
Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2014

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Political Science
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Political Science - D0755
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 4920
Course Title Politics in Film and Television
Transcript Abbreviation Pltcs Film & TV
Course Description Political films and television shows often convey an understanding of the political world. How films portray the political process may influence society's attitudes toward politicians and government institutions. Students will compare the portrayal of politics in films and television to the reality as understood through political science.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 7 Week, 4 Week (May Session), 12 Week (May + Summer)
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Exclusions Not open to students with credit for 4920H. This course is not part of the Film Studies major and does not satisfy any course requirements for that program.

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 45.1001
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Upon successful completion of the course, students will have learned about the processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior.
- Students will learn how to apply theoretical concepts from political science to the discussion of political films, making connections between the literature and real-world political events.
- Students will learn how to evaluate the social and political impact of a film.
- Students will learn how to apply contemporary social science research methods to conduct rigorous research on political phenomena.

Content Topic List

- Politics in Film
- Elections
- Incumbency Advantage
- Legislative Politics
- Congressional-Presidential Relations
- Interest Groups
- Political Parties
- Media and Politics
- Democratization
- International Relations
- Civil War

Attachments

- PoliticsFilm_Syllabus.pdf: Syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Smith, Charles William)
- concurrence from Film Studies.pdf: concurrence film studies
(Concurrence. Owner: Smith, Charles William)
- Politics and Film justification.pdf: justification
(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Smith, Charles William)

Comments

- We have also put in a request for an honors version of this course POLITSC 4920H. *(by Smith, Charles William on 11/15/2013 09:21 AM)*

COURSE REQUEST
4920 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
11/20/2013

Workflow Information

| Status | User(s) | Date/Time | Step |
|------------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|
| Submitted | Smith, Charles William | 11/15/2013 10:23 AM | Submitted for Approval |
| Approved | Herrmann, Richard Karl | 11/15/2013 10:54 AM | Unit Approval |
| Approved | Haddad, Deborah Moore | 11/15/2013 11:08 AM | College Approval |
| Pending Approval | Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Nolen, Dawn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle, Danielle Nicole Hanlin, Deborah Kay | 11/15/2013 11:08 AM | ASCCAO Approval |

POLITICAL SCIENCE 4920: POLITICS IN FILM AND TELEVISION

Wednesdays, 3:40 p.m. to 6:20 p.m.

Stillman Hall 0235

Fall 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

Course Description:

Political films and television shows often convey an understanding of the political world. In some cases, how films portray the political process also influences society's attitudes toward politicians and government institutions. While political films can provide an accurate depiction of the world, they can also stray substantially from political reality. In this course, students will compare the portrayal of politics in films and television to the reality as understood through political science. Our goal is not to appraise the artistic merit of the films but rather evaluate how faithfully they represent the political process. Where significant discrepancies exist, we will consider the implications of this cinematic representation for the workings of democracy. We will also use films as a tool for surveying and improving our understanding of a broad array of topics from the political science literature, including legislative behavior, elections, presidential politics, interest-group influence, and war.

This course requires the active participation of the students. There will be very little lecture. Instead, the class will consist of two parts each week. Starting the third week, during the first half of class, we will watch a political film (films are listed below by week). During the second half of class, we will discuss the film in the context of the assigned readings. A large part of your grade (see below) is based on your participation in these discussions. The success of the class absolutely depends on the contribution of the students. Be prepared to show up and say smart things. *Note: This class is not part of the Film Studies major and does not satisfy any course requirements for that program.*

Course Goals:

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

1. Processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior.
2. How to apply theoretical concepts from political science to the discussion of political films, making connections between the literature and real-world political events.
3. How to evaluate the social and political impact of a film.
4. How to apply contemporary social science research methods to conduct rigorous research on political phenomena.

Required Materials:

1. *All required readings are posted on Carmen*
2. *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 and by taking part in class discussions.
2. **Daily Reading Quiz (20% of Overall Grade)**
Students are required to complete the assigned readings prior to the start of class. In the beginning of each class period, students will use the clickers to complete a short quiz testing basic comprehension and recall of major facts from the readings assigned for that day (i.e., there will be no trick questions). *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 handed out in class and will be due a week later. Students will also complete an in-class multiple choice exam using their clickers. Students will have previously seen at least of half of the multiple choice questions during regular lecture (see Participation and Attendance and Daily Reading Quiz sections above).
4. **Final Paper (25% of Overall Grade)**
For this assignment, students will choose a political film (a list of potential films will be distributed in class) and review leading political science research on the topics relevant to the subject or theme of the movie. The final product will consist of an 8- to 10-page paper that compares and contrasts the portrayal in the film to the political reality as understood through empirical political science research.
5. **Final Exam (20% of Overall Grade)**
The final exam will have the same format as the midterm.

******A copy of all written assignments and exam essay questions must be uploaded to the appropriate dropbox on Carmen. 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/>.

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 write-ups are due at the beginning of class. Assignments submitted more than 15 minutes after the class has begun will be assessed a 5 percent late penalty, and assignments submitted after the class has ended will be assessed a 10 percent 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 exams and assignments are returned to appeal the grade. You must submit a typed, double-spaced statement explaining why you are requesting a grade appeal 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 existing grade if I determine that the original grade 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/>.

Grading Policy (Rule 3335-7-21):**A, A-**

The instructor judged the student to have satisfied the stated objectives of the course in an excellent manner. The student's performance was judged to be in this range of high quality based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor's personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based on the instructor's experience and expertise.

B+, B, B-

The instructor judged the student to have satisfied the stated objectives of the course in an above-average manner. The student's performance was judged to be in this range of above-average quality based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor's personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based on the instructor's experience and expertise.

C+, C, C-

The instructor judged the student to have satisfied the stated objectives of the course in an average manner. The student's performance was judged to be in this range of average quality based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor's personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based on the instructor's experience and expertise.

D+, D

The instructor judged the student to have satisfied the stated objectives of the course in a low but acceptable manner. The student's performance was judged to be in this range of below average but acceptable quality based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor's personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based on the instructor's experience and expertise.

E

The instructor judged the student not to have satisfied the stated objectives of the course. Credit for a course in which the mark of "E" has been received can be obtained only by repeating and passing the course in class. (See rules 3335-7-23 to 3335-7-28 of the Administrative Code.)

Course Overview and Schedule:**Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview****Week 2: Politics in Film***Reading:*

- Christensen, Terry, *Reel Politics: American Political Movies from Birth of a Nation to Platoon* (New York: Basic Blackwell, 1987): Preface.
- Giglio, Ernest, *Here's Looking at You: Hollywood, Film & Politics, Second Edition* (New York: Peter Lang Publishers, 2007): Chapter 1.

Week 3: **Elections I**

Film: “Primary Colors” (1998)

Reading:

- Sides, John and Lynn Vavreck, *The Gamble: Random, or Romney?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013): Chapters 1-4.

Week 4: **Elections II**

Film: “The War Room” (1993)

Reading:

- Popkin, Samuel L., *The Candidate: What It Takes to Win – and Hold – the White House* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012): Chapters 1-3, 9-10.

Week 5: **Incumbency Advantage**

Film: “The Distinguished Gentleman” (1992)

Reading:

- Jacobson, Gary C., *The Politics of Congressional Elections, Eighth Edition* (New York: Pearson, 2012): Chapters 1-3.
- Desposato, Scott W., and John R. Petrocik, 2003, “The Variable Incumbency Advantage: New Voters, Redistricting, and the Personal Vote,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47(1): pp. 18-32.

Week 6: **Legislative Politics**

Film: “Charlie Wilson’s War” (2007)

Reading:

- Mayhew, David, *Congress: The Electoral Connection, Second Edition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974): Part I.

Week 7: **Congressional-Presidential Relations I**

Film: “The Contender” (2000)

Reading:

- Segal, Jeffrey, 1987, “Senate Confirmation of Supreme Court Justices: Partisan and Institutional Politics,” *Journal of Politics* 49(4): pp. 998-1015.
- Schickler, Eric, “Congressional Investigations of the Executive Branch,” unpublished manuscript.

Week 8: **Midterm Exam**

Week 9: **Congressional-Presidential Relations II**

Film: “The West Wing,” Season 1, Episode 9 and Season 3, Episode 4

Reading:

- Cameron, Charles, *Veto Bargaining: Divided Government and Interbranch Bargaining* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000): Chapters 1-3.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, 2001, “The President’s Legislative Influence from Public Appeals,” *American Journal of Political Science* 45(2): pp. 313-329.

Week 10: **Interest Groups**

Film: "Thank You for Smoking" (2005)

Reading:

- Wright, John R., *Interest Groups and Congress: Lobbying, Contributions and Influence* (New York: Pearson): Chapters 1,3,4, and 6.

Week 11: **Political Parties**

Film: "House of Cards," Chapter 9

Reading:

- Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins, *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): Chapters 1-4.

Week 12: **Media and Politics**

Film: "Wag the Dog" (1997)

Reading:

- Krosnick, Jon A. and Laura A. Brannon, 1993, "The Impact of the Gulf War on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Multi-Dimensional Effects of Political Involvement," *American Political Science Review* 87(4): 963-975.
- Karol, David, and Edward Miguel, 2007, "The Electoral Cost of War: Iraq Casualties and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election," *Journal of Politics* 69(3): pp. 633-648.

Week 13: **Democratization**

Film: "The Last King of Scotland" (2006)

Reading:

- Geddes, Barbara, 1999, "What Do We Know about Democratization after Twenty Years," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: pp. 115-144.

Week 14: **International Relations**

Film: "Deterrence" (1999)

Reading:

- Wagner, R. Harrison, 1991, "Nuclear Deterrence, Counterforce Strategies, and the Incentive to Strike First," *American Political Science Review* 85(3): pp. 727-749.

Week 15: **Civil War**

Film: "Hotel Rwanda" (2004)

Reading:

- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin, 2003, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97(1): pp. 75-90.
- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon, 2013, "United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War," *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4): 875-891.

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

POLITICAL SCIENCE 4920: POLITICS IN FILM AND TELEVISION

(1) Catalog course description

Examination of how films and television portray politics, using political science research to compare these depictions to reality.

(2) Rationale

Political films often convey an understanding of the political world. In some cases, how films portray the political process also influences society's attitudes toward politicians and government institutions. Sometimes political films provide an accurate depiction of the world; often, however, their portrayal strays substantially from political reality. In this course, students will compare the portrayal of politics in films and television to the political reality as understood through political science. Where significant discrepancies exist, we will consider the implications of this cinematic representation for the workings of democracy. We will also use films as a tool for surveying and improving our understanding of a broad array of topics from the political science literature, including legislative behavior, elections, presidential politics, local politics, interest-group influence, and war.

(3) Learning objectives/outcomes

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

- (a) processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior;
- (b) how to apply theoretical concepts from political science to the discussion of political films, making connections between the literature and real-world political events;
- (c) how to evaluate the social and political impact of a film;
- (d) how to apply contemporary social science research methods to conduct rigorous research on political phenomena.

Students will also engage the teaching process as active learners, peer educators, and public scholars. Among the skills they will develop and strengthen are:

- (a) thinking and writing critically, imaginatively, and reflectively about the material covered in the course;
- (b) respectful and constructive participation, not limited to verbal contributions;
- (c) effective, analytical, and persuasive writing skills through the completion of three short analytical essays and one long research paper;
- (d) ability to employ critical thinking and demonstrate social scientific literacy, including basic quantitative literacy;
- (e) application of abstract theory and research methods to understand contemporary political events and public policies.

(4) Content topic list

See syllabus

From: "Podalsky, Laura" <Podalsky.1@osu.edu>
Subject: RE: concurrence request
Date: November 13, 2013 at 12:52:43 PM EST
To: "MacGilvray, Eric" <macgilvray.2@polisci.osu.edu>
Cc: "Swift, Matt" <swift.23@osu.edu>

Dear Eric,

The Interdisciplinary Film Studies Committee (IFSC) agreed to concurrence for the two new courses being proposed by Political Science.

However, we respectfully request that the syllabus for both classes (as well as any on-line descriptions on the departmental website) include a clear statement that the course will not count toward the Film Studies major. As you know, there are more and more courses that are using film as a point of departure to study other topics and issues. This can cause confusion among some students who, based on the title, assume that the courses count toward the Film Studies major. That, in turn, causes headaches for the advising staff on our end of things.

Your help with minimizing such potential problems would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Laura

Laura Podalsky
Acting Director, Film Studies
Professor and Vice Chair
Dept. of Spanish and Portuguese
The Ohio State University
1775 College Rd.
Columbus, OH 43210

From: MacGilvray, Eric
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2013 2:54 PM
To: Podalsky, Laura
Subject: concurrence request

Dear Laura (if I may),

I'm writing to request concurrence by the Program in Film Studies for a new course being proposed by the Department of Political Science on Politics in Film and Television. The course is being proposed by Professor Vladimir Kogan, who was newly hired into our department last year. The course will not focus on the technical, narrative or aesthetic aspects of film, as I take it a Film Studies course would do, but rather will compare the cinematic portrayal of political events and processes with what political science scholarship has to say about them. I therefore do not foresee significant overlap with FS offerings.

I've attached copies of two syllabi -- one for a regular and one for an honors version of the course -- which include more detailed information about the course topics and requirements. If you're able to offer concurrence then a reply to this email will suffice. However, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Many thanks,

Eric

ERIC MacGILVRAY
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