Description of Course: This course will provide an in-depth look at the role of leadership at various levels in a single momentous case: the relatively peaceful transition of South African from apartheid to a racially inclusive constitutional democracy premised on majority rule. While we will draw on modern histories of South Africa to provide a background of factual knowledge, the core of the course will be examination of narratives describing the reality of apartheid, the resistance to apartheid, the transition to a democratic government, and steps taken towards national reconciliation. These narratives include novels, autobiographies, speeches, and exhortatory writings. Specific leaders whose words and actions we will consider include Nelson Mandela, F.W. de Klerk, Steve Biko, Helen Suzman, Joe Slovo, and Desmond Tutu.

Briefly describe how the course will seek to achieve the five goals of the First Year Experience:

1. Expand students understanding of the world (e.g. state how the course will challenge students either to think about important questions and issues they may not have thought about before, or think about them in ways they have not thought about them).

   This course will use a concrete case to illustrate the multi-faceted nature of “leadership,” and in particular the role of both bottom-up and top-down leadership in bringing about massive social changes. The course will also challenge students’ thinking by presenting the same set of events from multiple perspective, and by drawing on multiple disciplines—history, literature, and political science. The case is also interesting and important for its own sake and students will have the opportunity to obtain substantial knowledge of recent South African history.

2. Enhance their ability to read and think critically (e.g. a preliminary list of books and articles for the course and exercises or pedagogical methods that will be used to improve critical reading and thinking).

   Class readings will alternate between historical texts (history books and first-person narratives) and fiction set in twentieth century South Africa. The course will proceed chronologically. A major theme for the class will be comparing how the different types of portrayals (literary, first-person, third-person historical) contribute to our understanding of events in different ways. Another theme will be comparing the perspectives of whites and blacks on both apartheid itself and how it might be changed.

Draft syllabus (very preliminary; subject to change)
I. **South Africa Before 1950**


Gandhi, *Autobiography* (short excerpts)

Es'kia Mphahlele, *Down Second Avenue*

Alan Paton, *Cry the Beloved Country*

Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (excerpts)

II. **1950-1970:**

Thompson, continued; also Worden, *Making of Modern South Africa*

Nadine Gordimer, *The Late Bourgeois World*

Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (excerpts)

Suzman, *In No Uncertain Times* (excerpts)

Slovo, *The Unfinished Autobiography* (excerpts)

III. **1970-1990**

Worden, *Making of Modern South Africa*

Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like* (excerpts)

Mongane Serote, *To Every Birth Its Blood*

Mark Behr, *The Smell of Apples*

JM Coetzee, *Age of Iron*

IV. **1990-1994: The Transition**

Worden, *Making of Modern South Africa*

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, excerpts

Per Strand, *Decisions on Democracy: The Politics of Constitution-Making in South Africa*, 1990-1996 (excerpts; or possibly substitute more concise journal article covering same terrain)

**V. 1994- : Reconciliation and Beyond**

Worden, *Making of Modern South Africa*

Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness*

JM Coetzee, *Disgrace*

3. Enhance students’ ability to communicate effectively in writing, speech, and other appropriate forms (e.g. describe the type and number of writing assignments students will complete, the opportunities students will have to develop their writing skills, the kinds of questions they will address, the ways in which they will be asked to communicate their ideas, and the type of feedback students will receive).

Students will write three analytical papers of 6 pages each for the first unit of the course, and then a 12 page paper covering the last two units together. (Student may focus more on one unit than the other in this final paper). I will provide questions as prompts for these essays. The emphasis will be reconstructing the situation the leaders and actors we are examining found themselves in, exploring their motives, and evaluating their course of action. Students will be expected to draw upon both non-fiction and the fiction material in each essay, though this need not be equally balanced depending on the question and the student’s interests.

Class sessions will be discussion-based apart from background historical material I may provide. If at all possible I will recruit South African natives and/or scholars to visit the seminar at least twice.

4. Develop fundamentals of information fluency and library research. Make time on your syllabus for students to complete the required library workshop outside of class and at least one additional library-related assignment for the class. Indicate any additional ways in which students will make use of library resources.

Students will be given an assignment of finding at least four published book reviews of one of the novels we read (not autobiographies). The student will then prepare a 2 page paper critically summarizing the reviews and stating whether he or she believes the review are fair and accurate (and in what respects). The student will be required to attach full text of the reviews to the submitted paper, which will count for one-half of the other 6 page papers in final course grading.

5. Provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor (e.g. Indicate specific efforts you will make to interact with each student, learn more about each student’s interests and abilities, and provide appropriate guidance for their intellectual growth.)
Each student will be required to meet with me at least once in the first month of the course outside of class. We may occasionally have class outings in which we continue our class discussions over food.

6. Briefly state your background for teaching this class:

I have taught classes on leadership and social change at UR for the past 5 years that incorporate leadership studies, social movement theory, and literature; this class represents the application of those tools to a single case. I am not a South Africa expert but have maintained an interest in the country and its politics for the past 20 years.