**MGSC12**

**Narrative and Management**

**Fall 2017**

**Professor Sandford Borins**

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**Mondays 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., IC 300**

**Personal Website:** [**www.sandfordborins.com**](http://www.sandfordborins.com)

**Course website: see Blackboard portal**

The objective of this course is to use a variety of narrative films as a basis for the discussion of issues of interest to managers. By narrative, I mean works of fiction, docudramas, or documentaries that tell stories that appeal to both the mind and the emotions. These films were not created for students of management, yet they do provide valuable insights into management skills, organizational diagnosis, ethical choices, leadership, and the impact of factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, and social class on managers. Films aspire not simply to depict actions and events, but also to lay bare the inner psychology of those involved in them. They attempt to capture and convey the realities they analyze with a psychological depth that social scientists cannot always replicate. This contributes to the richness of film and the depth of learning based on film.

Communications is an essential management skill and the use of narratives (often referred to as story-telling) is an important type of communication. Stories often connect emotionally with people in ways that other types of communications do not. This class will also draw upon the techniques used in the narratives presented in class as a basis for skill in managerial story-telling.

**Learning Objectives**

* To understand key narratives widely used in business and government
* To understand how these narratives are presented in moving image narration
* To understand how narratives shape the public’s understanding of business, politics, and governance
* To enhance the student’s ability to communicate his/her own narrative

**Prerequisites: MGHB02H3 or [MGTB23H & MGTB29H] or MGTB27Y or ENGD94H3 or 2.0 credits at the C-level in POL courses or permission of the instructor**

**Office Hours: IC 276**, Mondays from 10:30 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 1:30 p.m. I am also available by e-mail, which I answer promptly, or by appointment.

**Evaluation**

Student evaluation will be based on the following:

1. Individual narrative assignment (week 4) 15 %

2. Organizational narrative assignment (week 9) 15

3. Class participation 20

4. Final exam 50

Total 100 %

**Narrative Assignments**

Each of the two narrative assignments involves a short written essay (5 pages maximum) and a short in-class presentation (2 or 3 minutes maximum), in the first instance about yourself, in the second instance about an organization and your involvement with it. Details of the assignments will be provided in the two weeks before they are due.

**Class Participation**

**You must participate in class discussion.** To participate in class discussion, you must prepare the material in advance. I will post discussion questions in advance on the course website. To share your thinking with others, I encourage you to form viewing/discussion groups.

The class will be located in IC300, a skills development room. The course will use in-class discussion groups (“table work”) and provide opportunities for student presentations in addition to comments made in plenary discussions. I will post three or four questions for student presentations (5 minute maximum) each week. The purpose of class discussion is to advance *as a group* toward insight and understanding. Class discussion is a cooperative, not a competitive, exercise. You will thus be assessed on your display of the qualities conducive to collective learning.

**Final Exam**

Students are responsible for the material covered in the entire course. The exam will include both long and short answer questions.

**Required Reading and Viewing**

Sandford Borins, *Governing Fables: Learning from Public Sector Narratives* (Information Age Publishing, 2011): at UTSC bookstore, online from the publisher at <http://infoagepub.com/products/Governing-Fables>, or online from other providers (e.g. amazon.ca).

I encourage you to visit every movie’s entry on the Internet Movie Data Base ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)) or at Rotten Tomatoes ([www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com)). The external reviews, many by professional critics, are particularly valuable and the discussion by users is at least interesting. However, visiting an IMDB entry about a movie is no substitute for watching it yourself and forming your own judgment. In addition, many weeks there are Wikipedia entries to visit.

**Availability of Movies.** The movies in this course are all reasonably recent or classics, and should be available on Netflix or YouTube other online providers. They may also be available in the public library system. Another rental alternative is Videoflicks, 1701 Avenue Rd. (north of Lawrence), tel. 416-782-1883, info@myvideoflicks.ca.

**Course Topics, Viewing and Reading Assignments**

**Sept. 11**

**Introduction to the Course, Conceptual Framework**

Required Reading:

Borins, *Governing Fables,* chapter 1

Robert McKee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*, pp. 135-54 (on portal)

Wikipedia entry: Erik Erikson

Optional Viewing:

*Everyone Rides the Carousel* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m\_e17mS7VBY)

**Sept. 18**

**Entrepreneurship**

View: *The Social Network*

**Sept. 25**

**Investigative Journalism**

View: *Spotlight*

Prof. Borins’s personal narrative

**Oct. 2**

Personal narrative assignment due in class and in-class presentations

**Oct. 9: Reading Week: no classes**

**Oct. 16**

**Corporate Strategy, Investigative Journalism**

View: *The Insider*

Wikipedia entries: Lowell Bergman, Jeffrey Wigand, Mike Wallace

**Oct. 23**

**Financial Sector, System Failure, Management Ethics**

View: *Inside Job*

**Oct. 30**

**Financial Sector, System Failure**

View: *The Big Short*

Reading: Prof. Borins essay about business narratives

**Nov. 6**

**Small-Group Decision-Making**

View: *Twelve Angry Men* (original 1957 black and white version)

Prof. Borins’s organizational narrative

Readings:

*Governing Fables*, chapter 7 (pp.213-227 and 235-238)

Asimow, *12 Angry Men: A Revisionist View* (5 pp.) on portal

**Nov. 13**

Organizational narrative assignment due in class and in-class presentations

**Nov. 20**

**Public Sector Entrepreneurship**

View: *Eye in the Sky*

Reading: *Governing Fables,* pp. 75-80

**Nov. 27**

**Public Sector Organizational Change**

View: *Hidden Figures*

Reading: *Governing Fables,* pp. 30-35

**Dec. 4**

**Robert McNamara: A Life Narrative in Business and Government**

View: *The Fog of War*

Reading: *Governing Fables*, pp. 187-194, 201 – 211, chapter 8

**Policy on Missed Assignments/Examinations:**

The university has created a standardized form for students who are requesting special academic consideration based on illness or injury. The form focuses upon the degree of incapacitation that the illness or injury has upon the student’s academic functioning and the timeline of that incapacitation. All students must now have a health professional complete this new form:

<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/document/Verification%20of%20Student%20Illness%20(VOI)%20-%20Oct%2027%202016.pdf>

Narrative assignments are due on the days assigned. The only exception is an adequately documented emergency and/or medical illness. Please contact me *as soon as* the problem arises. Late assignments without documentation and advance instructor permission will be assigned a penalty.

If you miss the final exam because of illness or injury, you will be required to do a makeup exam as soon as you are able.

**Academic Support**

**UTSC Library:**

The Department of Management, in collaboration with the UTSC library, will be providing academic research support in the IC Building. To refine your research skills or to learn more about various scholarly resources, please contact the Librarian for Management and Economics students.

Stephanie Perpick, Liaison Librarian< Department of Management UTSC

Room IC367

Office hours: by appointment

Email:  [stephanie.perpick@utoronto.ca](mailto:stephanie.perpick@utoronto.ca)

Web:  <http://guides.library.utoronto.ca/UTSCFinanceLab>

The English Language Development Centre (ELDC) helps students develop the critical thinking, vocabulary and academic communication skills essential for achieving academic and professional success. Personalized support includes: RWE (for academic writing); Communication Cafés (oral); Discussion Skill-Building Cafés; Vocabulary Cafés; seminars/workshops; personal ELD consultations; drop-in sessions. <http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/eld/>

The Writing Centre (TWC) offers invaluable services to students (learn to become a better writer!) and offers many different kinds of help: drop-in sessions, individual consultations, workshops, clinics, and online writing handouts. <http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/>

**Academic Misconduct**

Students should note that copying, plagiarizing, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be subject to academic discipline ranging from a mark of zero on the assignment, test or examination to dismissal from the university as outlined in the academic handbook. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties.