Course information:
Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

Academic Unit: School of Politics and Global Studies
Department: Political Science

Subject: POS Number: 294 Title: Watching Politics: How Films Explain American Politics
Units: 3

Is this a cross-listed course? No
If yes, please identify course(s):

Is this a shared course? (choose one) If so, list all academic units offering this course No
Course description:

Requested designation: Historical Awareness-H
Note: a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

Eligibility:
Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university’s review and approval process. For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact the General Studies Program Office at (480) 965-0739.

Area(s) proposed course will serve:
A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:
Complete and attach the appropriate checklist
- Literacy and Critical inquiry core courses (L)
- Mathematics core courses (MA)
- Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses (CS)
- Humanities, Fine Arts and Design core courses (HU)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences core courses (SB)
- Natural Sciences core courses (NS/SC)
- Global Awareness courses (G)
- Historical Awareness courses (H)
- Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)

A complete proposal should include:
- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Syllabus
- Table of Contents from the textbook, and/or lists of course materials

Contact information:
Name: Kim Fridkin
Phone: 965-4195
Mail code: 3902
E-mail: fridkin@asu.edu

Department Chair/Director approval: (Required)
Chair/Director name (Typed): Kim Fridkin
Date: 6/13/13
Chair/Director (Signature):

Rev. 1/94, 4/95, 7/98, 4/00, 1/02, 10/06, 11/11/12/11, 7/12
Rationale and Objectives

The lack of historical awareness on the part of contemporary university graduates has led recent studies of higher education to call for the creation and development of historical consciousness in undergraduates now and in the future. From one perspective historical awareness is a valuable aid in the analysis of present-day problems because historical forces and traditions have created modern life and lie just beneath its surface. From a second perspective, the historical past is an indispensable source of national identity and of values which facilitate social harmony and cooperative effort. Along with this observation, it should be noted that historical study can produce intercultural understanding by tracing cultural differences to their origins in the past. A third perspective on the need for historical awareness is summed up in the aphorism that he who fails to learn from the past is doomed to repeat it. Teachers of today's students know well that those students do not usually approach questions of war and peace with any knowledge of historic concord, aggression, or cruelty, including even events so recent as Nazi and Stalinist terror.

The requirement of a course which is historical in method and content presumes that "history" designates a sequence of past events or a narrative whose intent or effect is to represent such a sequence. The requirement also presumes that these are human events and that history includes all that has been felt, thought, imagined, said, and done by human beings. The opportunities for nurturing historical consciousness are nearly unlimited. History is present in the languages, art, music, literatures, philosophy, religion, and the natural sciences, as well as in the social science traditionally called History.
Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

**ASU--[H] CRITERIA**

**THE HISTORICAL AWARENESS [H] COURSE MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Identify Documentation Submitted</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1. History is a major focus of the course. Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>2. The course examines and explains human development as a sequence of events. Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>3. There is a disciplined systematic examination of human institutions as they change over time. Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>4. The course examines the relationship among events, ideas, and artifacts and the broad social, political and economic context. Syllabus</td>
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**THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE:**

- Courses in which there is only chronological organization.
- Courses which are exclusively the history of a field of study or of a field of artistic or professional endeavor.
- Courses whose subject areas merely occurred in the past.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria (from checksheet)</th>
<th>How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples, in next column)</th>
<th>Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>During Section 1, students will learn about the history of political film making in the United States. In Section III of the course, the students will learn about the major political events of the last 100 years and the impact of these events on the political behavior of citizens and elected officials.</td>
<td>Syllabus Section 1 and Section 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>We will use the examination of political events and movements (e.g., the Civil Rights movement, Vietnam War) to discuss changes in the political behavior of citizens, in general (e.g., increases in polarization of the electorate) as well changes among the role of minority groups over the last 100 years.</td>
<td>Section 3-4 of the Syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The course uses major political events to explain changes in major institutions. For example, we will use films as well as discussion of historical events to learn about changes in the party system, changes in electoral campaigns, changes in nomination procedures in the U.S. Senate</td>
<td>Section 3 of Syllabus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Catalog Description:

