

ARTS AND SCIENCES 1137.XX: POLITICAL COURAGE

Dates and Times TBA

Fall 2017

Professor Vladimir Kogan

Office: Derby Hall 2004

Office Hours: Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and by appointment

E-mail: kogan.18@osu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Politics and public policy shape the lives of ordinary people in profound ways. This course examines how policymakers make decisions, and the forces that influence their thinking. In particular, we will examine the case of housing desegregation in the city of Yonkers, New York — as dramatically depicted in HBO’s miniseries “Show Me a Hero” — to think about how, and under what conditions, people with honorable intentions succeed in translating their goals into policy. We will also identify the forces that may thwart their efforts, and the courage sometimes required to do the right thing in politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the incentives and constraints facing elected public officials.
- Appreciate how the “electoral connection” motivates officeholders.
- Identify the conditions under which political elites can influence mass public opinion and policy preferences.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Participation (40% of Overall Grade)

Students must complete the assigned readings and watch the “Show Me a Hero” episodes assigned for that week’s class ahead of time on their own and come to class ready to discuss the material. The show may be streamed from OSU’s Secured Media Library (go.osu.edu/SecuredMediaLibrary) and links to the readings will be available on Carmen.

2. Weekly Quizzes (30% of Overall Grade)

At the start of each week’s class, students will take a brief quiz on Top Hat covering the readings and/or videos assigned for that week.

3. Strategy Memo (30% of Overall Grade)

Imagine that you are a political strategist or policy adviser working for Yonker's Mayor Wasicsko. Draft a 3- to 5-page memo outlining how you advise the mayor to proceed to: (1) maximize his chance of surviving his re-election while (2) staying true to his political values and ideals.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614-292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: **Introduction and Overview**

Week 2: **Political Courage**

Required Readings:

- John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage*: Chapters 1, 4, and 9

Week 3: **Electoral Connection**

Required Readings:

- David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*: Part I

Week 4: **Race and Politics**

Required Readings:

- Jessica Trounstine, *Segregated by Design*: Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Week 5: **Background on Yonkers**

Required Readings:

- Jennifer Hochschild, “Only One Oar in the Water: The Political Failure of School Desegregation in Yonkers, New York,” *Harvard Law Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 3.

Week 6: “Show Me a Hero” Part 1

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 1

Week 7: “Show Me a Hero” Part 2

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 2

Week 8: “Show Me a Hero” Part 3

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 3

Week 9: “Show Me a Hero” Part 4

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 4

Week 10: “Show Me a Hero” Part 5

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 5

Week 11: “Show Me a Hero” Part 6

Required Video:

- “Show Me a Hero” Part 6

Week 12: Political Leadership

Required Reading:

- Broockman, David E., and Daniel M. Butler, Forthcoming, “The Causal Effects of Elite Position-Taking on Voter Attitudes: Field Experiments with Elite Communication,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

Week 13: Strategy

Required Reading:

- William H. Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation*: Chapters 3 and 11.

Week 14: Political Courage

****Strategy Memo Due****