

BLO

2017–2018 Academic Year  
Summer Session 2017



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
FACULTY OF ARTS

POLI 415 L01  
Politics Through Film

<b>INSTRUCTOR</b>	<b>Chris W. J. Roberts</b>
<b>TELEPHONE</b>	<b>(403) 220-3624 / Cell (403) 870-9241</b>
<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>SS 702</b>
<b>EMAIL</b>	<b>christopher.roberts@ucalgary.ca</b>
<b>OFFICE HOURS</b>	<b>Tuesday/Thursday 14:00-15:00 or by appointment</b>
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<b><a href="http://d2l.ucalgary.ca">http://d2l.ucalgary.ca</a></b>
<b>LECTURE LOCATION</b>	<b>SS 203</b>
<b>LECTURE TIMES</b>	<b>Tuesday/Thursday 16:00-18:45</b>
<b>PREREQUISITES</b>	<b>Three (3) units in political science</b>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** Films can be “consumed” and engaged at multiple levels. They are not just aesthetic creations designed to tell a particular story or, more crassly, to make money. From its earliest days, however, film as an art form was often an explicitly political medium, designed to mobilize and persuade. As an occasionally powerful form of communication, films can inform or misinform, influence and incite audiences to think about political (and social and economic) problems and phenomena in different ways. In some cases they can prove as insightful as, or at least complementary to, the scholarly literature about politics.

In this course we’ll examine a series of paired films (from the 1960s to the 2000s) that reflect important, *general* political themes across political science major fields (from political theory and international relations to comparative politics) and, usually, each will also be relevant to one or more *specific* subfields and interests, including elections, the environment, war, terrorism, apartheid, postcolonialism, migration, unconstitutional changes of government, and tyranny and totalitarianism. One theme cutting across a number of films and readings is gender and politics.

And this summer there is a bonus theme: How might these films help us understand our own challenging political moment we (as Canadians, North Americans, global citizens) find ourselves facing in the Summer of 2017?

Much of our time in class will be spent watching and discussing our films, in the context of relevant literature. Some of these movies will be black and white, some will have subtitles. Some will be big budget Hollywood productions; others will come from various regions of the world. Some will be

funny and satirical, some will be violent, and many will tackle very difficult subjects, so both language and visuals will occasionally become intense. Sensitive material is unavoidable, so if you find it difficult to watch or discuss such content, this may not be the right class for you.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES**

In this course we'll rigorously apply a four-part analytical framework to our films, so you will develop the competencies to integrate these four core questions into your political analysis toolkit:

- 1) Most importantly, how might the non-traditional medium of film help us understand better those timeless political themes and challenges as an adjunct to the relevant literature?
- 2) Where applicable, what kinds of political and historical insights can we glean from films about the specific phenomenon or event they cover?
- 3) What might a film tell us about the political-historical moment it was made (not just what it is about)?
- 4) Why and how was this particular film made then, in terms of the political economy of film-making? [*This is not a major focus, but should not be overlooked.*]

By the end of this course, if you do your part through careful study, you will not only strengthen your analytical and critical thinking abilities, but also develop a foundation for making sense of political questions through the non-traditional medium of film (*this sentence and others courtesy of Professor Pablo Policzer, who originally conceived of this course*).

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

No required textbook. Required and supplemental course readings will be posted on D2L or otherwise available online.

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

COMPONENT	WEIGHTING	DUE DATES
<b>Class participation &amp; TopHat</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>Throughout</b>
<b>Online blog entries &amp; discussions (D2L)</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Throughout</b>
<b>One Short Essay (3-4pp)</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Various Tuesdays in class (hard copy)</b>
<b>One research paper (8-10pp)</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>Noon, Wednesday, Aug 23rd on D2L Dropbox</b>
<b>Total **</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**\*\*Overall requirement to pass the course:** Students must complete two formal written assignments (one short essay and one research paper) and three online blog contributions (on D2L) covering five of the six weekly themes (or modules) of the course. Failure to meet this level of contribution covering five of the six weeks will result in an automatic F grade.

**Class Participation  
(25%)**

This class is all about active engagement: engaging films and the academic literature to deepen our understanding of political phenomenon, puzzles, and paradoxes. Part of that process of engagement is discussion. We'll all have different reactions to films and different insights we draw, so class discussion and participation is thus an intrinsic element of this course. That includes proper preparation: reading some of the academic literature in advance of the film in order to begin to draw connections as you watch.