Watching Politics: How Films Explain American Politics

The course will trace the evolution of American Politics over the last century by examining how film portrays (1) major political events (2) as well as changes in the role of race, class, gender, and sexuality in American politics.
POS 294: Watching Politics:
How Films Explain American Politics

Spring 2014
Classroom:
Office Hrs
Class Time:

Professor Kim Fridkin
fridkin@asu.edu
Office: 6752 Coor Hall

Purpose of Course: In this course, we will rely on visual and aural texts (i.e., film) to trace the evolution of American Politics over the last century. The course will examine the major historical events (i.e., the Depression, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, 9/11) by looking at films written during or about these events. The course will also examine how the nature of political film has changed over the same time frame. Furthermore, since the political history of the United States involves a diversity of experiences, with different groups playing important roles in the political events of this country, we will spend time examining changes in the role of race, class, gender, and sexuality in American politics.

The requirements for this course are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hourly Exam #1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hourly Exam #2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly Exam #3</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Required Reading
Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin (2009). *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies*. Wiley-Blackwell

Schedule of Topics

I. Understanding and Interpreting Political Films (Week of January 13)
   Benshoff and Griffin, Chapter 1
   Christensen and Hass, Chapter 1-3

II. The Structure and History of Filmmaking (Week of January 20)
    Benshoff and Griffin, Chapter 2
    Christensen and Hass, Appendix 1

III. Political Films By Decade
    1910s-1930s (Week of January 27)
    Events to Be Covered: World War I, The Great Depression
    Readings: Christensen and Hass, Chapter 4-5
    Film to Be Viewed: *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*

    1940s-1950s (Week of Week of February 3)
    Events to Be Covered: World War II, Authoritarianism, Communism
    Readings: Christensen and Hass, Chapter 6-7
    Film to Be Viewed: *The Manchurian Candidate*

    1960s-1970s (Week of February 10)
    Events to Be Covered: Vietnam War, Civil Rights, Watergate,
    Readings: Christensen and Hass, Chapter 8-9
    Film to Be Viewed: *All the President’s Men*

    1980s (Week of February 17)
    Events to Be Covered: New Patriotism and Capitalism, Iran-Contra Scandal
    Readings: Christensen and Hass, Chapter 10
    Film to Be Viewed: *Silkwood*

    1990s and Beyond 9/11 (February 24)
    Events to Be Covered: Collapse of Soviet Union, 2000 Election, 9/11, Recession,
    Readings: Christensen and Hass, Chapter 11
    Film to Be Viewed: *Wag the Dog*

IV Political Films by Topic

   Ethnic Minorities and Film (Week of March 3-Week of March 17)
   Readings: Benshoff and Griffin, Chapters 3-7
   Films to Be Viewed: *Do The Right Thing; Little Big Man*
Class and American Film (Week of March 24-Week of March 31)
Readings: Benshoff and Griffin, Chapters 8-9
Films to Be Viewed: *Meet John Doe, Norma Rae*

Gender and American Film (Week of April 7-Week of April 14)
Readings: Benshoff and Griffin, Chapters 10-13
Films to Be Viewed: *State of the Union, The Contender*

Sexuality and American Film (Week of April 21)
Readings: Benshoff and Griffin, Chapters 14-15
Film to Be Viewed: *Milk*

**V. What We Know from Political Film** (Week of April 28)
Readings: Benshoff and Griffin, Chapters 17, Christensen and Hass, Chapter 15
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A Special Case: Jews and Hollywood
Case Study: The Jazz Singer (1927)
Veiled and Reviled: Arabs on Film in America
Conclusion: Whiteness and American Film Today
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African Americans in Early Film
Blacks in Classical Hollywood Cinema
World War II and the Postwar Social Problem Film
The Rise and Fall of Blaxploitation Filmmaking
Box: Blacks on TV
Hollywood in the 1980s and the Arrival of Spike Lee
Black Independent vs. "Neo-Blaxploitation"
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New Images for a New Century – Or Not?
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