POS 3258 Politics In Film Fall 2019

Instructor: Miroslav Shapovalov, mi918729@ucf.edu
Class Meets: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:30-12:20 NSC 0108
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 15:30-17:00
Credit: 3 Hours
Office: Howard Phillips Hall, room 313.
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Disclaimer:

It is the purpose of this course to explore political and often sensitive issues in film, these issues are portrayed, sometimes graphically and offensively through sex, violence, racism, and a host of other things students may find objectionable. We will be watching these films and it is integral to the course to discuss them - if this is not something you wish to expose yourself to, you should find a different course or discuss the issue the first week of class with the instructor. By staying in the class, I assume your consent to the eventuality that we will be offended - but keep in mind that these offenses are worth interrogating as part of the politics of film

Course Description:

The course studies the influence of American and international motion pictures on popular understanding of American and international politics.

Purpose of the course:

The course is designed to introduce undergraduate students to cinema as a way to reflect on important changes in political and social climate in the United States and around the world. It focuses on the gradual evolution of topics in movies through time, use of movies as instruments of social critique and portrayal of several contemporary societal issues in modern movies.

Course objectives:

On completing the course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of techniques that dominated moviemaking in different decades
- Identify the underlying political context for movies in different decades
- Critically analyze the messages within movies considering different social and political context
- Understand the influence American and international motion pictures have on the perception of politics and vice versa.

Major Topics and Issues to be discussed throughout the course:

- Evolution of Film in Politics: Theatrical performances and Television
- Decades of Political Film Making and Influence
- Film Coverage of War
- Communist Influence in Hollywood, McCarthy Hearings, and Blacklisting
- Patriotism in Film
- Censorship, Prior Restraint and Free Speech Protection
- Women, Politics, and Film
- Portrayal of Blacks in Film
- Minority groups in Movies

- Critical perception of social challenges through the lens of cinema

Required Textbook:

Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christensen and Peter J. Haas. 2015. Projecting Politics: Political Messages In American Films 2nd Edition. Routledge. New York, New York ISBN: 978-0765635976
Available online free of charge through UCF library

Recommened Books

Marc Dipaolo. 2011. War, Politics and Superheroes: Ethics and Propaganda in Comics and Film. McFarland & Company. Jefferson, North Carolina ISBN: 978-0786447183
Daniel Franklin. 2016. Politics+Film 2nd Edition. Rowman & Littlefield. Lanham, Maryland ISBN: 978-1442262324

Description of Assignments & Evaluation

Video Series. Every week has a selection of movies and/or shows corresponding to each topic. Students are responsible to watch selected movies each week. The students are also encouraged to acquaint themselves with movies' individual history, context, reception and critique, using open sources. This course does not require a thorough knowledge of the abovementioned points. However, some familiarity with them will make in-class discussions more productive.

Class meetings will follow a combination lecture/discussion format. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss assigned reading from the text reading, as well as the movies assigned for each week, and to meet other course requirements outlined in your syllabus.
Lectures, discussions, video presentations, and guest speakers will not always parallel text material. Written assignments (tests, reviews) will be based on both textbook material and subjects discussed in class which may not be covered in the textbook.
Grading class participation: during lectures and in-class discussions I will mark students who actively answer to my questions or contribute to the discussion. But in order to prevent potential inaccuracy in large classes or disagreements over participation grades each student who participated will have to submit a note after the class briefly describing their participation. The note shall consist of one or two sentences describing your activity during the class and is to be submitted via Webcourses. In order to get maximum points for participation each student will have to meaningfully participate in class activities at least 15 times throughout the semester. Be advised: meeting this criterion, does not mean you can stop participating in class activities altogether. Also submitting a participation note without participating in class activities will not earn you participation points. Depending on the number of students enrolled in the class, the required number of participations can go up or down. The instructor will inform you of any changes after the Add/Drop deadline.
Movie suggestions. Students have an option of suggesting additional movies which should be covered starting with week 6. The suggestion should be reasonable and well-explained. If the suggested film is accepted the student scores a participation grade.

