



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

**Course information:**

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

Academic Unit	<u>School of Politics and Global Studies</u>	Department	<u>Political Science</u>
Subject	<u>POS</u>	Number	<u>294</u>
Title	<u>Watching Politics: How Films Explain American Politics</u>		Units: <u>3</u>
Is this a cross-listed course?	<u>No</u>		
If yes, please identify course(s)	_____		
Is this a shared course?	(choose one) If so, list all academic units offering this course		<u>No</u>
Course description:	_____		

**Requested designation:** Social and Behavioral Sciences-SB  
*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 (SQ/SG)
  - Global Awareness courses (G)
  - Historical Awareness courses (H)
  - Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)

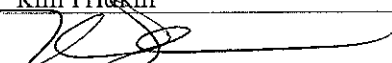
**A complete proposal should include:**

- 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): 

**Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for**  
**SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES [SB]**

**Rationale and Objectives**

The importance of the social and behavioral sciences is evident in both the increasing number of scientific inquiries into human behavior and the amount of attention paid to those inquiries. In both private and public sectors people rely on social scientific findings to assess the social consequences of large-scale economic, technological, scientific, and cultural changes.

Social scientists' observations about human behavior and their unique perspectives on human events make an important contribution to civic dialogue. Today, those insights are particularly crucial due to the growing economic and political interdependence among nations.

Courses proposed for General Studies designation in the Social and Behavioral Sciences area must demonstrate emphases on: (1) social scientific theories and principles, (2) the methods used to acquire knowledge about cultural or social events and processes, and (3) the impact of social scientific understanding on the world.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

<b>ASU--[SB] CRITERIA</b>					
<b>A SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE [SB] course should meet all of the following criteria. If not, a rationale for exclusion should be provided.</b>					
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Course is designed to advance basic understanding and knowledge about human interaction.	Syllabus		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Course content emphasizes the study of social behavior such as that found in: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANTHROPOLOGY</li> <li>• ECONOMICS</li> <li>• CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY</li> <li>• HISTORY</li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 60%; vertical-align: top;">Political Behavior</td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANTHROPOLOGY</li> <li>• ECONOMICS</li> <li>• CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY</li> <li>• HISTORY</li> </ul>	Political Behavior	Syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANTHROPOLOGY</li> <li>• ECONOMICS</li> <li>• CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY</li> <li>• HISTORY</li> </ul>	Political Behavior				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Course emphasizes: a. the distinct knowledge base of the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., sociological anthropological). OR b. the distinct methods of inquiry of the social and behavioral sciences (e.g., ethnography, historical analysis).	Syllabus		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Course illustrates use of social and behavioral science perspectives and data.	Syllabus, the course looks at political events through the lens of history as well as political science		
		<b>THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COURSES ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE [SB] AREA EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE CONCERNS:</b>			
		• Courses with primarily fine arts, humanities, literary, or philosophical content.			
		• Courses with primarily natural or physical science content.			
		• Courses with predominantly applied orientation for professional skills or training purposes.			
		• Courses emphasizing primarily oral, quantitative, or written skills.			

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
POS	294	Watching Politics: How Films Explain American Politics	SB

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
1	The course is designed for students to understand significant political events during the last century.	Section III of the Syllabus
2	The entire course emphasizes the study of political behavior, both overtime and among diverse groups of political actors	Section III and Section IV of the Syllabus
3-4	The course will utilize research from political science to inform the political phenomena displayed in the films and illustrated by political events. For example, when learning about women and political film, we will discuss the role of gender stereotypes in political decision-making	Section III and Section IV of the Syllabus

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

Course Requirement	Percentage of Grade
Hourly Exam #1	20%
Hourly Exam #2	20%
Hourly Exam #3	20%
Final Examination	30%
Participation	10%

### Required Reading

Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin (2009). *America on Film: Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies*. Wiley-Blackwell

Terry Christensen and Peter J. Haas (2005). *Projecting Politics: Political Messages in American Films*. M.E. Sharpe.

