UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON -- NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

Electronically submit this completed form with attachments in one file to the Chair of the College Curriculum Committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGE (check one):</th>
<th>Arts and Sciences</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Submitted By: Stephen Farnsworth</td>
<td>Date Prepared: September 24, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Title:</td>
<td>US Political Film</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department/discipline and course number*:</td>
<td>Political Science 450</td>
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</table>

*This course number must be approved by the Office of the Registrar before the proposal is submitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of credits proposed:</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Prerequisites:</th>
<th>PSCI 101 and PSCI 102</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will this be a new, repeatable &quot;special topics&quot; course? (Do you want students to be able to take this new course more than once if the topic changes?)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of first offering of this new course:</th>
<th>FALL SEMESTER, year</th>
<th>Fall Semester, 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed frequency of offering of the course:</td>
<td>Every other fall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List the faculty who will likely teach the course:</td>
<td>Stephen Farnsworth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are ANY new resources required?</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This new course will be (check all that apply):</th>
<th>Required in the major</th>
<th>General Elective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elective in the major</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>General Education**</td>
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**AFTER the new course is approved, a separate proposal must be sent to the General Education Committee.

Catalog Description:
An examination of the political meaning and implications of influential American films, paying particular attention to the changing political and cultural messages found in films from different decades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE HISTORY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was this course taught previously as a topics or experimental course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Number and Title of Previous Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSCI 471A7 US Political Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSCI 471K1 US Political Film</td>
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</table>

X CHECK HERE if the proposed course is to be equated with the earlier topics or experimental offerings. This means that students who took the earlier "topics" course will only be able to take the new course if they made a C- grade or lower in the earlier course.

NOTE: If the proposed course has not been previously offered as a topics or experimental course, explain in the attached rationale statement why the course should be adopted even though it has not been tried out.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:
1. Rationale Statement (Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?)
2. Impact Statement (Provide details about the Library, space, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc. as needed.)
3. Sample Syllabus

Department Chair Approval: __________________________________________ Date: __________

CCC Chair Approval: __________________________________________ Date: __________

UCC Chair Approval: __________________________________________ Date: __________
1. Rationale Statement (Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?)

US Political Film has been successfully taught twice as a topics course in political science (PSCI 471K1 & PSCI 471A7). The course is an elective in both the Political Science major and the Digital Studies minor and has been used as part of individually designed special majors in journalism/communication. The course is also being proposed as an elective course in the proposed Communication & Digital Studies major.

The Political Science Department only has one regular course in the area of media and politics, even though media matters are an important and growing area of political activity – and that class, by the way, is always WAY oversubscribed.

The US Political Film course also enjoys some demand for students outside of the majors and minors previously listed. Students taking the class in 2013 were from the majors of English, Anthropology and Economics as well as from Political Science, International Affairs and Digital Studies. A number of students were turned away from the course in Fall 2013 in order to facilitate effective class discussion.

Film has long been a central avenue for the transmission of political and cultural messages about the U.S. to U.S. citizens and the world, and this course offers the department’s only examination of this powerful media vehicle. Through the use of blog posts, extensive class discussion and traditional term papers, students develop an understanding of political science and political communication theories as they apply to what has long been a highly popular medium.

2. Impact Statement (Provide details about the Library, space, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc. as needed.)

As noted above, US Political Film will continue to serve as an elective in the Political Science major and the Digital Studies minor. This course will also serve as an elective in the Communication and Digital Studies major that is being proposed. The course will not be a requirement in any of the programs listed here and will not require any additional resources.
University of Mary Washington
Political Science 471A7: US Political Film
Fall 2013

Tuesdays
6:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
Room 346, Monroe Hall

Stephen J. Farnsworth, Ph.D.
Office: Room 315, Monroe Hall
Phone: 540-654-1404
Email: sfarnswo@umw.edu
Twitter: @drsfarnsworth
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Thursdays 1:30-3:30 p.m. & 4:45-5:45 p.m.
(and by appointment)

NOTE: These films contain language, situations and depictions that some viewers may consider unacceptably violent, coarse and/or offensive. Highly sensitive individuals may wish to take another course.

Course blog: http://uspoliticalfilm.umwblogs.org/

Course Outline

Film is a powerful medium for the delivery of political and cultural messages. Throughout the semester, we will examine the political meaning and implications of popular American films. This course will cover the past century of film-making in the United States, and the changing political and cultural messages found in films from different decades.

This class is organized around several major themes. We will consider how films represent political ideologies and help construct as well as strengthen or undermine political identities. We will investigate how political history is retold by Hollywood. We also will examine how important political and social problems are treated in films.

