



An invitation to apply for the position of

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLITICAL MANAGEMENT  
COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES  
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
Washington, DC**

**Executive Summary**

The George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management (GSPM) seeks a dynamic proven leader to become the next Executive Director.

GSPM was founded in New York City in 1986 to nurture the development of a professional approach to the management of politics and to improve the democratic process. The School moved to Washington, DC in 1991 and was acquired by The George Washington University in 1995. In 2006, the School moved into the University's College of Professional Studies (CPS) and is its largest program.

GSPM is dedicated to educating students and professionals in the tools, principles, and ethics of applied political management, democratic participation, and public discourse. Through these efforts, the School hopes to prepare them for successful careers as political leaders, campaign professionals and advocates before legislative and administrative bodies and public relations professionals.

The School is seeking its next Executive Director at a critical juncture. It needs a visionary, energetic, and experienced leader to direct the School's flagship Political Masters program and grow the School's reputation to new heights. The Executive Director will be a highly respected leader and a forward-looking thinker with successful experience in politics and demonstrated leadership.

The new Executive Director must be able to lead within an academic environment; work collaboratively with both University administrators and faculty; be a spokesperson for the School; and introduce bold ideas that align with GSPM's objectives. Further, the Executive Director must be a talented leader in the political arena and have the experience and contacts to raise funds for scholarships and build partnerships to sponsor GSPM programs and other initiatives that enhance GSPM's reputation as a leader in innovative thinking about political management strategies, technologies, and communications.

The successful candidate will have outstanding communications and interpersonal skills and a passion for the discipline of applied politics. The Executive Director must be able to attract and retain first-rate faculty and students, develop resources, and motivate the community. An advanced degree is preferred but not required. Adaptability and a dedication to the mission, values and integration of the School, College, and University are essential.

In addition to leading the Graduate School of Political Management, the new Executive Director will maintain an appointment as a faculty member within the CPS and teach in and administer the Political Management Program. It is expected that the Executive Director will work closely with college and university faculty and administration and serve on the college's Dean's Council.

GSPM has engaged the search firm, Isaacson Miller, to assist the search committee with this important search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be sent to Isaacson Miller at the address and in the manner indicated at the end of this document. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

### **Background - The College of Professional Studies (CPS)**

CPS was created to serve the needs of mid-career professionals working in emerging and rapidly changing professions. GSPM is administratively housed within CPS and shares services with seven other programs which include graduate, undergraduate, and credit-bearing certificate programs. These programs, which draw from multiple academic disciplines, are typically co-developed through collaboration with University content specialists and outside partners— government agencies, professional associations, consulting organizations, and business and industry leaders. By combining University non-tenured faculty experts with accomplished professors of practice, the College has a reputation for being a catalyst for academic innovation and for creating credentials that meet the University's rigorous standards of academic excellence.

### **Background - The Graduate School of Political Management**

GSPM is the first school of political management in the country. In 1986, Neil Fabricant, a lawyer and former legislative Executive Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, realized that a new profession of politics was emerging, one that warranted a dedicated school to nurture that development and, thereby, improve democratic politics. The first class of 24 students convened on the campus of Baruch College in New York City in 1987, and three years later the School created its first degree program. GW acquired the School in 1995 and today it is the largest program in CPS and an integral part of the University.

GSPM was founded on the premise that it could improve the democratic political process by educating students and professionals in the tools, principles, and values of participatory democracy. Through such preparation, graduates would be well-suited for careers as ethical, effective advocates and leaders at the international, national, and local levels. Located in Washington, DC, GSPM is known nationally and internationally as the premier school in applied politics.

Currently the faculty consists of 5 full-time teaching faculty. There are also approximately 32 part-time faculty members. Currently about 200 students are enrolled in the School's degree programs. The School offers master's degrees in Legislative Affairs, Political Management, and Public Relations & Communications as well as several graduate certificate programs. (More information about GSPM and its programs is available [here](#).)

All GSPM programs are designed to be flexible to meet the needs of mid-career professionals; courses are offered online in the evening. GSPM has classes in three Washington DC locations at the Foggy Bottom,

Capitol Hill, and Old Town Alexandria campuses. GSPM's unparalleled Washington, D.C. connections mean our students learn not only in the classroom, but in campaign offices, legislative suites, lobbying shops, PR agencies and news bureaus that shape the world.

The school's more than 4,500 talented alumni live and work around the globe as elected officials, serve as staff or consultants for elected leaders and changemakers in the world of government, politics, public relations, and public affairs.

### **The Opportunities and Challenges**

The overarching objective for the next Executive Director will be to grow GSPM's student population while providing its current students the cutting edge education they need to be successful in the world of politics. This challenge comes at a time when the academic environment has become increasingly more competitive and complex. It is also at a point when technology is revolutionizing every aspect of political and, more broadly, social engagement in new ways. To thrive, GSPM needs to attract political industry changemakers and partners.

### **Major Responsibilities of the GSPM Executive Director**

The Executive Director will serve as the faculty director for the Political Management masters program and will manage all of GSPM's administrative, academic and budget functions, including recruiting students, academic planning and reviews, accreditation, faculty affairs and student services in close collaboration with college and university leadership. The Executive Director will oversee and support programming determined by the Dean of the College of Professional Studies and other university administrators.

It is expected that the Executive Director will spend 50% of their time in administrative leadership and management; 40% of their time in external stakeholder engagement efforts; and 10% of their time teaching.

Specifically, the Executive Director will:

1. Provide effective leadership and vision for GSPM. The new Executive Director will be expected to introduce a strategic plan for the School, putting forth bold ideas that align with GSPM's objectives and help the School to thrive amid a competitive academic landscape. This role also will serve as the spokesperson for GSPM with the media and through public engagement.
2. Direct the Political Management Masters Degree Program and related Graduate Certificates. This will include working with the Academic Affairs team to further develop and update the curriculum; provide strategic guidance for the Global Residence courses; and recruit, train, and manage adjunct faculty to ensure quality teaching and compliance with university rules and regulations. The Executive Director will be expected to teach one class per year including electives of their own design that ideally attract students from across GSPM programs.
3. Work with the College of Professional Studies (CPS) Recruiting and Admissions and Student Success Teams and many other GSPM stakeholders, and focus on recruiting and retaining top

students—ensuring the continued success of GSPM as the premier school of applied politics while advancing the mission of the College of Professional Studies to educate the next generation of political leaders.

4. Work with the Marketing and Communication Team to improve marketing efforts in order to identify and engage prospective students and strengthen the brand identity of the School through new and traditional strategies, for example, email, visits (including virtual), events, social media postings and web advertising.
5. Work with the GW University Department of Alumni Relations (DAR) to strengthen GSPM's relationship with the School's Alumni and political communities. The Executive Director will take a leadership role in finding new ways to reach out to local, national, and international alumni, as well as leaders in the field, to engage their interest and strengthen these relationships in ways that are beneficial to the School.
6. Work with the University's Department of Alumni Relations (DAR) on GSPM's fundraising, including a focus on student scholarships, developing proposals for granting agencies, cultivating donor prospects, and conducting related outreach activities.
7. Grow and further engage the GSPM Advisory Council, leveraging Council members' expertise and networks to broaden GSPM external engagement efforts, grow philanthropy, and identify opportunities to enhance the student experience and student recruiting efforts.
8. Work with GSPM faculty and CPS staff on all aspects of GSPM programs and events, including support of participating fellows and speakers and media relations with a strong commitment to engaging with the wider GW community and promoting and strengthening GSPM's distinct identity and visibility. Represent GSPM at conferences, committees, research initiatives, and task forces.
9. Serve on college and university committees as appropriate, providing leadership with insights and support aligning with CPS core initiatives and the strategic plan.
10. Foster an inclusive environment that attracts and retains a diverse, bipartisan faculty by creating effective recruitment and retention programs, securing the resources to enable faculty to offer high quality cutting edge courses, providing support for faculty scholarship and research, and creating opportunities for faculty to build partnerships both within and outside of academe.

### **Qualifications, Attributes, and Experience**

GSPM is seeking an energetic and talented leader with a record of success in complex, decentralized professional environments who will work collaboratively with the GSPM community, the Dean of the College, and other university administrators to create a vision and articulate the strategic direction for the

School. The Executive Director will be expected to build upon the success of the School's existing programs and oversee the development of new programs that meet the educational needs of its students.

No single candidate will possess all of the ideal qualifications, but the University seeks an Executive Director who has a track record of experience and the personal talent and commitment to lead and build an exceptional school of applied politics. The search committee seeks candidates with the following qualifications and attributes:

1. An individual who has demonstrated the ability to recruit students, engage stakeholders, and raise funds. The successful candidate will need to help GSPM to retain its leadership in the field and achieve its goals.
2. A well-known and respected individual with a large political network who has the stature, credibility, and maturity to earn the trust and confidence of academic colleagues, funders, and the political community on both sides of the aisle.
3. Someone with existing relationships in federal, state, and local government entities, non-governmental organizations and multilateral organizations to create mentoring, internship and job opportunities for alumni and students and to create awareness of GSPM.
4. An external spokesperson who has outstanding communications skills and experience addressing public audiences and interacting effectively with the media.
5. A collegial, consultative leader with a team-building approach that puts others at ease and engenders trust; and the ability to actively listen, with an appreciation for nuance in communication.
6. A person dedicated to the mission, values and integration of the School, College, and University.
7. Demonstrated ability to teach graduate level courses.
8. A terminal degree in political science, public policy, history, economics, law or a related field is preferred, but is not required.

### **Applications, Inquiries, and Nominations**

Applications should include a resume and statement of interest. The statement should address why an applicant is interested in the position and how his/her experiences fit with the needs of GSPM. Applications should be sent to Isaacson Miller at this [link](#). Electronic submission of materials is strongly preferred. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Inquiries and nominations may also be sent to the above web address. All inquiries, nominations and expressions of interest will be held in strict confidence.