## **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

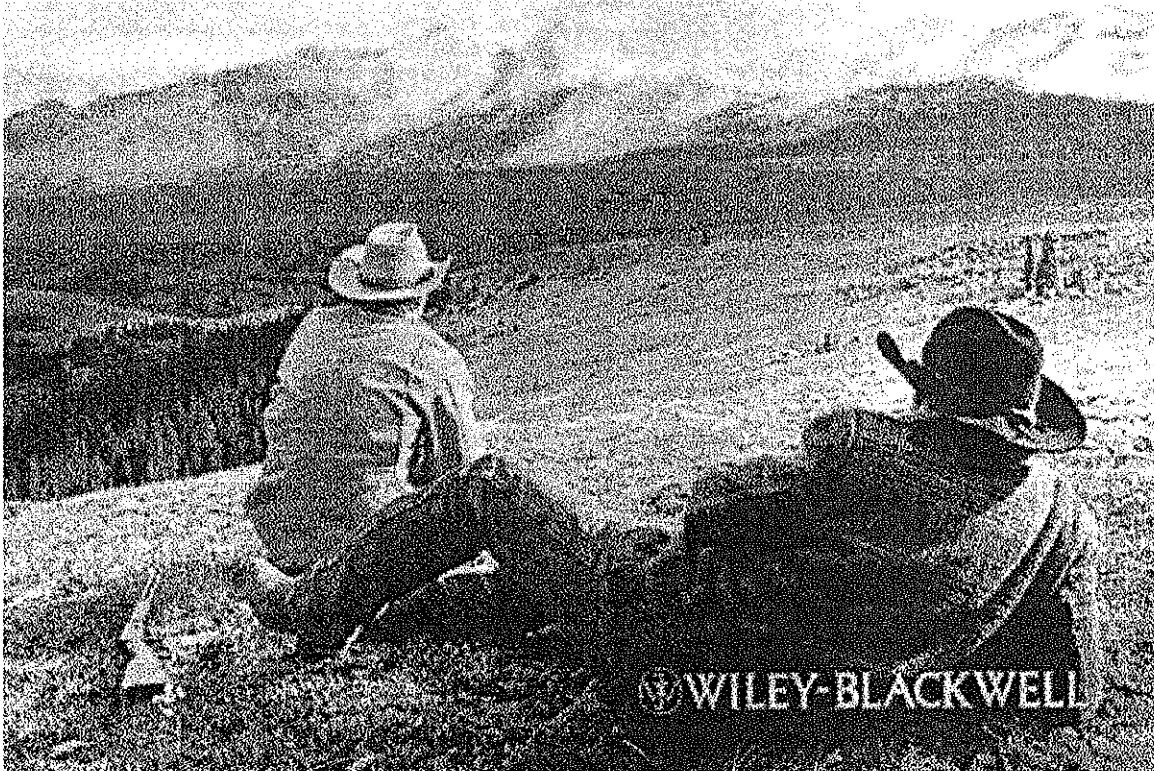


SECOND EDITION

Harry M. Ranshoff and Sean Griffin

# AMERICA ON FILM

REPRESENTING RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY AT THE MOVIES

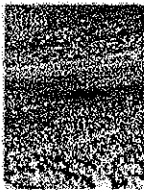


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# CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	xi
How to Use This Book	xvi

## Part I Culture and American Film 1



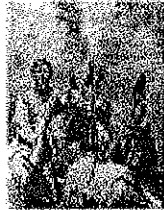
### 1 Introduction to the Study of Film Form and Representation 3

Film Form	3
American Ideologies: Discrimination and Resistance	6
Culture and Cultural Studies	12
Case Study: <i>The Lion King</i> (1994)	17
Questions for Discussion	20
Further Reading	20

### 2 The Structure and History of Hollywood Filmmaking 21

Hollywood vs. Independent Film	21
The Style of Hollywood Cinema	23
The Business of Hollywood	28
The History of Hollywood: The Movies Begin	30
The Classical Hollywood Cinema	34
World War II and Postwar Film	37
"New" Hollywood and the Blockbuster Mentality	40
Questions for Discussion	43
Further Reading	43
Further Screening	44

**Part II Race and Ethnicity and American Film 45**  
**Introduction to Part II: What is Race?**



**3 The Concept of Whiteness and American Film 51**


Seeing White	52
Bleaching the Green: The Irish in American Cinema	56
Looking for Respect: Italians in American Cinema	60
A Special Case: Jews and Hollywood	65
Case Study: <i>The Jazz Singer</i> (1927)	68
Veiled and Reviled: Arabs on Film in America	70
Conclusion: Whiteness and American Film Today	76
Questions for Discussion	77
Further Reading	77
Further Screening	77

