

**PS 350 Politics & Film  
(On-Line)  
Summer 2025  
Priscilla L. Southwell**

Political content tends to saturate many films, in both explicit and implicit ways. A primary goal of this class will be to examine the political relevance of films, as they relate to actual political events and developments. The required films are grouped by broad thematic categories, from the United States and various other countries. Starting from these examples, this course aims to characterize film as an especially apt medium for illustrating, defending, challenging, and engaging political ideas.

**OFFICE HOURS:** I can be contacted by email ([psouth@uoregon.edu](mailto:psouth@uoregon.edu)) 9-5 M-TH, with a 24-response time, and with a semi-instant response from me, from 10-12 on Wednesdays.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christiansen, and Peter J. Haas. *Projecting Politics: Political Messages in American Films*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Routledge, 2015. Do not purchase the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of this book. The UO library has *Projecting Politics* as an e-book with unlimited users. Just search for "Projecting Politics."

Quizzes and the final exam (if you choose this option) for this course will be based on this latest (2<sup>nd</sup>) edition of *Projecting Politics*, the PowerPoints, and the required 16 films.

**EVALUATION**

You must complete all quizzes, and (the final exam **OR** the final paper) by  
**Sunday, September 14, 6 p.m. (PDT)**

However, you may proceed at your own pace on the quizzes; you could take three quizzes in one week or one per week. This is your choice.

**Quizzes:** 50% of Grade (or 12.5% each)

**Final or Paper:** 50% of Grade

**ASSIGNED FILMS AND READING FOR EACH SECTION:**

**SECTION # 1 (for QUIZ #1):**

**a) Violence of a Different Sort**

*In the Heat of the Night* (USA, 1967, "109"); *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (USA, 2012, 130")

**b) Environmental Activism or Terrorism?**

*If a Tree Falls* (USA, 2011, 85"); *The East* (USA, 2013, 116")

Reading: *Projecting Politics*, Chapters 1-2.

Review background material on PowerPoint I

## **SECTION # 2 (for QUIZ # 2):**

### **a) Politicians**

*Milk* (USA, 2008, 129"); *The Candidate* (USA, 1972, 110")

### **b) Conflict (Political & Personal)**

*The Company You Keep* (USA, 2012, 121")

*Trumbo* (USA, 2015, 124")

Reading: *Projecting Politics*, Chapters 3-6.

Review background material on PowerPoint II

## **SECTION # 3 (for QUIZ # 3):**

### **a) Individual against the State – Germany and the U.K.**

*The Lives of Others* (Germany, 2007, "138"); *Official Secrets* (UK, 2019, 152")

### **b) Individual against the State – USA and Kenya**

*Snowden* (USA, 2016, 134"); *The Constant Gardener* (USA, 2005, "129")

Reading: *Projecting Politics*, Chapters 7-10.

Review background material on PowerPoint III

## **SECTION # 4 (for QUIZ # 4):**

### **a) Individual against the State – Ireland**

*The Crying Game* (UK, 1992, 111"); *In the Name of the Father* (USA, 1993, 133")

### **b) Scandal and Corruption**

*Inside Job* (USA, 2010, 108")

*Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Eliot Spitzer* (USA, 2010, 117")

Reading: *Projecting Politics*, Chapters 11-13.

Review background material on PowerPoint IV

Note: You must obtain these films on your own and watch them at your own pace, but I would recommend that you see at least two films a week, or you will quickly fall behind. You should also watch the PowerPoint that is associated with each of the four films associated with each section and quiz. These PowerPoints are available on the "Files" tab on Canvas.

Keep in mind that you may have to rent or buy the following movies, in some cases, but many of these films are available in the UO Knight Library, in your local library, on YouTube, Netflix or Amazon Prime.

**QUIZZES:** There are four quizzes in this class – each covering the four required films, the PowerPoints, and 3-4 chapters in the textbook, for each section, as listed on the

syllabus. All quizzes will be taken on-line via CANVAS, and you are not permitted to consult the textbook, the Internet or notes while taking these quizzes. The quizzes are all contained within the folder called "Quizzes." You will have 30 minutes to take each quiz, and you may re-take each quiz once, and the highest grade will be recorded. There are 20 multiple choice questions per quiz, but your second attempt may have different questions, as they are randomly picked from a larger test bank. Each quiz is worth 12.5% of your grade.

## **FINAL EXAM OR FINAL PAPER:**

**You must choose one of the following two options:**

### **Option 1: Final Exam**

I will email the final exam to you **on Sunday, September 14, 4 p.m. (PDT)** and your answers must be submitted through the "Assignments" on the CANVAS website in the "Assignments" folder, by **Sunday, September 14, 6 p.m. (PDT)**. It will consist primarily of short essay questions. This exam will be run through "Turnitin" to protect against plagiarism.

Let me know immediately if you do not receive it. If you decide to wait until later in the day to let me know that you have not received the final, you will not be granted an extension past the 6 p.m. deadline. For every hour that this exam is late, your grade will be reduced by 10 points. **There will be no early exams or make-up exams, so please do not schedule any travel, work, or other commitments during this time period. If you plan to take this exam, but miss it for any reason, you will be required to write the paper instead.**

### **Option 2: Final Paper**

Instead, you may opt out of the final exam and write a 8-10 page paper instead. This paper must be submitted on the CANVAS website in the "Assignments" folder for this class by **Sunday, September 14, 6 p.m. (PDT)**, although you can turn it in earlier. This paper will be run through "Turnitin" to protect against plagiarism. The topic of this paper may be of your own choosing, but must pertain directly to one or more of the required films and analysis from *Projecting Politics*. A critique of the analysis offered in this book is certainly acceptable, but not required. A paper guidelines sheet is available on CANVAS in the "Files" folder. For every hour that it is late, your grade will be reduced by 10 points.

## **Grading Scale:**

A+	= 98 - 100	C+	= 78 - 79
A	= 92 - 97	C	= 72 - 77
A--	= 90 - 91	C--	= 70 - 71
B+	= 88 - 89	D+	= 68 - 69
B	= 82 - 87	D	= 62 - 67
B--	= 80 - 81	D-	= 60 - 61

**TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- You will need regular access to a computer with web access.
- **No incompletes** can be given for this course due to its web-based nature. If you do not complete a quiz for any reason, you will receive a “0.” If you have trouble accessing any quiz, please contact me immediately.
- All quizzes and the final exam/or paper must be completed by **Sunday, September 14, 6 p.m. (PDT)**
- Please email me directly, not through CANVAS, with any questions from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, and I will respond within 24 hours.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Knowledge of the political context of both international and domestic films
- Ability to analyze the ideological content of films over time
- Ability to analyze the cultural content of films across countries

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** It is a violation of the UO Student Conduct Code to open the required textbook or other materials during a quiz, collaborate or consult with another person during a quiz, share questions or answers with others, print out the quiz, or use a quiz or quiz answers provided by another person, or to pay another person or organization to assist you in taking these quizzes. If you engage in any of these activities even once, your grade for all the quizzes will be a zero, which will make it essentially impossible to pass the class.

**ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu).

**TITLE IX STATEMENT:** I am a student-directed employee. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see Employee Reporting Obligations. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender based violence, may seek information on [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu), [respect.uoregon.edu](http://respect.uoregon.edu), [titleix.uoregon.edu](http://titleix.uoregon.edu), or [aaeo.uoregon.edu](http://aaeo.uoregon.edu) or contact the non-confidential Title IX office (541-346-8136), AAEO office (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.