In addition, every Tuesday, at the beginning of class, you'll be required to answer a few TopHat questions (an online, interactive response application) related to the key themes and concepts for that week, drawn from the core readings.

So, in-class verbal participation contributions will comprise 20% of your participation grade, while the short TopHat quizzes will total 5% of your participation grade.

**Three online blog  
entries & discussions  
(D2L)  
(3 x 5% for entries,  
5% for responses to  
others' entries=20%)**

Three times during the course you will post a 400-500 word blog entry related to a weekly theme. Your objective is to critically assess one or both films in terms of how well they shed light on general aspects of politics, particularly in relation to the relevant readings. You should then also address at least one of our additional core questions: specific political/ historical insights related to the event portrayed, reflections of the period the film was made, and/or the political economy behind the making of that particular film. Blog entries need to be posted by, latest, Friday evening (9pm) of the same week, though preferably earlier during the week; online discussions about posted topics can continue until the following Tuesday at noon, when the focus shifts to the new week's films and themes.

**One Short Essay  
(20%)  
(Hard copy due in  
class on specified  
Tuesday)**

One short written assignment of approx 4-5 pages will be required during the course. The short essay will cover one weekly module (2 films plus readings). These will be due on the Tuesday (in class) immediately following the week of those films. These short essays will apply the four-part analytical framework and leverage the relevant core and supplemental readings for that week, thus designed to illustrate your competency with the core material as well as assess the films' helpfulness in exploring those political themes. *Note: Your short essay and your research paper have to focus on different weekly modules, as do your three blog posts.*

The additional research requirement for the essay is to integrate at least two contemporary, political analysis pieces (e.g., newspaper editorials, blogs, policy or "thought" pieces from policy-makers, scholars, think tanks, or public intellectuals, etc.) published since January 2016 that illustrate in some way the

contemporary relevance of the film/reading themes for that week well beyond the scope of the specificities of the films and/or readings.

**One research paper (8-10pp) (35%)**

Your research paper is, in effect, a take home exam. It provides more opportunity to illustrate your analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as your research skills, and enable you to drill deeper into a particular weekly theme you'd like to investigate further.

*Due: Noon,  
Wednesday,  
August 23rd on D2L  
Dropbox*

While one weekly theme (films/readings) will form the foundation for your paper, you are expected to bring into consideration one additional film that complements your analysis. That film can be one you watched in class (from any other week) or outside of class. As per the shorter essay assignment, you also want to find at least two contemporary, relevant political analysis pieces dated January 2016 or later that bring some of the themes from the films and the concepts from the core readings to bear on current political issues. You may also want to draw on additional academic work that extends or changes the thematic focus for the films under consideration.

**Written assignments** are often required in Political Science courses, including this one, and the quality of writing skills, including but not limited to such elements as grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity, citation, and organization, will be taken into account in the determination of grades. Students are encouraged to make use of the services offered through Writing Support Services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library) or at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>.

<b>GRADE SCALE:</b>	<b>A+</b> = 95+	<b>B+</b> = 80-84	<b>C+</b> = 66-69	<b>D+</b> = 54-57
	<b>A</b> = 90-94	<b>B</b> = 75-79	<b>C</b> = 62-65	<b>D</b> = 50-53
	<b>A-</b> = 85-89	<b>B-</b> = 70-74	<b>C-</b> = 58-61	<b>F</b> = 0-49

**\*\*Overall requirement to pass the course:** Students must complete two formal written assignments (one short essay and one research paper) and three online blog contributions (on D2L) covering five of the six weekly themes (or modules) of the course. Failure to meet this level of contribution covering five of the six weeks will result in an automatic F grade.

**LATE PENALTIES:** Late penalties for written work: Ten percent (10%) per every day late, including weekends.

**CLASS PREPARATION & DESIRE2LEARN (D2L)**

Students are expected to read the assigned literature before the class we watch the specific film, and be prepared for class discussion. Generally, laptops will not be available during class, so notes should be taken, and be brought to class, in hard copy.

Important information and readings are posted on Desire2Learn (D2L). Students should regularly check the Announcements or News section of Desire2Learn (D2L) for ongoing notices, as well as the Contents page for additional course materials and assignments. If you need clarification on

course themes, concepts, readings, etc., please take the initiative to ask the instructor during class or during office hours.

