

HI291-H1: Leadership in the Face of Conflict: Twentieth Century Crises

ILC: Crossing Boundaries, Raising Voices:
The History and Politics of Feminist Activism

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And by appointment

Spring 2008
Main Hall 6
MW 10:10-11:10

"It always seems impossible until it is done."—Nelson Mandela



Left: The First female President in Africa, Ellen Johnson of Liberia, with Condoleezza Rice, second female U.S. Secretary of State.
Center: Environmentalists protest at European Biofuel Expo, Newark, England, 2007
Right: Mike Krzyzewski, Coach K, Blue Devils, Prof., The Fuqua/Coach K Center of Leadership and Ethics, Duke University.

Course description:

Students will identify exemplary models of leadership through case studies of select political and civic issues which have mobilized communities in the U.S. and around the world in the Twentieth-Century. The struggles of notable politicians and community activists in the face of conflict suggests how to act effectively when confronted with complex and ethically challenging situations. Case studies may include campaigns against child labor and child soldiers, the civil rights movement, environmental activism, global feminism and the African refugee crises (including resettlement in New York City). Students interested in a range of professional goals--law, business, politics, human rights, sports, environmental issues, health/medicine, journalism, global issues—will find this knowledge valuable.

This course is part of a learning community that focuses our attention on the possibilities and liabilities of feminist activism, both locally and globally. While the political theory course will engage with the founding ideas of contemporary global feminism and civil rights movements, the leadership class will offer historical perspective and analyze case studies. Together we expect students will learn to identify and articulate some of the systemic issues that sustain grave injustices. We will look at how to empower ourselves, women and children in the local and global community to more effectively raise our voices by “socially responsible, participatory citizenship.”

At the heart of this course is a community-based Leadership Project (LP) involving the Liberian refugee community of Clifton, Staten Island, just next to campus. The largest community of Liberians outside Africa, their history is intertwined with American diversity: as the new wave of African immigrants to America; as beneficiaries of the American commitment to rescue refugees after the failure to do so in World War II; as the only U.S. Colony in Africa, and one administered since the 1830s by freed American Slaves, who were sent back to Africa. Learning about leadership and its failures both in Liberia and in the U.S. Liberian community will offer students a unique and invaluable opportunity. Students will choose from three projects: (A) Environmental justice and community gardening; (B) oral history of community leaders and refugees; and (C) direct involvement with children, primarily through tutoring.

This course is made possible by grant from Project Pericles to promote “socially responsible and participatory citizenship” as well as the Fox Fellows Fund for community-based teaching and learning.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will establish a strong foundation of knowledge in the role of leadership in American and global history, both at the national and grassroots level, as well as theories of leadership
- Students will improve their critical thinking skills, including their ability to make historical arguments, interpret and analyze documents and place ideas into a larger context
- Students will improve their ability to express themselves in writing and using internet technology to disseminate information
- Students will gain leadership experience and community-organizing skills and be able to relate these “socially responsible” experiences of “participatory democracy” to theoretical material discussed in the class.

Required Books:

Wren, J. Thomas. *The Leader's Companion: Insight on Leadership Through the Ages*. New York: Free Press, 1995.

Levitt, Jeremy. *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: From 'Paternalitarianism' to State Collapse*. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2005.

Mandela, Nelson. *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Bay Back Books, 1995.

Naples, Nancy, *Community Activism and Feminist Politics: Organizing Across Race, Class, Gender*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Requirements

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION and MOODLE (10%)

Our class discussions are a critical aspect of this course and you are expected to contribute regularly. Your ability to raise questions and express opinions, drawing upon the readings, will be an important component of your grade. *Attendance is required*, including at film screenings and designated lectures. (see syllabus). More than 3 unexcused absences will be penalized as follows: for each additional absence, your *final* grade will drop by one-third. Several lectures and trips out-of-class time will be required. At least once weekly, students will be asked to post their reactions to the readings on moodle. Moodle assignments will be graded based on quality of the analysis and effort in responding to readings and instructor questions.

