

**THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLITICAL MANAGEMENT  
AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

**CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION  
PMGT 252  
SPRING 2009**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Instructors**

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**Purpose**

This course will examine the strategies, techniques, design and impact of paid political communications. It will focus on the role of political advertising in a campaign, including radio, direct mail, print and internet, but with specific emphasis on television.

We will look at the history of political advertising in the television age and trace the significant changes over the years. The course will focus on the message, as well as the techniques employed, and how they have evolved.

Students will be given the chance to produce actual advertising plans and shoot and edit television spots. The class will be divided into teams and role-play specific races for 2009-2010.

In addition, the course will include guest lecturers in areas such as polling, research, time buying, targeting, and media techniques. We will examine specific case studies and analyze the campaigns' media strategies. We will draw on the recent political literature and discuss how campaign advertising may change in the future.

The course is designed to provide a practical understanding of what it takes to create and execute a successful media strategy and the role campaign advertising plays in a campaign.

**Schedule**

The class will meet on **Tuesday evenings from 7:10pm until 9:40pm in Media**

**and Public Affairs Building (MPA), room 309** beginning on January 13<sup>th</sup> and ending on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Spring Break is the week of March 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>.

There will be homework and projects due throughout the session. Deadlines and assignments will be provided for each class.

This class will be time-consuming and require one day of work for the purpose of filming and one day for the purpose of editing.

**All students are expected to attend every class. If there is a problem and you must miss a class, please contact Peter Fenn and Russ Schriefer beforehand to let them know.**

### **Grading**

Students are expected to participate actively in class discussion, master the literature assigned and think creatively about the application of media to campaigns. The final grade will be determined by a combination of peer evaluations of the team projects as well as performance in class, tests and homework assignments.

- Class participation, discussion and weekly assignments 65%
- Team Advertising Projects 35%

### **Course Readings – required and optional**

(Books on hold at the GW Bookstore: (202) 994-6870)

The Spot by Edwin Diamond and Steven Bates, MIT Press, 1992.

Life After the 30 Second Spot by Joseph Jaffe, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006.

In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns by John G. Geer, University of Chicago Press, 2006.

### **Optional:**

Lights, Camera, Campaign!, David A. Schultz, Peter Lang Publishing, 2004.

Dirty Politics, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Oxford Univ. Press, 1992.

Going Negative, Stephen Ansolabehere and Shanto Iyengar, Free Press, 1995.

Air Wars, Darrell M. West, Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993.

Politics and the Media, Richard Davis, Prentice Hall, 1994.

You Are the Message, Roger Ailes, 1989.

The A to Z of Video and Audio Visual Jargon, Suzan St. Maur, 1986.

The Responsive Chord, Tony Schwartz (Out of Print).

The Selling of the President, Joe McGinnis, 1968.

**Week 1 – Jan. 13, 2009 – Introduction to the Course and the History and Role of Political Advertising**

- I. Introduction of course – what is expected, weekly assignments, production of spots
- II. Introduction of class participants – interests, past experiences, career goals
- III. History of Political Advertising – types of ads, phases of a political campaign
- IV. How advertising fits into an overall campaign – selected campaigns will be discussed, and spots will be shown to illustrate the impact of advertising
- V. New Trends in Advertising – where is it going? Good Ads? Bad Ads?
- VI. Reading Assignment: Chapters 1 - 6 of *THE SPOT* by next week

**Due Jan. 27th:** – Draft a 60-second introductory TV spot for a political candidate of your choice. *Time the spot carefully*, use a stopwatch, and pay particular attention to visuals.

**NO CLASS ON JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>**

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**Week 2 – Jan. 27, 2009 – Press, Coverage, and Political Advertising or “Toto, We Aren’t in Kansas Anymore!” Guest Speaker: Jim Rutenberg, *The New York Times***

**Due Today** – Draft a 60-second introductory TV spot for a political candidate of your choice. *Time the spot carefully*, use a stopwatch, and pay particular attention to visuals.