**CONTACTING YOUR INSTRUCTOR** Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to their instructor during class or their office hours. Should you wish to meet with the instructor outside of office hours, please email the instructor to make an appointment. It is to the student’s advantage to keep such appointments.

**PROPER USE OF EMAIL & ELECTRONICS** Email is commonly used by students to communicate with their instructor. It is imperative that students regularly check their UofC email accounts for course related information and announcements (or forward that email to a regularly checked account). Email can limit the effectiveness of communication and may not be the best way for instructors to answer student questions. A personal meeting may be requested if necessary.

Other than completing Tuesday TopHat questions, electronics will not be available in class. No recording of lectures (audio and/or video) is permitted without prior approval of the instructor, with exceptions of course made in the case of approved accommodations. Please be considerate of others and switch off cell phones when you enter the classroom.

**COURSE SCHEDULE & FILMS: The schedule is subject to change if the need arises.**

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to minimal changes)		
DATE	TOPICS & THEMES	REQUIRED READINGS BEFORE CLASS (See D2L for posted URLs (online) or PDFs)
Week 1	<i>Stranger than Fiction Week</i>	<b>General Readings:</b>
July 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Course Introduction</b> Syllabus, Assignments, D2L/TopHat usage Class expertise & interests inventory Frameworks for thinking about politics through film	David Bordwell (2000), “Studying Cinema” (URL) David Bordwell (2008), “Doing Film History” (URL) – <i>just the introduction: stop at first sub-header</i> Susan Sontag (1964), “Against Interpretation” (URL) Susan Sontag (1996), “The Decay of Cinema” (URL)
&	<b>Dr. Strangelove (1964) – Kubrick</b>	_____
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Seven Days in May (1964) – Frankenheimer</b>	Herman Kahn (1960), “The Nature and Feasibility of War and Deterrence,” Rand Corporation [PDF] Graham Allison (1969), “Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis,” <i>APSR 63 (September)</i> [PDF] H.E. Finer (1974), “The Man on Horseback -1974,” <i>Armed Forces &amp; Society</i> 1, 1 (November) [PDF] Robert Dallek (2003), “JFK’s Second Term,” <i>The Atlantic</i> (June) [URL]

<p><b>Week 2</b></p> <p><b>July 11th</b></p> <p><b>July 13th</b></p>	<p><b><i>Postcolonial Week</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Black Girl (1966) – Sembène</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The Battle of Algiers (1966) – Pontecorvo</i></b></p>	<p>Frantz Fanon (1952), <i>Black Skin White Masks</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Samir Amin (1972), “Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa-Origins and Contemporary Forms,” <i>Journal of Modern African Studies</i> 10, 4 (December) [PDF]</p> <p>Jean O’Barr (1975), “Making the Invisible Visible: African Women in Politics and Policy,” <i>African Studies Review</i> 18/3 (December) [PDF]</p> <p>Frantz Fanon (1961), <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b></p> <p><b>July 18th</b></p> <p><b>July 20th</b></p>	<p><b><i>Western Angst Week</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The Candidate (1972) – Ritchie</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Soylent Green (1973) – Fleisher</i></b></p>	<p>Kenneth Arrow (1950), “A Difficulty in the Concept of Social Welfare,” <i>Journal of Political Economy</i>, 58, 4 (August) [PDF] – See also Michael Morreau (2014), “Arrow’s Theorem,” <i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> [URL]</p> <p>Anthony Downs (1957), “An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy,” <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> 65, 2 (April) [PDF]</p> <p>Paul Ehrlich (1968), <i>The Population Bomb</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Donella Meadows et al (1972), <i>The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome’s Project on the Predicament of Mankind</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Friedrich Hayek (1974), “The Pretence of Knowledge,” Lecture to the memory of Alfred Nobel (Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences) [URL]</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b></p> <p><b>July 25th</b></p> <p><b>July 27th</b></p>	<p><b><i>Vicissitudes of War Week</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Platoon (1986) – Stone</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Flame (1996) – Sinclair</i></b></p>	<p>Carl von Clausewitz (1832), <i>On War</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Bernard Fall (1961), <i>Street Without Joy</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Aaronette White (2006), “All the Men are Fighting for Freedom, All the Women are Mourning Their Men, But Some of Us Carried Guns: Fanon’s Psychological Perspectives on War and African Women Combatants,” Working Paper, Consortium on Gender, Security, and Human Rights (later published in <i>Signs</i>, 2007) [URL]</p> <p>Stathis Kalyvas (2003), “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence’: Action and Identity in Civil Wars,” <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 1, 3 (September) [PDF]</p>

