

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLITICAL MANAGEMENT

Spring 2009

**PMGT 265**  
**Urban Political Campaign Management**

Wednesdays 7:10pm – 9:40pm.  
2020 K Street NW #14

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Office Hours: By appt

**Course Objectives:**

The objective of this course is to familiarize students with the distinctive aspects of urban electoral campaigns. Upon completion, students will have a working knowledge of the key forces and institutions at play in a municipal election and recognition of their significance in the urban landscape. The course examines the unique challenge of managing an electoral campaign in a modern American city. Participants will develop a strong working knowledge of the urban political landscape and the factors that political professionals must address in municipal races. Races for executive as well as legislative offices will serve as the platform from which the class will be launched.

Special attention will be paid to the institutions that are key factors in local races such as public service unions, community based organizations, ethnic media and faith based groups. The course will also explore the dynamic impact gentrification is having on the urban core and its effect on the political environment. Students will examine how these demographic and economic shifts are having a tremendous impact upon the candidates, coalitions and tactics employed in urban campaigns. Through case studies and available research tools, participants will develop the decision making analysis and techniques to succeed as political professionals.

**Course Description:**

The course is comprised of three key focal sections. **Section One** will introduce students to the characteristics that make cities and hence their elections unique. A brief examination of urban policy and its impact upon housing, employment and community dynamics will be explored giving students an understanding of metropolitan development and its impact upon the current urban political landscape. **Section Two** will explore the urban electorate and the significant institutions that impact their behavior. Special attention will be paid to the role that race and ethnicity plays/played in the creation of political power bases within the city. Looking forward, the course will analyze the dramatic role that gentrification and new immigrant communities are having upon the existing paradigm. **Section Three** students will utilize case studies to examine and assess the recent and current municipal races throughout the country. Class sessions will focus on the dynamics of these contests and the manner in which the campaigns took the electorate, institutions and the city's history into account as they waged their campaigns.

On occasion, guest lecturers will be invited to address the class and share their insights and perspectives.

### **Graded Requirements:**

The majority of the student's grade (40%) will be made up of a 15 to 20 page research paper based upon a self identified case study. Student's will take a midterm examination (20%) a final examination (30%) and 10% assigned to class participation and brief in class assignments. The research paper must be written in the American Psychological Association (APA) style. All papers will be reviewed and returned to students prior to the end of the course. Any papers receiving a grade below B must be resubmitted with corrections for reconsideration.

### **“Incomplete Policy”:**

I will not offer “incomplete” grades to any student who fails to turn in or complete any assignment by the end of the term. Late submission of any assignment will be subject to automatic grade reduction at the rate of one letter grade per week. **Any paper submitted after the last day of the course will be issued an automatic failing grade.** Start working early and complete the assignments on time.

### **Required Texts:**

Browning, Rufus P., Dale Rogers Marshall and David H. Tabb. 2003. *Racial Politics in American Cities*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Addison Wesley Educational Publishers. ISBN 0321100352

Judd, Dennis and Todd Swanstrom. 2006. *City Politics The Political Economy of Urban America*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson Education Inc. ISBN 0321328167

Self, Robert. 2003. *American Babylon*. Princeton University Press. ISBN 0691070261

Sosnick, Douglas B., Matthew J. Dowd and Ron Fournier. 2006. *Applebee's America*. Simon and Schuster. ISBN 0743287180

Vaca, Nicolas C. 2004. *The Presumed Alliance: The unspoken conflict between Latinos and Blacks and what it means for America*. Harper Collins Publishers. ISBN 0605220406

Additional reading assignments will be posted on BLACKBOARD

## **Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic and readings:</b>
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Jan 14th	1: Introduction/Overview: Course structure, assignments Reading: none
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### **SECTION ONE**

The Urban Landscape, historic and contemporary characteristics

Jan 21st	2: Postwar American Metropolis Reading: Self : Introduction; chs. 1-2 Judd: chs. 1 -2
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Jan 28th	3: Politics of the Modern American City Reading: Judd: ch 7 BLACKBOARD assigned readings
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Feb4 <sup>th</sup>	4: Race, Class, Gentrification and Community Reading: Browning: chs. 1,4,5 Sosnick: Part II Vaca: ch. 4
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### **SECTION TWO**

**Deconstructing Mayoral Elections**

Feb 11th	5: In class midterm examination Writing assignment discussion
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Feb 18th	6:The Urban electorate: powerbrokers, stakeholders and constituencies BLACKBOARD assigned readings
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Feb 25th	7: Developing the Urban Game Plan Browning: ch. 9 BLACKBOARD assigned readings
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March 4th 8: Case study review  
BLACKBOARD assigned readings

March 11th 9: Case study review  
BLACKBOARD assigned readings

March 18<sup>th</sup> Spring Break

March 25<sup>th</sup> 10: Case study review  
BLACKBOARD assigned readings

April 1st 11: Case study review  
BLACKBOARD assigned readings

**SECTION THREE:**

Campaign Management in an urban environment

April 8<sup>th</sup> 12: Campaign Planning Design/exercise  
BLACKBOARD assigned readings

April 15<sup>th</sup> 13: Plan reviews/presentation

April 22<sup>nd</sup> 14: Course Review

April 29<sup>th</sup> 15: Final Exam