Other materials. Students may be assigned additional articles and/or multimedia materials available through UCF library and posted on the Webcourses platform. The materials are assigned at the beginning of each week. These articles will be part of the class and are expected to be used in preparation for tests, midterm assignment and the final exam. In-class discussions will also draw on these materials extensively.

Tests. There are two tests based on the previously learned material at the end of weeks **4** and **11.** The tests are taken in Webcourses between 6AM on Wednesday and 6PM on Friday of each respective week. The tests will contain 40 questions and you may have 60 minutes to complete each test, after which new answers

cannot be saved.

Reviews. The students are required to write two reviews of movies covered in one of the weeks. The weeks are chosen at the start of the course by students through a poll in Webcourses. These reviews should compare the films of their respective sections. You may also include comparisons from prior sections, but the main goal is to compare that section. Each review should explore concepts that are found in the readings and these should be properly cited in text with work cited at the bottom. Better reviews will cite and explain connections and concepts that come from outside articles in film criticism journals, outside books, or newspapers. The reviews must be between 1000 and 1200 words with word count should be at the bottom of the essay. Essays should be free of grammatical, spelling and stylistic problems. The students are free to choose two weeks when they would like to write a review. The students can choose between weeks 4 through 9 for their first review and weeks 10 through 14 for their second review.

Take Home Exam. The exam will consist of a detailed analytical paper of 3000 words students will have to write using the knowledge of US and international cinema they have received in class. The topic of the paper will be released at the start of the final exam week. The exam is submitted, graded, and returned to students electronically. No paper copies are accepted. Any student not taking the final exam will earn a final grade of "F".

Submission deadline: Monday December 11th, 1:00pm

GRADES

Final Course grades will be determined by:

-Attendance (10%) + Participation (10%)
-Two (2) Tests (25%)
-Two (2) Reviews (25%)
-Take Home Exam (30%)

The average grade will be evaluated on the following scale:

93 – 100 = A
90 – 92 = A-
87 – 89 = B+
83 – 86 = B
80 – 82 = B-
77 – 79 = C+
73 – 76 = C
70 – 72 = C-
67 – 69 = D+
63 – 66 = D
60 – 62 = D-
0 - 59 = F

Federal Financial Aid Requirement

Beginning in the Fall 2014 semester, UCF must comply with a federal financial aid regulation that states that in order to receive federal aid, students must be actively academically engaged (according to a federal definition) in each course in which they are enrolled. As of Fall 2014, all faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. Without verification of this engagement, students will not receive their financial aid. In order to
document that you began this course, you will be required to complete a short quiz in Canvas during the first week of classes. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of students' financial aid,

or will mean that students will not receive their aid.

Academic Integrity

The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.
http://academicintegrity.org/

UCF Creed: Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.
Integrity: I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
Scholarship: I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
Community: I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
Creativity: I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
Excellence: I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

The following definitions of plagiarism and misuse of sources come from the Council of Writing Program Administrators <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9> and have been adopted by UCF's Department of Writing & Rhetoric.

Plagiarism
In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Misuse of Sources
A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student should be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating
UCF faculty members have a responsibility for your education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to infringements of academic integrity. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.
For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes and Materials
Although the instructor is a supporter of free and unrestricted access to all necessary course materials, distributing the materials use in this class outside of the class or to those who do not have the right to view the materials constitutes a violation of the copyright law. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face legal penalties. Similarly, selling notes, handouts, etc. without authorization or using them for any commercial purpose without the

express written permission of the University and the Instructor is a punishable violation of this rule.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes

Third parties may be selling class notes from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.

In-Class Recording Policy

Outside of the notetaking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is allowed *only* with the advance and explicit written consent of the instructor. Such recordings are only acceptable in the context of personal, private studying and notetaking and are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the separate written approval of the instructor.