2. DISCUSSION LEADERS, including one-page handout (10%)

Students will be asked to prepare at least one presentation from the assigned readings and lead discussion. Students will be responsible on that day for getting everyone to understand and discuss the material. A 1-page **outline** (of their presentation and follow-up questions) **MUST** be distributed to the class. You should explain the main argument of the author, three or four major points, an evaluation of his/her sources and conclusion. Maps and images are encouraged. A Power-point presentation is not necessary—careful analysis is more important. Students may request copies the day **BEFORE** their presentation at the copy center (basement, Campus Hall).

3. REFLECTION PAPERS (Four 3 page papers at 10% each)

Students will be asked regularly throughout the course to relate the theories and case studies of leadership to their own community-based leadership project. The leadership project in the community will serve as an illustration of the concepts learned in the class and suggest further questions for research. Students will be asked direct questions to enable them to link the experiential and theoretical together. .

4. FINAL PROJECT (20% Research Paper, 20% Multi-media Presentation, 40% total)

Your research paper will offer you an opportunity, building on course readings and the LP, to explore and critically analyze a topic of interest in greater depth. Papers must be narrowly focused. Although your paper will concentrate on a precise issue, you must demonstrate an awareness of more general issues raised throughout the course. Papers must be 5-8 pages long, based on research in at least 5 primary or secondary sources (normally published since 1985). Students are expected to use interlibrary loan to obtain sources. All references to ideas and direct citations must be properly footnoted. Students will be asked to present their research in progress and papers to the class. The bibliography and outline (or first draft) due in week 11 will be calculated into the grade (roughly 10% or half the grade on the research paper). Students must use formal footnotes according to the **Chicago Manual of Style** and include a bibliography of sources. You are encouraged to use the writing center (in the library basement) before submitting the final draft.

One lesson of this course is that research that is of interest to the community should be made public. Hence we will all create a web-based project and/or a public presentation of our work (20% of grade). More details to follow. Of course, there are also pre-professional implications as you are then able to reference this site on your resume.

Your research paper will normally relate directly to the community leadership project but you may request to write about a different aspect of leadership if you choose.

5. **EXTRA CREDIT:** Films, trips or lectures relevant to NYC history or the historical imagination generally are possible.
6. **HONOR CODE:** Please reference the honor code on all your papers and other submissions: http://www.wagner.edu/campus_life/node/498

DISABILITIES: If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Dina Assante in the Academic Advisement Center, 390-3278 as early as possible.

Syllabus

You are responsible for checking weekly for updates and assignments on moodle

Weeks 1-4: What is Leadership?

M 1/21: No school: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (leadership to be discussed)

W 1/23: Defining Leadership

In class: Desmond Tutu essay on Leadership

F: Orientation on Community-based Leadership Project (CLP)

Begin moodle articles on "Little Liberia" (Staten Island)

M 1/28 Theories of Leadership: Traits and Behaviors

Read: Wren, *The Leader's Companion*, Ch. 6-8, 19-20, 24-25, 59
and handout on Sisyphus

W 1/30: Leaders, Past and Present

Read: Wren, 3, 9, 14-15, 58 and handout on Pericles

Feb. 1: Visit to African Refuge Center (Required) for all groups

M 2/4: Citizen-leaders and Environmental/Economic Justice

Read Naples, *Community Activism and Feminist Politics*, Ch. 5 (Toxic Waste) and 11 (Housing) carefully!

Presentation 1. _____

Video on Saul Alinsky, "founder of community activism"

W 2/6 Think Local, Act Global

Mary Rogge, "Leveraging Environmental Justice in Chattanooga," in *Journal of Community Practice*, 13 (3), 33-53. and excerpt from Wangari Maathai's *Unbowed*

Presentation 2. _____

W 2/6 evening *The Trojan Women*. Performance in Harlem. Read *The New York Times* article on Liberian community in Park Hill.

F 2/8 No class

M 2/11 Race, Gender and Leadership: Elections 2008

Guest speaker: Cutis Wright, Readings TBA

Reflection paper #1 due

Weeks 4-6: Case Study: Staten Island's "Little Liberia"

Tu 2/12: Community Board 1 Meeting (optional)

W 2/13 America's Legacy of Slavery and Black Colonialism

Begin Levitt, *Liberia*, Ch. 1-2 and handouts on Liberian Refugees

Presentation 3. _____

F 2/15: Meeting Groups/Park Hill Projects

President's Weekend (More Leadership!)

M 2/18 Continue Levitt, *Liberia*, 3-6

Presentation 4. _____

W 2/20 Civil War: When Leaders Fail

Finish Levitt, *Liberia*, Ch. 7-8

Presentation 5. _____

F 2/22 (Required): Prof. Jeremy Levitt, Florida Law School, 6pm, Spiro Hall 2

M 2/25 Simulation on Liberian Politics

Students will enact a possible scenario in the Truth and Reconciliation process

Reflection Paper # 2 due

W 2/27 **Projects: Thesis and Bibliography Due**

Read J. Walljasper "When Activists Win," *The Nation* (1997) and K. Reardon, "Enhancing the capacity of community-based organizing in East St. Louis."

F 2/29 Mentoring/Group Meetings

Week 7: Dissident Leaders in the Political Arena

M 3/3 Courage and Civil Rights: MLK and Rosa Parks

Read Holloway Sparks "Dissident Citizenship: Democratic Theory, Political Courage and Activist Women" and MLK, "Letter from Birmingham Jail." (Moodle)

Tu 3/4: View *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days* 6:00 p.m. (required)

W 3/5 Patricia Moynagh, "Women and Political Action" in Marso and Moynagh, *Simone de Beauvoir's Political Thinking*

Presentation 6. _____

F: Mentoring/Park Hill Projects

Week 8: Nearby Leadership: Running a Winning Team

M 3/10 Managing Athletic Leaders

Guest Speaker:

Read: Coach K

W 3/12 Managing Academic Leaders

Guest Speaker:

Read: David Rooke and William Torbet, "Transformations of Leadership,"
Harvard Business Week and Richard Guarasci, "On the challenge of becoming the good
college," *Liberal Education*, Winter 2006

F: No class

Spring Break (March 17-21)

Week 9: Two Cold War Battles

M 3/24 No classes

Tu 3/25 Fighting the "Problem with No Name": Second Wave Feminism

W 3/26 JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis

Reading TBA

Clips: *At the Brink*

Reflection Paper # 3 due

Weeks 10-12: Nelson Mandela and Moral Leadership

3/31-4/2 Begin Mandela

Presentation 7. _____

4/7 Roundtable: Leadership Projects

Outline/First Draft for Final Paper due

4/9 Continue Mandela and additional reading TBA

Presentation 8. _____

4/14 Finish Mandela

Presentation 9. _____

Reflection Paper #4 due

4/16 IT Training for Final Project

Weeks 14-15: Diversity and Leadership Today

4/21 No classes

4/22 Read Naples on NYC/Hmong

Presentation 10. _____

4/23 Do Women and Minorities Lead Differently?

Read Wren, Selected chapters

4/28 Resume Workshop and Roundtable on CLP

Final Projects: Research Paper Due

4/30 Summation

5/5, 10:10am-1:10pm: Presentations of Final Leadership Projects

Video on IRC training women In Liberia with new skills...

<http://womennewsnetwork.vodpod.com/video/45681-in-liberia-new-skills-help-women-fight-poverty>

Women in Liberia and courage

<http://www.marwopnet.org/welcome.htm>

Park Hill: Forgotten NY

<http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.forgotten-ny.com/SLICES/parkhill.si/eibs6.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.forgotten-ny.com/SLICES/parkhill.si/parkhill.html&h=324&w=432&sz=27&hl=en&start=2&um=1&tbnid=XzcMcM4vwqdezM:&tbnh=95&tbnw=126&prev=/images%3Fq%3Deibs%2Bpark%26svnum%3D10%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN>

Partnerships for Parks—Outreach S.I.

Outreach Coordinator:

Frank Filatro, (718) 390-8016

Frank.Filatro@parks.nyc.gov

http://www.partnershipsforparks.org/partnerships_directory.html

What makes a leader?

<http://www.partnershipsforparks.org/resources/materials/leadership.html>

New York Foundation

<http://www.nyf.org/2007newgrants.asp>