- I. What role does paid advertising play, and how do you utilize media techniques to best capture the theme and messages?
  - II. Examples of effective and ineffective "message media"
  - III. Dividing up into Groups – Choose a Campaign for Producing Spots
  - IV. Reading Assignment: Chapters 7-11 of *THE SPOT* by next week
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**Week 3 – Feb. 3, 2009 – Research: Central to Every Campaign; Guest Lecturer: Terry Cooper, partner Republican research firm**

- I. What makes up a Political Spot – Research, Polling, Theme & Message, Techniques
- II. Crafting the Message for a Campaign/Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis Case

Study

- III. Critique of 60-second spots written for homework
- IV. Reading Assignment: Chapters 12-16 of *THE SPOT* by next week

**Due Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>:** Individually, each student will write a 2-3 page memo laying out the theme and messages for use in the campaign of their candidate.

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**Week 4 – Feb. 10, 2009 – Polling, Focus Groups, and Their Importance in Designing the Media Campaign. Guest Speaker: Bill McInturff, Public Opinion Strategies.**

*Due Today* – Individually, each student will write a 2-3 page memo laying out the theme and messages for use in the campaign of their candidate.

- I. Discussion of political and issue campaigns and the use of polling to help determine media strategy.
- II. Presentation and critique of Theme and Message assignments. How does this analysis play into determining advertising? How does polling measure the comparisons between candidates? How does this get translated into media?
- III. Reading Assignment: Read Chapters 1-3 of *IN DEFENSE OF NEGATIVITY* for next week

**Due Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>:** Individually, draft 10 questions for your pollster that you want in the benchmark survey (not including demographic questions) – use your candidate.

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**Week 5 – Feb. 17, 2009 – The Art of Script-Writing – What Constitutes an Effective Spot. Use of Visual Imagery to Make Your Point. The New Media and American Politics: Is the 30 Second Spot Dead?**

*Due Today* – Individually, draft 10 questions for your pollster that you want in the benchmark survey (not including demographic questions) – use your candidate.

- I. Planning Your Advertising – Thinking through your campaign
- II. The Chess Game: The creation of a single spot vs. the entire campaign
- III. Writing scripts – unique and different...Or How to stick it to your 8th grade English teacher. (Why grammar doesn't matter!)
- IV. Criteria for judging a well-written spot.

- V. The Ultimate Test...Does it work...? Does it move voters to your candidate?
- VI. Discussion of Message Memos
- VII. Reading Assignment: Read Chapters 4-5 of *IN DEFENSE OF NEGATIVITY* for next week

**Due Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>:** Groups will meet and come up with 3 script ideas for a 30 second positive spot for their candidate and 3 script ideas for a negative spot against your opponent.

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**Week 6 – Feb. 24, 2009 – Focus Groups: Team Presentations of Spot Concepts**

*Due Today* – Groups will meet and come up with 3 script ideas for a 30 second positive spot for their candidate and 3 script ideas for a negative spot against your opponent.

- I. Each group will present their ideas for spots to the class for focus group critique.
- II. We will discuss techniques of producing ads – simple studio spots, more complicated use of visuals, onsite shoots.
- III. Examples will be shown of spots and what techniques are involved.
- III. Presentation of poll questions and what critical information they provide for writing an effective ad.
- IV. Reading Assignment: Read Chapters 6-7 of *IN DEFENSE OF NEGATIVITY* for next week

**Due March 3<sup>rd</sup>:**

Individually, write a critique of your team's spot ideas. Using the knowledge gained from your focus group, examine how they can be improved, what works about them, what doesn't, what are the pitfalls, what can be done to see that the shoot is done effectively? Think critically.

Individually, draft scripts for your candidate, one negative ad and one positive – groups should meet to discuss.