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Campus Safety Statement

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise in our class, we will all need to work together. Everyone should be aware of the surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.
In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Please make a note of the guide's physical location and consider reviewing the online version at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.
Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes from each of your classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency. (Insert class-specific details if appropriate)
If there is a medical emergency during class, we may need to access a first aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those items are located in this building, see http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF (click on link from menu on left). (insert class specific information if appropriate)
To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to my.ucf.edu and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the tool bar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on your Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including your e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
If you have a special need related to emergency situations, please speak with me during office hours.
Consider viewing this video (https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk) about how to manage an active shooter situation on campus or elsewhere.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Class Attendance

Attendance is not mandatory. However, if you do not attend the classes you will not be able to take part in class discussions and score attendance and participation points which is, 20% of the final grade.

Make-up Policy

All major assignments are scheduled well in advance so that you can plan around these dates. No one may make up a quiz or a midterm exam at will. There are two exceptions.

First, for personal emergencies (medical problems), students should obtain a note from their physician. Second, for students with extra-curricular activities (athletic contests or other University-sponsored activities) that conflict with deadlines, arrangements for an alternate test date must be made at least a week in advance of the scheduled test or deadline. Students must provide verification of the activity in order to be eligible for an alternate test date. I reserve the right to select the content and format of the make-up assignment based on the material covered in the course. I do not accept p o s t - f a c t u m notifications.

Religious Holidays

The University of Central Florida welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic or work requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request reasonable accommodation of their religious practices. In all
cases, you must put your request in writing and present it to the instructor at the beginning of the semester. The instructor or supervisor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation when possible to do so without fundamentally altering a course or creating an undue burden for the department.

Changes in the syllabus and/or schedule may be made at anytime during the term by announcement of the professor. It is your responsibility to stay informed of any changes.

Course Schedule

Week 1.

Chapter 1. Setting the Scene

August 26: Introduction
Syllabus and general discussion.

August 28: Why do we like the films we like?

August 30: Sending political messages through films
Movie: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)

Week 2.

Chapter 2. Making a Message

September 2: Labor Day, no classes.

September 4: Film production and techniques

September 6: What themes to look for in american films

Week 3.

Chapter 3. Causes and Special effects

September 9: Political environment of film

September 11: Film content: cause or effect?

September 13: Class Discussion
Movies: Metropolis (1925)

Week 4.

Chapter 4. Politics in Silent Movies & Chapter 5. 1930s: The Great Depression

September 16: Motion picture studio transitions.
Movies: All quiet on the Western Front (1930), Modern Times (1936).

September 18: The great depression.
Movies: Gone With the Wind (1919), Wizard of Oz (1939)
Important: Webcourses test #1 opens at 6 AM

September 20: Depression and war through the lens of Charlie Chaplin's movies
Movies: Modern Times (1936), The Great Dictator.
Optional movies: MGM: When the lion roars. The birth of a nation (1915)
Important: Webcourses test #1 closes at 6 PM

Week 5.

Chapter 6. 1940s: Hollywood goes to War

September 23: Wartime cartoon and propaganda
Cartoons: Walt Disney: on the Front Lines, Victory through Air Power, Dr. Seuss Goes to War.

September 25: Wartime movies.
Movies: Mrs. Miniver (1942), Casablanca (1942)

September 27: Post-war period
Movies: It's a Wonderful Life (1946), 1984 (1984)

Week 6.

Chapter 7. 1950s: Anti-Communism

September 30: McCarthyism, conformity, the Red Scare.
Movies: Pickup on South Street (1953), Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)

October 2: Backlash.
Movies: The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951), Storm Center (1956), Paths of Glory (1957)

October 4: Modern interpretation.
Movies: Trumbo (2015), The Bridge of Spies (2015)

Week 7.

Chapter 8. 1960s: From Mainstream to Counterculture

October 7: (Anti)war and (anti)establishment?
Movies: Dr. Strangelove (1964), Lord of the Flies (1963), Battle for Algiers (1966), James Bond Franchise
Optional TV show: Doctor Who

October 9: (Anti)war and (anti)establishment? (cont.)
Movies: Battle for Algiers (1966) The Graduate (1967),

October 11: General Discussion.
Movies and shows: Night of the Living Dead (1968), Star Trek (1966)

Week 8.

Chapter 9. 1970s: Cynicism, Paranoia, War, and Anti-Capitalism

October 14: Movie discussion: Clockwork Orange (1971),

October 16: Movie discussion: Cabaret (1972), The Godfather (1972)

October 18: Movie discussion: Executive Action (1973), All the President's Men (1976),

Optional: Monty Python show

Week 9.

Chapter 10. 1980s: New Patriotism

October 21: Rise of the New Patriotism
Movies: Apocalypse Now (1979), Rambo II First blood (1985), Rocky IV (1985)

October 23: Anti-war sentiment, patriotic and anti-capitalist?
Movies: Full metal jacket (1987), Robocop (1987)

October 25: Critique of the New Patriotism
Movies: Die Hard (1988), Total recall (1990)
Important: Review #1 Deadline

Week 10.

Chapter 11. FX Politics

October 28: The fall of the Soviet Union: looking inward
Movies: Star Trek 6 The Undiscovered Country (1991), JFK (1991), Forrest Gump (1994)

October 30: Searching for a new villain
Movies: Air Force One (1997), Tomorrow Never Dies (1997)
Optional: The Siege (1998)
Important: Webcourses test #2 opens at 6 AM

November 1: Media, violence, and politics
Movies: Natural Born Killers (1994), Wag the Dog (1997), Fight Club (1999).
Important: Webcourses test #2 closes at 6 PM

Week 11.

Chapter 12. 9/11 & Beyond & Chapter 13. True Lies, Rise of Docudramas

November 4: War on Terror
Movies: Black Hawk Down (2001), United 93 (2006).

November 6: Pushback, PATRIOT Act, and surveillance scandals
Movies: The Lives of Others (2006), Inglorious Bastards (2009)
Optional: The Dark Knight (2008)

November 8. Documentaries or dramas? The new way to address social issues
Movies: The Invisible war (2012), Der Untergang (2004), Chernobyl (2019)
Optional: Katyn (2007), Milk (2008)

Week 12.

Chapter 14 and 15. Film & Politics of Race, Sex, and Gender

November 11: Veterans Day, No classes

November 13: Race: a Century After *The Birth of a Nation*
Movies: Lion's Heart (2013), Ida (2013), , Sorry to bother you (2018), Us (2019)
Optional: Dawn of the Planet of Apes (2014), Hidden Figures (2016)

November 15: Sex.
Movies: Mustang (2015), The Post (2017), Widows (2018), On the Basis of sex (2018)
Optional: Handmaid's Tale (2017-)

Week 13.

November 18: Gender
Movies: Freier Fall (2013), The Danish Girl (2015), Moonlight (2016),
Optional TV shows: Sense8, Queer as Folks (UK & US)

November 20: Satire and Social critique worldwide: 1. Ideology and political regime
Movies: Persepolis (2007), The Death of Stalin (2017)

November 22: 2. Social inequality
Movies: Roma (2018), Parasite (2019).

Week 14.

November 25: 3. Societal disillusionment
The Collector (2016), Loveless (2017), TV show: Black Mirror
Optional: Hunger Games (2012) (jap. Battle Royale 2000)

November 27: Thanksgiving Wednesday, no classes.

November 29: Thanksgiving, no classes

Week 15.

December 2: There and back: between a TV show and real-life politics.
TV Shows: House of cards, Servant of the People
Important: Review #2 Deadline

Take home exam available on: December 5th 00:00.
Submission deadline: December 11th, 1:00pm