<p><b>Week 5</b></p> <p><b>Aug 1st</b></p> <p><b>Aug 3rd</b></p>	<p><b><i>Race, Class, &amp; Power Week</i></b></p> <p><b><i>A World Apart (1988) – Menges</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Machuca (2004) – Wood</i></b></p>	<p>Heribert Adam &amp; Kogila Moodley (1986), <i>South Africa without Apartheid: Dismantling Racial Domination</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Ruth First (1970), <i>The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d’Etat</i> [excerpts as listed on D2L-PDF]</p> <p>Gabriel García Márquez (1974), “Why Allende had to die,” <i>New Statesman</i> [URL]</p> <p>Pablo Politzcer (2009), “The Dark Spaces of Politics,” Chapter One in <i>The Rise and Fall of Repression in Chile</i> [PDF]</p>
<p><b>Week 6</b></p> <p><b>Aug 8th</b></p> <p><b>Aug 10th</b></p> <p><b>Aug 15th</b></p>	<p><b><i>Terror, Tyranny &amp; Totalitarianism Week</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Making Of (2006) – Bouzid</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The Lives of Others (2006) – von Donnersmarck</i></b></p> <p><b><i>The Last King of Scotland (2006) – Macdonald</i></b></p> <p><b>- USRIs will also be completed in class</b></p>	<p>Olivier Roy (2015), “What is the driving force behind jihadist terrorism? A scientific perspective on the causes/circumstances of joining the scene,” BKA Conference on International Terrorism Germany [PDF]</p> <p>Juan Linz &amp; Alfred Stepan (1996), “Modern Nondemocratic Regimes,” in <i>Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation</i> [D2L]</p> <p>Albert Hirschman (1993), “Exit, Voice, and the Fate of the German Democratic Republic: An Essay in Conceptual History,” <i>World Politics</i> 45:2 (January) [PDF]</p> <p>Ali Mazrui (1980), “Between development and decay: Anarchy, tyranny and progress under Idi Amin,” <i>Third World Quarterly</i> Vol. 2, 1 [PDF]</p>

**IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

Absence From a Mid-term Examination:

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test for legitimate reasons (e.g. illness with the appropriate documentation) are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

Deferral of a Final Examination:

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

Appeals:

If a student has a concern about the course or a grade they have been assigned, they must first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If this does not resolve the matter, the student can then proceed with an academic appeal. The first in an academic appeal is to set up a meeting with the Department Head.

University Regulations:

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the University policies found in the Academic Regulations sections of the Calendar at [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html).

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Plagiarism And Other Forms Of Academic Misconduct:

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP):

FOIP legislation requires that instructors maintain the confidentiality of student information. In practice, this means that student assignment and tests cannot be left for collection in any public place without the consent of the student. It also means that grades cannot be distributed via email. Final exams are kept by instructors but can be viewed by contacting them or the main office in the Department of Political Science. Any uncollected assignments and tests will be destroyed after three months; final examinations are destroyed after one year.

Evacuation Assembly Points:

In the event of an emergency evacuation from class, students are required to gather in designated assembly points. Please check the list found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints) and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

For program planning and advice, visit the Arts Students' Centre in Social Sciences 102, call 403-220-3580 or email [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for program assistance.



For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit their office in the MacKimmie Library Block.

Important Contact Information:

Campus Security and Safewalk (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year)  
Phone: 403-220-5333

Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students' Union Representatives  
Phone: 403-220-6551  
Email: [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca),  
[arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)  
Students' Union URL: [www.su.ucalgary.ca](http://www.su.ucalgary.ca)

Graduate Students' Association  
Phone: 403-220-5997  
Email: [ask@gsa.ucalgary.ca](mailto:ask@gsa.ucalgary.ca)  
URL: [www.ucalgary.ca/gsa](http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa)

Student Ombudsman  
Phone: 403-220-6420  
Email: [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca)