application of campaign strategy and management principles to electoral races at the state and local levels. Staffing, budgeting, and strategic challenges for what are typically lower-visibility contests that involve state and local candidates. Coordinated campaigns and the impact of the national party's reputation on these down-ballot races. (Professor TBD)

PMGT 6440. Targeting and Voter Contact. 3 Credits.

How to find voters for electoral and advocacy campaigns and tailor communications to them. Database analytics, list management, questionnaire design, target weighting, predictive modeling. Review of randomized and natural experiments in light of theoretic principles and findings from public opinion research. Skill development in use of spreadsheets and basic statistical packages. Lab fee. (Professors B. Russell, A. Strauss) Prerequisites: PMGT 6403.

PMGT 6442. Campaigns Around the World. 3 Credits.

Comparative examination of national-level campaigns in democratic countries outside of the United States. Strategies, techniques, and practices used in multi-party and/or parliamentary systems. Professional conduct, consulting rules and norms.

PMGT 6450. Rules, Laws, and Strategy. 3 Credits.

U.S. federal and state laws and regulations governing recognition of political parties and political organizations, campaign finance, political broadcasting and cablecasting, lobbying registration. Ballot access and voter registration. Ethical and strategic considerations (opportunities and constraints; benefits and drawbacks) related to rule construction. (Professor M. Braden)

PMGT 6452. Digital Strategy. 3 Credits.

Development of an integrated digital strategy for use in advocacy and electoral campaigns. Introduction to the theoretical concepts, distinctive technologies, applied skills, and managerial challenges associated with digital campaigning. Search engine optimization, GPS, online payment systems, customizing back- and front-end systems to meet strategic goals and budget parameters, working with IT vendors and distance volunteers, legal and cultural considerations in US and other regimes, site rollout and scaling, security and privacy. (Professor TBD)

PMGT 6454. Fundraising and Budgeting. 3 Credits.

Raising and spending money in political campaigns, referendum contests, issue advocacy, and lobbying efforts. Budgeting process, standard controls to check expenditures, accounting procedures, and general strategies for use in effective fundraising. (Professor N. Bocskor)

PMGT 6456. Speechcraft. 3 Credits.

Analysis and techniques used in speechwriting and presentations for public officials and candidates. Managing the political optics and understanding a speech's visual context and non-verbal communication capabilities (Rose Garden, Oval Office, campaign stump speech, ceremonial occasion, congressional testimony). Modulating speaker style, tone, and pacing, and staging the speech for effect. (Professors D. McGroarty, R. Lehrman)

PMGT 6458. Crisis Management. 3 Credits.

Management of crisis situations and defining moments in electoral, legislative, and public policy campaigns. Exploration of the causes and consequences of political scandals. Professional responsibilities and ethical considerations of crisis management and rapid response decisions. (Professor M. Edwards)

PMGT 6460. Audience Research. 3 Credits.

Processes by which citizens acquire political information and make decisions in politics. Survey research uses in electoral campaigns and issue advocacy. Designing and drawing samples, constructing and pretesting questionnaires, modes of interviewing, financial implications, practical problems in selecting and monitoring polling organizations, and interpretation of data. Focus groups and small-sample interviews; relationship between qualitative and quantitative research; reliability and validity. (Professors R. Johnson, D. Cantor, B. Tringali, M. Ward) Prerequisites: PMGT 6403.

PMGT 6462. Opposition Research. 3 Credits.

Practices and techniques associated with investigative opposition research. Public document and website searches, candidate tracking, and methods for information dissemination. Changes in practice as a result of technological innovations and a changing media environment. Professional responsibilities and ethics expected from opposition researchers.

PMGT 6464. Influencing the Media. 3 Credits.

Organization, practices, and norms of the major media; media coverage of public officials, political campaigns, legislative battles, interest groups, and issues of public policy. Formulation of strategies for getting favorable news coverage for the issue or candidate and for ending a media crisis. (Professor L. Ellenbogen)

PMGT 6466. Political Advertising. 3 Credits.

Strategies and techniques for using the various media (print, radio, television, cable, Internet) in political and advocacy campaigns, with emphasis on the use of television. Impact and uses of paid advertising; development of campaign messages; production, timing, and placement of television advertising; explanation of media markets. Students design print ads and brochures and produce a 30-second television spot. (Professor P. Fenn)

PMGT 6468. Digital Advertising and Action. 3 Credits.

Strategies and techniques for developing and leveraging digital advertising for mobilization. Manage an effective online ad campaign from initial concept to creation and from targeting to measuring the results. Prepare, design, and launch a variety of online ad types, including search, social, display, and video. Analyze success or failure based on analytics and benchmarking. Prerequisite: PMGT 6452.

PMGT 6470. Digital Content Creation. 3 Credits.

Developing and creating effective digital content that promotes campaign narratives and furthers strategic messages. Construct portfolios of original and aggregated digital media content. Skill development in infographics, video, GPS, photo collage, page and site architecture, and texts from 140 characters to blog posts and file attachments. Versioning for different communities, functionalities, and channels including mobile applications. Prerequisite: PMGT 6452.

PMGT 6472. Maximizing Social Media. 3 Credits.

Creating and integrating owned digital platforms and social media assets for political persuasion and action. Cultivation of online political communities, moderating and curating outside-generated content, integration and alignment with campaign message; event, reputation and crisis management. Review of constraints and potentials intrinsic to specific social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Twitter). Prerequisite: PMGT 6452.

PMGT 6474. Stereotypes and Political Strategy. 3 Credits.

Accounting for psychological constructs, social stereotypes, media framing, and the impression formation process in developing a political strategy. Review of empirical research; investigation of effective techniques or postures for overcoming biases; self-assessment of perceptual assumptions.

PMGT 6476. Political Consulting. 3 Credits.

Management principles, technical procedures, and legal requirements for starting and running a political consulting business. Effective practices for gaining a positive reputation, sustaining profitability across the variable political environment, and engaging on the international front. Start-up funding, mergers and acquisitions, exit strategies. (Professors G. Nordlinger, L. Purpuro, M. Meissner)

PMGT 6477. Political Risk Assessment. 3 Credits.

Techniques for analyzing and anticipating potential political risks to government, candidates, organized interests and businesses. Effective responses to political risk and techniques for mitigation.

PMGT 6479. Using Humor Strategically. 3 Credits.

The role of humor in politics and how it can be employed to make campaigns more effective. Analysis of different types, techniques, styles, topics, cultural contexts, and modes of delivery of humor in politics for differential political impact. Restricted to graduate students.

PMGT 6480. Washington Residency. 3 Credits.

Capstone experience equivalent to PMGT 6495 for students in the online political management program. Exposure to and interaction with political consultants, advocacy specialists, elected officials, and applied researchers in Washington, DC. Integration of program curriculum toward an understanding of the federal political ecosystem and development of a robust political network. Restricted to PMGT online students in their last or penultimate term, or students with permission of the instructor.

PMGT 6490. Special Topics. 3 Credits.

Topic to be announced in the Schedule of Classes.

PMGT 6495. Political Power and Practice. 3 Credits.

Capstone seminar that develops and integrates knowledge of political strategies, tactics, and situational considerations, and applies that knowledge to advanced political problems. Topics include: gaining and wielding power, the complexity associated with making democracy work, conflict resolution, negotiation and bargaining skills, grappling with the consequences of winning and losing. Students to enroll during their last or penultimate term. (Professor L. Brown)

PMGT 6496. Independent Study. 3 Credits.

Independent research with a Political Management faculty member. Registration must be approved in advance by the supervising faculty member and the director of the political management program.

PMGT 6497. Graduate Internship. 0 Credits.

Experience at an organization focused on applied politics. Restricted to students in the MPS in political management program.

PMGT 6498. Thesis I. 3 Credits.

Master's degree candidates must apply to the program committee for thesis approval and have completed 24 credits with a 3.3 GPA.

PMGT 6499. Thesis II. 3 Credits.

Master's degree candidates must apply to the program committee for thesis approval and have completed 24 credits with a 3.3 GPA. Prerequisite: PMGT 6498.

PMGT 6501. Politics and Public Policy. 3 Credits.

Examination of political processes that influence policy formulation, policy implementation, and the uses of policy analysis. Topics include political and policy decision making, actors, and process.

PMGT 6502. Managing Confrontations and Alliance Building. 3 Credits.

Tools, techniques and approaches necessary to navigate conflict and create a compelling narrative. How to transmit messages and evaluate the role they play in the governing process.

PMGT 6503. Communication Strategy. 3 Credits.

Formulation of political communications strategies. Elements necessary to create, introduce, and maintain an effective political profile in issue advocacy campaigns, candidate elections, and legislative advocacy campaigns. Application of principles of research, advertising, and marketing to the political landscape.

PMGT 6504. Political Management and Strategic Governance. 3 Credits.

How to govern in a democracy, taking into consideration the role of nongovernmental actors.

PMGT 6505. Grassroots Politics. 3 Credits.

Techniques, including microtargeting, to mobilize volunteers for political campaigns, lobbying efforts, and community advocacy and to help corporations, unions, civic and nonprofit organizations, and special interest groups achieve strategic goals.

PMGT 6510. Managing Political Campaigns. 3 Credits.

Organizational choices facing campaign management teams in Latin America as they attempt to combine the resources and activities of a modern campaign into a winning effort.

PMGT 6511. Social Media and Political Advertising. 3 Credits.

Role of political advertising in a campaign, including radio, direct mail, print and television, but with specific emphasis on social media.

PMGT 6512. Media and Politics. 3 Credits.

The role of the media in the politics of Latin America. Who the media are, how they make their decisions, and how they influence outcomes in campaigns and other political situations.

PMGT 6513. Capstone. 3 Credits.

Capstone seminar that develops and integrates knowledge of political strategies, tactics, governance, and situational considerations, and applies that knowledge to advanced political problems.

PMGT 6515. Democracy and Crisis. 3 Credits.

The role of crisis management in democracies, specifically in Latin America.

PMGT 6516. Strategy and Polling. 3 Credits.

Polling and survey research uses in electoral campaigns and issue advocacy.