An important component of this course is the changing ways that Hollywood has addressed these questions in different eras. How have films reflected changes in American politics over time? What do films tell us about political generations? Do popular films influence the public’s political attitudes, beliefs and perhaps even actions? In what ways can film preserve status quo, and in what ways can film serve as an agent of political change?

This class is designed to be interdisciplinary and so will examine issues that cross traditional academic boundaries. This course is an elective in the political science major and in the digital studies minor program.
Course Prerequisites

You must have taken PSCI 101 and PSCI 102 to be eligible to take this course. Students who have not yet taken PSCI 201 (American Government) may find this course particularly difficult.

Required Readings


Course Outcomes

At the end of this course, you should be able to understand better the roles the popular film play the American political system. You should be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the messages of key politically oriented films with respect to political institutions and political culture.

Additional course outcomes include the following:

1. (Ideas): Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying strategies to convey arguments, main ideas and support/evidence.
2. (Organization): Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying patterns of composition organization and development.
3. (Rhetorical Situation): Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the audience, the role of the writer, and rhetorical strategies.
4. (Editing): Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of writing conventions and correctness.
5. (Development of Discipline-specific Writing Skills): Students will learn how to synthesize difficult material in a concise, clear way while focusing on the most relevant details.
6. (Appreciation of the Nature of Systematic Inquiry): Students will assess the evidence and methods used in the studies examined in this course and think critically about conclusions that can be drawn from that material.

Email Communication of Course Information

All students are responsible for checking their university email accounts regularly for any information relating to the course.
Any course may require minor adjustments in the syllabus in order to take account of unexpected political developments. During the semester I will draw your attention to several newspaper and online articles about ongoing events that can shape some of the class discussion for a given week. These brief articles will be required readings.

Grading

Course blog:  http://uspoliticalfilm.umwblogs.org/

There will be a significant online participation component to this course. Everyone enrolled must register and then participate throughout the semester on the course blog. The blog home page contains information for signing in to the course blog, as well as creating a UMW blog account if you do not already have one. Everyone is expected to be signed in by the start of the second week of classes, so please try to do this right away. If you have a problem doing so, email me. (All our blog postings will be available to the instructor and the students enrolled in the class and should include the student’s name in either the blogger’s name or in the text of the posting.)

There will also be two papers and an in-class closed-book final essay exam in this class. The first paper is due before fall break, and the second is due towards the end of the semester. Both papers involve the examination/analysis of a specific film or films to be viewed outside of class. One paragraph summaries of the topic, including the names of the film or films being analyzed, are due roughly a month before the paper is due.

Each paper will be roughly seven pages in length. The paper should be typed using a normal sized typeface (12-point), double-spaced and properly documented with footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. No fancy binders or covers please.

Late papers will be penalized at a rate of ten points per day. A paper not turned in at the start of class on the day it is due is a late paper.

Thoughtful discussion – both during class and on the class blog -- is encouraged and will be rewarded. Students are expected to attend all classes and be prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that class. You cannot do well in this course if you do not complete all the readings and assignments before class, post your reactions to the works before class and be prepared to apply the issues raised in those readings in the context of the film you view that week.

The blog posts are designed to be brief reactions (a paragraph or two) that reflect upon some specific aspect of the week’s readings. The before-class posts are due at 5 p.m. on Mondays, the post-class posts are due by 5 p.m. on Thursdays. Each student is expected to submit at least two comments per week for ten of the weeks during the semester (e.g., at least a total of 20 posts over the course of the semester). At least one of each student’s postings for a given week must
represent a separate, distinct comment on the course material. One posting may be a substantive reaction to a posting previously submitted. In this way, students will also be able to comment/reflect/debate on the commentaries of others. I ask that all students treat each other with respect in these comments. No anonymous posting will be permitted. If a student prefers, both postings for any given week can be original threads. (To be clear, a posting stating “I agree” without saying why would not count as a substantive comment).

You cannot make up for missing posts by submitting a large number during the final weeks of the class.

Because this class meets only once a week, you must make a special effort to attend every week – one missed class means you missed 1/14th of the semester. Arriving late to class disrupts both the instructor and your fellow students.

You will be marked absent if you are more than five minutes late or if you leave early.

You must attend all classes, even if you have previously seen the film for a given week.

Grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online &amp; Class Participation (includes attendance)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mary Washington uses the following grading system:

A  “Unusual Excellence” (93 or higher=A; 90-92=A-)
B  “Work Distinctly Above Average” (87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 80-82=B-)
C  “Work of Average/Medium Quality” (77-79=C+; 73-76=C; 70-72=C-)
D  “Work of Below Average Quality” (67-69=D+; 60-66=D)
F  “Failure, No Credit” (0-59=F)

Religious Holidays

UMW and this instructor will make every reasonable effort to allow members of our diverse university community to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. However, it your responsibility to provide me with advance written notice of the dates of any major religious holidays on which you will be absent (the earlier notice the better please).
Academic Honesty and the Honor System

I encourage students to discuss the course material with each other away from class. Motivated students who form small study groups can really help each other master the concepts presented in readings, lectures and discussions.

Students are responsible for being familiar with the Honor System, and for following its provisions. Obviously, a student may not receive any help from other students during the exams. A closed-book exam means just that: no books or notes. Students who have taken an exam should not discuss its contents in the presence of students who for some reason have not yet done so. If there are any questions, please consult the Honor System and Code in the University Catalogue. If you still have a question, please ask me.

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.

Students who are found to have cheated in this course -- or who have assisted others in doing so -- will receive an “F” final grade and will face additional penalties under the Honor System.

Students are responsible for reporting all honor violations of which they are aware.

Information for Students with Disabilities

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not made contact with the Office of Disability Resources and have reasonable accommodation needs, please make an appointment with that office as soon as possible. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability before issuing an accommodation letter.

Classroom & Online Behavior

In all discussions and assignments, this course emphasizes the importance of avoiding identifications and descriptions that perpetuate stereotypes about gender, age, dialect, disability, national origin, race, religious affiliation and sexual preference. Discussions will be open and honest, but abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated. There is no food allowed in the classroom, and no smoking.

Students must turn off all wireless equipment, including instant messaging/e-mail devices and
cell phones, upon entering the classroom. The equipment must remain turned off and out of sight during the entire class. Studies show that effective learning requires full concentration and that it can take several minutes to re-focus on a topic after being distracted by a text message. **For that reason, do not surf the web or send text messages or email during our class.** You have plenty of time outside of class to do these things. Students engaging in such non-authorized online activities during class will be marked absent for that day.

You are not permitted to make any recordings of any part of the class in any format without specific authorization.

You cannot post your class notes online or share your notes with anyone who is not enrolled in the class this semester.

**If you wish to drop this class, you must do so yourself. You will not be dropped automatically.**

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**Course Schedule**

**Week 1: Course Introduction**
- Film: Excerpts from Early Political Films
- Reading: Scott, Introduction & Ch. 1

**Week 2: The Thirties: Questioning Modernity**
- Film: *Modern Times* (1936), Charlie Chaplin
- Reading: Scott, Ch. 2

**Week 3: The Thirties: The Great Depression**
- Film: *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), John Ford
- Reading: Neve, Chs. 1, 2

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10: FIRST PAPER TOPIC DUE**

**Week 4: The Forties: Frank Capra’s Vision of America**
- Film: *Meet John Doe* (1941), Frank Capra
- Reading: Scott, Ch. 3

- Film: *Casablanca* (1942), Michael Curtiz
- Reading: Neve, Chs. 3, 4
Week 6: The Fifties: Domestic Insecurity
   Film: *On The Waterfront* (1954), Elia Kazan
   Reading: Neve, Chs. 5, 6

Week 7: The Fifties (Extended): International Insecurity
   Film: *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), John Frankenheimer
   Reading: Neve: Chs. 7, 8  Scott, Ch. 4

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8 - FIRST PAPER DUE**

Week 8: The Sixties: A Searching Youth Generation
   Film: *Easy Rider* (1969), Dennis Hopper
   Reading: Ryan & Kellner, Introduction and Ch. 1

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22: SECOND PAPER TOPIC DUE**

Week 9: The Seventies: The Cinema of Despair
   Film: *Taxi Driver* (1976), Martin Scorsese
   Reading: Ryan & Kellner, Chs. 2, 3

Week 10: The Eighties: Race, Class and Ethnic Identities
   Film: *Do The Right Thing* (1989), Spike Lee
   Reading: Ryan & Kellner Ch. 4

Week 11: The Nineties: Gender Identities
   Film: *Thelma and Louise* (1991), Ridley Scott
   Ryan & Kellner, Ch. 5

Week 12: The Nineties: Revisiting the “The Good War”
   Film: *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), Steven Spielberg
   Reading: Ryan & Kellner, Chs. 7, 8, 9

Week 13: The Nineties: Revisiting Youth Politics and Culture
   Film: *Slacker* (1990), Richard Linklater
   Reading: Ryan & Kellner, Ch. 10

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 - SECOND PAPER DUE**

Week 14: Political Representations as a New Century Dawns
   Film: *Bulworth* (1998), Warren Beatty
   Reading: Scott, Chs. 5, 6, 7

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10 -- FINAL EXAM at 7 p.m.**

Students are required to be present at the start of exams to receive full credit for the exam.