**MGSC12**

**Narrative and Management**

**Fall 2019**

**Professor Sandford Borins**

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**Phone: 416-287-7362**

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

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

**Course website: see Quercus 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 (due Oct. 7) 15 %

2. Organizational narrative assignment (due Nov. 11) 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), the first about yourself and the second 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. Students are encouraged to use Examplify software to write the exam. Essentially, Examplify locks all other files and applications on your computer while you are writing the exam, and allows you to submit your answers online. The software will be made available, at no cost to students, in the middle of the term and you will perform a “mock exam” activity to make sure the software is working on your computer.

**Required Reading and Viewing**

Sandford Borins and Beth Herst, *Negotiating Business Narratives: Fables of the Information Technology, Automobile Manufacturing, and Financial Trading Industries* (Palgrave Macmillan 2018), available online as an ebook at University of Toronto library, either for download as a pdf or Mycopy softcover ($24.99 US)

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 former has a variety of interesting material (plot synopses, quotes, gaffes, and trivia) and the latter links to reviews by professional critics. However, visiting these sites is no substitute for watching the movie yourself and forming your own judgment.

**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. Many are also available through the Media Commons at <https://mediacommons.library.utoronto.ca/criterion-demand>. DVDs are also available at Bladen Library.

**Course Topics, Viewing and Reading Assignments**

**Sept. 9**

**Introduction to the Course, Conceptual Framework**

Required Reading:

Borins and Herst, Chapter 1, pp. 1-11

Borins, *Governing Fables: Learning from Public Sector Narratives*, pp. 21-22, 26 (note 6)

Link to access it: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/lib/utoronto/detail.action?docID=3315693&query=governing+fables>

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

Quercus)

Optional:

Wikipedia: Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development

*Everyone Rides the Carousel* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKt7\_\_yeszw)

**Sept. 16**

**Entrepreneurship**

View: *The Social Network*

Read: Borins and Herst, Chapter 2, pp. 13-22

**Sept. 23**

**Investigative Journalism**

View: *Spotlight*

Read: Borins and Herst, Beyond “Woodstein”: Narratives of Investigative Journalism (on Quercus)

Obituaries for Richard Sipe and Bernard Law (links on Quercus)

**Sept. 30**

**Corporate Strategy, Transformative Technology**

Professor Borins’s personal narrative

View: *Revenge of the Electric Car*

Read: Borins and Herst, Chapter 3, pp. 23-35

**Oct. 7**

Personal narrative assignment due in class and in-class presentations

**Oct. 14: Reading Week: no classes**

**Oct. 21**

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

View: *Inside Job*

Read: Borins and Herst, Chapter 4, pp. 37-55

**Oct. 28**

**Financial Sector, System Failure**

View: *The Big Short*

**Nov. 4**

**Small-Group Decision-Making**

Prof. Borins’s organizational narrative

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

Readings:

Borins, *Governing Fables*, pp.217-227 and 235-238 (on Quercus)

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

**Nov. 11**

Organizational narrative assignment due in class and in-class presentations

**Nov. 18**

**Public Sector Entrepreneurship**

View: *Eye in the Sky*

**Nov. 25**

**Public Sector Organizational Change**

View: *Hidden Figures*

**Dec. 2**

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

View: *The Fog of War*

Reading: Borins, *Governing Fables*, pp. 201–208, 254-258;

Borins and Herst, chapter 5 (pp. 57-60)

**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-%20March%207%202018%20-%20AODA.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.

Mariana Jardim, Liaison Librarian, Department of Management UTSC

Office hours: by appointment

Email:  [mariana.jardim@utoronto.ca](mailto:mariana.jardim@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.