Course Description: This course is an examination of a number of the most famous trials of the past century, focusing on the legal significance, historical and political context and consequences, social implications, and media coverage surrounding each case. Course materials (to be reviewed prior to class meetings) shall include selected readings from a number of texts and actual trial transcripts, together with a series of videos providing extensive archival footage of the specific trials studied. Pursuant to the goals of the FYS program, this course is designed to strengthen the students’ critical thinking ability and will emphasize the four core goals of the program: reading, writing, research, and public speaking. Class sessions shall include discussions of the facts of each case, the details of the trial and any appellate procedures, the manner and impact of the media coverage, and the historical, social, political, and legal consequences of the trial. Students will be required to complete two take-home examinations (the first of which shall be delivered to the students on Oct. 7th and due back on Oct. 9th—the second will be delivered on Nov. 11th and due back on Nov. 13), consisting of short essay answers (2-4 pages each) to 2 selected questions, each representing 20% of the final grade. Students will submit a final research paper (10-12 pages), which will be due on December 15, 2019, focusing on a specific trial (other than those covered in the course) representing 30% of the grade. In addition, students will be required to submit 2 written discussion questions in advance of each week’s session and will also conduct an oral presentation focusing on the facts of the particular assigned trial, all of which will comprise 20% of the course grade. The remaining 10% of the final grade shall be based upon class attendance and participation, which will include the discussion of facts and issues surrounding each case and their relevance to current issues.

Principal Course Materials:
Frankie Bailey, Steven Chermak (Eds.), Famous American Crimes and Trials (2004)
Lloyd Chiasson (Ed.), The Press on Trial (1997)
Court TV Crime Library
Court TV, Greatest Trials and Trial Stories (DVD)
NBC News, Trials of the Century (DVD)
A&E, American Justice Series (DVD)
Week 1: Introduction to Course

Week 2: Celebrity in the Courtroom
Lindbergh Kidnapping Case
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 9 (Lindberg), pgs. 169-186
A&E, *Biography: Charles and Anne Lindbergh* (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (78 pgs.)

Week 3: Celebrity in the Courtroom (cont.)
O.J. Simpson Murder Trial
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 5, Ch. 11 (OJ), pgs. 189-227
Chiasson, Ch. 15 (The Case of OJ Simpson), pgs. 189-201
Selected trial transcripts (26 pgs.)

Week 4: Celebrity in the Courtroom (cont.)
The Murder Trials of Dr. Sam Sheppard
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 13 (The Sam Sheppard Trial), pgs. 243-261
NBC News, Trials of the Century, *The Sam Sheppard Trial* (DVD)
History Channel, *American Justice: The Sam Sheppard Story* (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts and Supreme Court decision (32 pgs.)

Week 5: Religion in the Courtroom
The Trial and Lynching of Leo Frank
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 1 (Leo Frank and the Legacy of Southern Lawlessness: A Murder and a Lynching) pgs. 1-30
PBS, *The People vs. Leo Frank* (DVD)

Week 6: Religion in the Courtroom (cont.)
The Scopes “Monkey” Trial
Chiasson, Ch. 8 (The Case of John Scopes) pgs. 85-102
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 5 (The Scopes “Monkey Trial”) pgs. 87-107
History Channel, *The Monkey Trial* (DVD)
MGM, *Inherit the Wind* (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (12 pgs.)

Week 7: Race in the Courtroom
Emmett Till Murder Case
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 14 (The Emmett Till Murder: The Civil
Week 8: Race in the Courtroom (cont.)
The Trials of “The Scottsboro Boys”
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 3, Ch. 8 (The Scottsboro Boys Trials) pgs. 147-168
Chiasson, Ch. 9 (The Case of the Scottsboro Boys) pgs. 103-116
PBS, Scottsboro: An American Tragedy (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts and newspaper articles (63 pgs.)

Week 9: Race in the Courtroom (cont.)
The Rodney King Assault Trial
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 5, Ch. 9 (Rodney King Beating Trial: A Landmark for Reform) pgs. 143-164
Court TV, Trial Story: CA vs. Powell—What the Jury Saw (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (31 pgs.)

Week 10: Politics in the Courtroom
The Rosenberg Espionage Case
Doug Linder, Trial of the Rosenbergs (2001) pgs. 1-7
Chiasson, Ch. 11 (Cases of Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs) pgs. 131-146
Ronald Radosh, Final Verdict, The New Republic (March 1997) pgs. 1-4
NBC News, Trials of the Century, The Rosenberg Trial (DVD)
Facets, The Unquiet Death of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (55 pgs.)

Week 11: Politics in the Courtroom (cont.)
The “Chicago Seven Conspiracy” Trial
Chiasson, Ch. 12 (The Case of the Chicago Seven) pgs. 147-157
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 4, Ch. 4 (The Trial of the Chicago Seven: Stage Against the Machine) pgs. 59-78
A&E, American Justice: Riot, The Chicago Conspiracy Trial (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (18 pgs.)

Week 12: Politics in the Courtroom (cont.)
Impeachment Trial of President William Clinton
Douglas Linder, Impeachment Trial of President Clinton (2005) pgs. 1-11
PBS American Experience, Clinton (Episodes 3-4) (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (96 pgs.)
Week 13: War in the Courtroom
The My Lai Courts-Martial
Bailey and Chermak, Vol. 4, Ch. 7 (The My Lai Massacre: A Mixed Reaction to Tragedy) pgs.115-138
Michael Belknap, The Vietnam War on Trial (2002) pgs.144-190
Court TV, Greatest Trials: The My Lai Court-Martial of Lt. Calley (DVD)
PBS, My Lai (DVD)
Selected trial transcripts (41 pgs.)

Disability Disclosure Statement: Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is www.nyu.edu/csd. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.