

# MASTER OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE FIELD OF STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Program Director: L. Parnell

The master of professional studies in strategic public relations program takes advantage of GW's connections in the nation's capital, focusing on the public policy system and the advocacy role played by PR firms and PR operations in corporations and associations. The Graduate School of Political Management (<https://gspm.gwu.edu/>) engages experts in both the PR and political arenas to serve as faculty. Students graduate prepared for professional advancement in the field.

The program consists of 10 courses (30 credits). Students may apply the coursework completed as part of the graduate certificate programs in public relations (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/professional-studies/certificate-programs/public-relations/#text>), digital communications (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/professional-studies/certificate-programs/digital-communications/>), or global public relations (<http://bulletin.gwu.edu/professional-studies/certificate-programs/global-public-relations/>) toward requirements for the strategic public relations master's degree. Focus areas in the program include communications theory, ethics and law, digital media strategies, evaluating communications programs, crisis communications, media relations, and strategic planning.

Classes meet Monday through Thursday evenings at GW's Arlington Education Center. The program also may be completed online or in a hybrid format.

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

## ADMISSIONS

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

Fall International Application Deadline - May 1

Fall General Admission 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

Recommendation: Two (2) letters of recommendation from professional and/or academic references; at least one academic reference for those who graduated within the last five years.

**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](mailto: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: 30 credits, including 18 or 21 credits in required courses and 9 or 12 credits in elective courses.\*

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
PSPR 6201	Strategic Public Relations: Principles and Practice	
PSPR 6202	Advanced Writing for Public Relations Professionals *	
PSPR 6203	Research Methods for Public Relations and Public Affairs Managers	
PSPR 6204	Media Relations in a Digital World	
PSPR 6205	Fundamentals of Business and Management for Public Relations and Public Affairs	
PSPR 6206	Applied Ethics in Public Relations and Public Affairs	
PSPR 6300	Capstone Research Project	
<b>Electives</b>		
9 to 12 credits in elective courses chosen in consultation with the program director. *		

\*Students may place out of PSPR 6202 based on review of their transcript and required writing samples. Such students take 12 credits in elective courses.

## 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

#### **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.**

The essentials of effective public relations and public affairs writing, emphasizing strategic thinking and compositional precision as the source of their efficacy and power.

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

Overview of applied research techniques with an emphasis on planning and evaluating public relations and corporate communications campaigns in support of business strategies and goals.

#### **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.**

Fundamentals of business and management that can be applied to small, mid-size and large organizations, public relations agencies, and start-up consultancies.

#### **PSPR 6206. Applied Ethics in Public Relations and Public Affairs. 3 Credits.**

Applied ethics in public relations and public affairs. Students gain the knowledge and skills needed to function as an ethical and effective practitioner. Restricted to graduate students. Prerequisites: PSPR 6201.

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

The role of the global corporate social responsibility (CSR) movement and the unique communications challenges it presents.

#### **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.**

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#### **PSPR 6222. Multicultural Marketing. 3 Credits.**

How brands have shifted their general or total market to be more culturally relevant in ethnic markets and successfully connect with underserved communities.

#### **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 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.

**PSPR 6300. Capstone Research Project. 3 Credits.**

Culminating experience for strategic public relations students, who select a topic of interest in an organization and use the skills and knowledge learned in the program to develop a comprehensive strategic communications plan to address the issue. Prerequisites: PSPR 6201, PSPR 6202, PSPR 6203, PSPR 6204, PSPR 6205, and PSPR 6206.