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**Week 7 – March 3, 2009 – Radio, Mail and Print in a Campaign: How Important Are They? Guest Lecturer: Hal Malchow, President of Malchow, Schlackman, and Hoppey, Direct Mail Consultant to President Clinton/Vice President Gore**

*Due Today* – Individually, write a critique of your team's spot ideas. Using the knowledge gained from your focus group, examine how they can be improved, what works about them, what doesn't, what are the pitfalls, what can be done to see that the

*shoot is done effectively? Think critically. Also, individually, draft scripts for your candidate, one negative ad and one positive – groups should meet to discuss.*

- I. How to Decide what Medium to Use and When – examples of campaigns that supplement TV with the other forms of communication; examples of campaigns where radio and/or mail supplants television
- II. Continue discussion of script ideas
- III. Reading Assignment: *Life After the 30-Second Spot* (Sections 1 - 4)

**Due March 10<sup>th</sup>:** Individually, create a direct mail piece to support your candidate's television campaign. Also, write a 60-second script for radio. (Warning: this assignment will take longer than you think...start early.)

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**Week 8 – March 10, 2009 – Scouting and Setting up the Shoot; Dealing with the Candidate. Shoot Memos. Shoot Budgets. Costs and Quality of Ads. The Whys and Wherefores Behind Shooting Political Commercials.**

*Due Today* – Individually, create a direct mail piece to support your candidate's television campaign. Also, write a 60-second script for radio. (Warning: this assignment will take longer than you think...start early.)

- I. What's entailed in an Effective Shoot:
  - Location/Visuals
  - Preparation
  - Schedules
  - Wardrobe, extras, props
  - Release forms
  - Film vs. Tape
  - Costs/Budgeting
  - Expecting the Unexpected
- II. Working With the Candidate and Staff of the Campaign

**Due March 24<sup>th</sup>:** As a group, draft a detailed shoot and production memo. Finalize scripts with groups to discuss with Fenn Communications Group. (Note: the more your ideas are crystallized, the better the advice will be and the easier it will be to shoot and edit.)

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**Week 9 – March 24, 2009 – Media Tour and Group Meetings to Plan Media Campaigns – Will meet at FENN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP**

*Due today – As a group, draft a detailed shoot and production memo. Finalize scripts with groups to discuss with Fenn Communications Group. (Note: the more your ideas are crystallized, the better the advice will be and the easier it will be to shoot and edit.)*

- I. Crafting, Drafting and Producing a 30-Second Spot
- II. **MEET at FCG – NOT AT GW!**
  - Shooting, transferring, time codes
  - Off line editing
  - On line editing
  - Voice over
  - Paint Box/Graphics
  - Use of music in a political advertisement
  - Anatomy of an ad produced by Fenn Communications Group
- III. **3/27, 3/28, 3/29: Shoots**
- IV. Producing Ads – Shooting. Sign up for production schedule. **Scripts must be completed.**

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**Week 10 – March 31, 2009 – Voiceover Records BEFORE class; Media Buying – Fitting the Budget and Paying Attention to the Strategy/ Discussion of Negative Campaigning. Guest Lecturer: Danny Jester; Greer, Margolis, Mitchell and Burns.**

- I. Shooting and Producing ads – **Voiceovers at Clean Cuts on 3/31**
- II. Media Buying in Campaigns – case studies
- III. Time for working with the groups on their ads – solving problems, last minute changes before drafting, discussion of negative/comparative ads for each group...
- IV. **4/3, 4/4, 4/5: Editing**

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**Week 11 – April 7, 2009 – Class Presentations of Ad Campaigns!!!**

- I. Review Ads produced from the groups – these will be in the form of presentations to the candidates and campaigns, complete with rationale and discussion of the strategy involved. The class and instructors will serve as critics and questioners of the presenters.
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**Week 12 – April 14, 2009 – Class Presentations of Ad Campaigns!!!**

- I. Review Ads produced from the groups – these will be in the form of presentations to the candidates and campaigns, complete with rationale and discussion of the strategy involved. The class and instructors will serve as critics and questioners of the presenters.
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**Week 13 – April 21, 2009**

- I. Feedback on the Course – Class Discussion
- II. Evaluations of Ads – Presentation of “Classie Awards”
- III. GET A PIZZA

**STUDENT INFORMATION FORM – PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY**

Name:

Home Phone:

Age:

Email:

Hometown:

High School:

College:

Major:

Current Job:

Work Phone:

Campaigns you have worked on:

Career Plans:

Courses you have completed or are taking at GSPM: