POLITICAL SCIENCE 4127:  
CITY POLITICS  
Tuesday and Thursday, 11:10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Stillman Hall 0235  
Spring 2014

Professor Vladimir Kogan  
Office: Derby Hall 2004  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m., and by appointment  
E-mail: kogan.18@osu.edu

Teaching Assistant: Lauren Elliott  
E-mail: elliott.466@osu.edu

Course Description:  
In this course, students will watch HBO’s series “The Wire” and complete readings that engage key themes of the show. In particular, we will focus on: (1) the major problems facing urban communities in the 21st Century; (2) the economic, social, and political forces that have shaped their development; (3) the role of government in addressing urban problems; and (4) the major participants and stakeholders in city politics. We will use “The Wire” as an analytical lens through which to understand the most important political developments in American cities.

!!WARNING!!

“The Wire” is an adult show that addresses a number of topics students may find uncomfortable. Episodes may include scenes that depict extreme violence, nudity and sexual intercourse, racist and profane language, drug use, and other content that may disturb and unnerve you. If you are easily offended, I strongly encourage you to consider taking a different course.

!!WARNING!!

Goals:  
Upon successful completion of the course, students will have learned about:

1. The institutional, political, social, and economic context that shapes city politics and policy.

2. Challenges confronting major U.S. cities and urban areas in the 21st century, and the causes of these challenges.

3. The role of government policy as both a cause of, and a potential solution to, these challenges.

4. The political dynamics and coalition-building strategies necessary to effectuate city-wide policy change.
Required Materials:

1. All required readings are posted on Carmen

2. You are responsible for acquiring all five seasons of “The Wire”
   You can buy the box set online through websites such as Amazon.com or use your (or your parents’) HBO Go subscription. I encourage students to collaborate on getting access to the show.

3. Students are required to bring a clicker (Turning Technologies) to class daily
   Clickers can be rented or purchased at the OSU bookstore. You can purchase the cheapest model available. Note: The software-only “Response Ware” will not work in this class. Instructions for linking a clicker to your student account are posted on Carmen.

Assignments:

1. Class Participation (15% of Overall Grade)
   Students can earn participation points by using their clickers to respond to questions incorporated into the course lecture, by taking part in class discussions, and by completing in-class group assignments. Participation grades will be calculated using a “curve,” with the highest 10% of the scores discarded, and the top remaining score used as the denominator for this grade category. I will e-mail progress reports about your current participation grades: (1) at the time of the midterm exam; (2) at the beginning of spring break.

2. Daily Reading Quiz (20% of Overall Grade)
   Students are required to complete the required readings and watch the assigned episodes of the show prior to the start of class. In the beginning of each lecture, students will use the clickers to complete a short quiz testing basic comprehension and recall of major facts from the readings and episodes assigned for that day (i.e., there will be no trick questions). Please note that if you only read HBO’s plot summaries, you will not do well on the quizzes. While these summaries can be helpful in jogging your memory, they are not a substitute for watching the show. Episodes assigned for days featuring guest speakers or when no class is in session will be included on the quiz given during the subsequent class period. Quizzes missed due to absences cannot be made up, but the lowest four quiz scores will be dropped prior to the calculation of the final grades.

3. Midterm (20% of Overall Grade)
   The midterm will consist of two parts. Two take-home essay questions will be distributed on Thursday, Feb. 6 and are due at the beginning of class on Thursday, Feb. 13. On Feb. 13, students will also complete an in-class multiple choice exam. Students will have previously seen at least of half of the multiple choice questions during regular lecture (see Participation and Attendance above).

4. Research Paper (25% of Overall Grade)
   During the course of the semester, students will be responsible for researching a major question pertaining to the quality of urban life. The final product will be a 12-15 page research paper. To help keep the assignment tractable and make sure that students avoid
procrastinating, a number of short intermediate assignments will also be due through the semester, prior to the submission of the final draft. Due dates for each of the portion of the research assignment and the point values allocated to each part of the project are as follows:

- Research Question due Jan. 24 (2%)
- Annotated Bibliography due March 7 (3%)
- Paper Outline due March 20 (5%)
- Final Draft due April 3 (15%)

5. Final Exam (20% of Overall Grade)
The final exam will have the same format as the midterm. Two take-home questions will be distributed on Thursday, April 17. They are due at the beginning of the assigned final exam time on Monday, April 28, when students will complete the multiple choice portion of the exam using their clickers.

**All written assignments and exam essay questions must be uploaded to the appropriate dropbox on Carmen. Physical copies of assignments are not required, nor will printed copies be accepted in lieu of electronic submissions. Assignments will be considered late and assessed a late penalty unless they are uploaded by the beginning of the class when they are due.**

Academic Integrity:
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/](http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/).

Students are required to upload their papers and written exams to Carmen, which utilizes Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection. This online service analyzes student submissions for plagiarism from published or online sources and from other students (including students who have taken the course in earlier years). To avoid plagiarism charges, students must cite all sources from which they get their information and use quotation marks when quoting directly from these sources. **Students are responsible for knowing how to correctly cite their sources; ignorance about proper citation standards will not be accepted as an excuse for plagiarism.**

Late and Make-Up Policy:
All assignments and take-home exams are due at the beginning of class (11:10 a.m. on each due date). Assignments submitted more than 15 minutes after the class has begun will be assessed a 5 percent late penalty. There will be an additional 10 percent penalty for each subsequent day that the assignment is late. **No assignments will be accepted more than one week late.**

Make-up exams and extensions will be approved only in the event of a medical or family emergency or a University-sanctioned event. Extensions must be arranged ahead of time. You must have documentation of your emergency (for example, a doctor’s note) to be able to take a make-up exam.
or get an extension. After you provide this documentation, a decision will be made regarding whether and when you may take a make-up exam/get an extension. Similarly, any request for an incomplete must be accompanied by written medical documentation.

Grade Appeals:
You have one week from when the exam and assignment grades are posted on Carmen to appeal the grade. You must submit a typed, double-spaced statement to the teaching assistant explaining why you are appealing your grade and justify it with evidence from your paper, exam, readings, lectures, and answer keys. If you choose to appeal your grade, I reserve the right to decrease the original grade if the teaching assistant determines that it was erroneously high.

Accommodations for Disabled Students:
Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.

Course Overview and Schedule:

PART I: HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN CITIES

Week 1
Tuesday, January 7: Campus Closed

Thursday, January 9: Introduction and Course Overview
Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 1 (Screened in class)

Week 2
Tuesday, January 14: National Development and Cities
*Research paper assignment handed out*
Reading:
Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 2-4

Thursday, January 16: Machine-Style Politics and Political Reform
Reading:
Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 5
PART II: ECONOMIC CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

Week 3
Tuesday, January 21: **Guest Speaker — Kent Scarrett (Lobbyist, Ohio Municipal League)**
*Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 6-8*

Thursday, January 23: **Urban Decline**
*Reading:*
*Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 9-11*

Friday, January 24: **Research Question due**

Week 4
Tuesday, January 28: **Exile to the Suburbs**
*Reading:*
*Episodes: Season 1, Episodes 12-13*

Thursday, January 30: **Public Finance**
*Reading:*
  - Congressional Budget Office, “Fiscal Stress Faced by Local Governments.”
*Episodes: Season 2, Episodes 1-2*

Week 5
Tuesday, February 4: **City Limits**
*Reading:*
*Episodes: Season 2, Episodes 3-5*

Thursday, February 6: **Politics of Economic Development**
*Take-home midterm questions handed out*
*Reading:*
*Episodes: Season 2, Episodes 6-7*
Week 6

Tuesday, February 11: **Race to the Top or Bottom?**

*Reading:*

*Episodes: Season 2, Episodes 8-10*

Thursday, February 13: **MIDTERM**

PART III: RACE AND ETHNIC POLITICS

Week 7

Tuesday, February 18: **Race and Ethnic Politics**

*Reading:*

*Episodes: Season 2, Episodes 11-12*

Thursday, February 20: **Rainbow Coalitions?**

*Reading:*

*Episodes: Season 3, Episodes 1-2*

Week 8

Tuesday, February 25: **Guest Speaker — Jack Reall (President, Columbus Professional Firefighters)**

*Episodes: Season 3, Episodes 3-5*

Thursday, February 27: **Politics of Minority Empowerment**

*Reading:*

*Episodes: Season 3, Episodes 6-7*
PART IV: POLITICS OF CRIME

Week 9
Tuesday, March 4: **Industrial Organization of Crime**
Reading:
*Episodes: Season 3, Episodes 8-10*

Thursday, March 6: **Race and Law Enforcement**
Reading:
*Episodes: Season 3, Episodes 11-12*

Friday, March 7: **Annotated bibliography due**

Week 10
**Spring Break**

Week 11
Tuesday, March 18: **Politics and Public Safety**
Reading:
*Episodes: Season 4, Episodes 1-2*

Thursday, March 20: **No Class**
*Research paper outline due*
*Episodes: Season 4, Episodes 3-5*

Week 12
Tuesday, March 25: **Guest Speaker — Kristen Easterday and Michael Hartley (Columbus Chamber of Commerce)**
*Episodes: Season 4, Episodes 6-8*

Thursday, March 27: **Fighting Crime**
Reading:
*Episodes: Season 4, Episodes 9-10*
PART IV: EDUCATION

Week 13

Tuesday, April 1: Urban Education
Reading:
Episodes: Season 4, Episodes 11-13

Thursday, April 3: No Class

Week 14

Monday, April 7
*Research papers due*

Tuesday, April 8: Guest Speaker — Rhonda Johnson (President, Columbus Education Association)
Episodes: Season 5, Episodes 1-3

Thursday, April 10: School Reform: Charter Schools
Reading:
Episodes: Season 5, Episodes 4-5

Week 15

Tuesday, April 15: Guest Speaker — Stephanie Hightower (CEO, Col. Urban League)
Episodes: Season 5, Episodes 6-8

Thursday, April 17: School Reform: Performance, Accountability, and No Child Left Behind
*Take-home final exam questions handed out*
Reading:
• New America Foundation, “No Child Left Behind — Overview”
Episodes: Season 5, Episodes 9-10

**FINAL EXAM: Monday, April 28, 10 to 11:45 a.m.**