**4 African Americans and American Film 78**

African Americans in Early Film	78
Blacks in Classical Hollywood Cinema	82
World War II and the Postwar Social Problem Film	85
The Rise and Fall of Blaxploitation Filmmaking	88
Box: Blacks on TV	90
Hollywood in the 1980s and the Arrival of Spike Lee	90
Black Independent vs. "Neo-Blaxploitation" Filmmaking	93
New Images for a New Century – Or Not?	95
Case Study: <i>Bamboozled</i> (2000)	98
Questions for Discussion	100
Further Reading	100
Further Screening	101

**5 Native Americans and American Film 102**

The American "Indian" Before Film	103
Ethnographic Films and the Rise of the Hollywood Western	105
The Evolving Western	110
A Kinder, Gentler America?	115
Case Study: <i>Smoke Signals</i> (1998)	118
Conclusion: Twenty-First-Century Indians?	121
Questions for Discussion	122
Further Reading	122
Further Screening	122

<b>6 Asian Americans and American Film</b>	<b>123</b>
Silent Film and Asian Images	124
Asians in Classical Hollywood Cinema	126
World War II and After: War Films, Miscegenation Melodramas, and Kung Fu	130
Contemporary Asian American Actors and Filmmakers	134
Case Study: <i>Eat a Bowl of Tea</i> (1989)	140
Questions for Discussion	142
Further Reading	142
Further Screening	142
<b>7 Latinos and American Film</b>	<b>143</b>
The Greaser and the Latin Lover: Alternating Stereotypes	145
World War II and After: The Good Neighbor Policy	148
The 1950s to the 1970s: Back to Business as Usual?	152
Expanding Opportunities in Recent Decades	154
Conclusion: A Backlash Against Chicanos?	159
Case Study: <i>My Family/Mi Familia</i> (1995)	160
Questions for Discussion	163
Further Reading	163
Further Screening	163
<b>Part III Class and American Film</b>	<b>165</b>
Introduction to Part III: What is Class?	
	
<b>8 Classical Hollywood Cinema and Class</b>	<b>171</b>
Setting the Stage: The Industrial Revolution	171
Early Cinema: The Rise of the Horatio Alger Myth	173
Hollywood and Unionization	178
Class in the Classical Hollywood Cinema	180
Case Study: <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (1940)	184
Conclusion: Recloaking Class Consciousness	186
Questions for Discussion	186
Further Reading	186
Further Screening	186
<b>9 Cinematic Class Struggle After the     Depression</b>	<b>187</b>
From World War II to the Red Scare	187
From Opulence to Counterculture	191
Box: Class on Television	196

New Hollywood and the Resurrection of the Horatio Alger Myth	198
Case Study: <i>Bullworth</i> (1998)	204
Conclusion: Corporate Hollywood and Labor Today	204
Questions for Discussion	208
Further Reading	208
Further Screening	209

**Part IV Gender and American Film 211**

**Introduction to Part IV: What is Gender?**



**10 Women in Classical Hollywood Filmmaking 217**

Images of Women in Early Cinema	218
Early Female Filmmakers	222
Images of Women in 1930s Classical Hollywood	227
World War II and After	231
Case Study: <i>All that Heaven Allows</i> (1955)	234
Questions for Discussion	236
Further Reading	237
Further Screening	237

**11 Exploring the Visual Parameters of Women in Film 238**

<i>Ways of Seeing</i>	238
"Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"	242
Case Study: <i>Gilda</i> (1946)	250
Conclusion: Complicating Mulvey's Arguments	253
Questions for Discussion	255
Further Reading	255
Further Screening	256

**12 Masculinity in Classical Hollywood Filmmaking 257**

Masculinity and Early Cinema	260
Masculinity and the Male Movie Star	262
World War II and Film Noir	267
Case Study: <i>Dead Reckoning</i> (1947)	272
Masculinity in 1950s American Film	274
Questions for Discussion	277
Further Reading	277
Further Screening	277

**13 Gender in American Film Since the 1960s 278**

Second Wave Feminism and Hollywood	278
Into the 1980s: A Backlash against Women?	283
Box: Women and American Television	284
A New Generation of Female Filmmakers	291
Case Study: <i>The Ballad of Little Jo</i> (1993)	296
Conclusion: Gender in the Early Twenty-First Century	296
Questions for Discussion	301
Further Reading	301
Further Screening	302

**Part V Sexuality and American Film 303****Introduction to Part V: What is Sexuality?****14 Heterosexuality, Homosexuality, and Classical Hollywood 309**

(Hetero)Sexuality on Screen	309
(Homo)Sexuality in Early Film	311
Censoring Sexuality during the Classical Hollywood Era	314
Postwar Sexualities and the Weakening of the Production Code	319
Camp and the Underground Cinema	324
Case Study: <i>The Celluloid Closet</i> (1995)	326
Questions for Discussion	328
Further Reading	328
Further Screening	328

**15 Sexualities on Film Since the Sexual Revolution 329**

Hollywood and the Sexual Revolution	329
Film and Gay Culture from Stonewall to AIDS	331
The AIDS Crisis	336
Queer Theory and New Queer Cinema	339
Box: Queer TV	340
Case Study: <i>Go Fish</i> (1995)	347
Hollywood Responds to New Queer Cinema	347
(Hetero)Sexualities in Contemporary American Cinema	352
Questions for Discussion	354
Further Reading	354
Further Screening	355

Part VI Ability and American Film 357  
Introduction to Part VI: What is Ability?



16 Cinematic Images of (Dis)Ability 363

Disabled People in Early American Film: Curiosities and Freaks	364
Romanticizing Disability in Classical Hollywood Melodramas	368
Disability in War Movies and Social Problem Films	370
Disability and the Counterculture	374
Case Study: <i>Children of a Lesser God</i> (1986)	378
A More Enlightened Age?	380
Questions for Discussion	384
Further Reading	384
Further Screening	384

17 Making Connections 385

Case Study 1: <i>Queen Christina</i> (1933)	386
Case Study 2: <i>The Old Maid</i> (1939)	388
Case Study 3: <i>The Gang's All Here</i> (1943)	390
Case Study 4: <i>A Patch of Blue</i> (1965)	392
Case Study 5: <i>Erin Brockovich</i> (2000)	394
Case Study 6: <i>8 Mile</i> (2002)	396
Case Study 7: <i>Better Luck Tomorrow</i> (2002)	398
Case Study 8: <i>Saving Face</i> (2004)	400
Case Study 9: <i>Crash</i> (2004)	402
Case Study 10: <i>The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio</i> (2005)	404
Case Study 11: <i>Brakeback Mountain</i> (2005)	406
Case Study 12: <i>Quinceañera</i> (2006)	408

Glossary	410
Index	432

# PROJECTING POLITICS

POLITICAL MESSAGES  
IN AMERICAN FILMS

TERRY CHRISTENSEN AND PETER J. HAAS



# Contents

Preface	vii
Acknowledgments	xiii

## I. Studying Political Films

1. Setting the Scene: A Theory of Film and Politics	3
2. The Making of a Message: Film Production and Techniques and Political Messages	19
3. Causes and Special Effects: The Political Environment of Film	41

## II. Political Films by Decade

4. Politics in the Silent Movies	61
5. The 1930s: Political Movies and the Great Depression	73
6. The 1940s: Hollywood Goes to War	91
7. The 1950s: Anti-Communism and Conformity	109
8. The 1960s: From Mainstream to Counterculture	125
9. The 1970s: Cynicism, Paranoia, War and Anticapitalism	143
10. The 1980s: New Patriotism, Old Reds, and a Return to Vietnam in the Age of Reagan	171
11. The 1990s and Beyond 9/11	199

## III. Political Films by Topic

12. True Lies? The Rise of Political Documentaries	227
13. Film and the Politics of Race: The Minority Report	237

14. Women, Politics, and Film: All About Eve? <i>Elizabeth Ann Haas, PhD</i>	249
15. Afterword	277

### Appendixes

1. An Outtake: A Guide for the Political Analysis of Movies	291
2. The Net: A Brief Guide to Web-Based Film Resources	301
3. Closing Credits: A Political Filmography	307
4. The Bottom Line: Domestic Gross Receipts by Decade	325
Notes	333
Index	343
About the Authors	365