
POLI 392 Politics, Art and Film (F2F)

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Fall 2021

Instructor:	Dr. Saemyi Park
Class Time & Location:	TH 2:00 PM – 4:50 PM & SCI D314
Email:	spark@uwsp.edu
Office Hours:	<i>In-Person:</i> 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (T/TH) @ SCI D335 <i>Online:</i> 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM (W) via Zoom

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The important and long-standing interplay between politics and film is the focus of this course. While most people go to the movies for mere entertainment, a good film can inspire its viewers, challenge people to think in new ways, and even educate its audience. Since its inception, the film has been used to set political agendas, advocate policies, and influence political socialization. It has both challenged and upheld traditional values and institutions. The purpose of this course is to tap into the power of film to study, learn about, and deepen your understanding and appreciation of politics and government. Throughout the semester, we will view several films with political messages. Our goal is not to appraise the artistic merit of the films but rather interpret their larger meaning. We will use films as a tool for surveying and improving our understanding of a broad array of topics from the political science literature, including legislative behavior, elections, presidential politics, interest-group influence, war, domestic policies, race, class, and economy. Students will also be exposed to other forms of art such as opera, play, literature, photography, music, and more. But, our focus of this course is to explore political issues raised by the films. **While this course will be entertaining due to its nature to watch a lot of films, it is a serious course where students should complete readings, class participation, assignments, and other required work diligently.**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- LO1: Examine the various perspectives and theories that illuminate the film-politics relationship
- LO2: Analyze the political ideas embedded in art and films
- LO3: Explain processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior expressed in art and films
- LO4: Evaluate the effectiveness of films in conveying the intended political message

Students will meet the outcomes listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Complete readings and learning materials (LO1 & LO3)
- Take two exams (for all LOs)
- Participate in the class discussion (for all LOs)
- Conduct the research project & Deliver the oral presentation on the research (LO1 & LO2 & LO3)
- Watch the films featuring the subjects & Write a brief reflective essay (LO2 & LO4)
- Analyze the data covering the topics (LO2 & LO4)

COURSE STRUCTURE

Classes begin with the screening of the film; the second hour of class is devoted to the class discussion to analyze the political meanings and significance of the messages found in the film. A brief lecture will be given if it is necessary. **Active participation in this class is a crucial component to the overall success and a good grade.** I encourage everyone to be active participants during class discussions. The best learning environments are those where there is open dialogue, free conversation, and respectful debate. Your active participation in these discussions should challenge and engage you to think critically about the topics presented and the questions raised in this course. Thus, students will be expected to regularly participate in class discussions and to keep up with the readings for that week's class session.

WARNING

Several of the films shown in class have an "R" rating. An R-rated motion picture may include dialogue with profanity, racial, ethnic, and/or sexist slurs; graphic violence; nudity and/or sexual situations; drug use; and/or other adult themes. Please contact me if you have any moral, religious, political, or other objections to viewing films with an "R" rating. We can work on finding alternative sources for the particular topic(s). If you are easily offended, however, you may consider taking another class.

REQUIRES TEXTBOOK

There is **NO required textbook** for students to purchase. This course has a site in Canvas. All course materials including the assigned readings will be uploaded to the course site. You can click on the Canvas quick link from the UWSP homepage or the address is <http://www.canvas.uwsp.edu>. Please see the course calendar at the end of this syllabus to see the list of readings assigned to each topic.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Weight	Due Date
Online Midterm Exam	20%	October 21 (TH)
Online Final Exam	20%	December 15 (W)
Discussion/Activities	40%	Every class throughout the semester
"Politics & Art" Research Presentation	20%	December 17 (F)
Total	100%	

Note: students must complete ALL the required work to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. **You do NOT have the option to "take a zero" on an assignment.** Not completing all required work will result either in a final grade of F for the course or I (incomplete) until the work is submitted (but a very rare option). You are NOT allowed to submit and complete the required course assignments late unless you receive my permission to do so. Students with a serious illness or family emergencies may be excused for late submission, but I will need to see official evidence to verify the seriousness of the situation. Please read the attendance policy on page 5.

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be determined according to the university's standard scale. There is no curve, so you receive what you earn.

A	94-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-93	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D+	67-69
B-	80-82	D	63-66
		F	Below 63

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

A. Two Exams (20% each)

You have **two online exams** in this course. The midterm exam (**Oct. 21, Thursday**) will include materials covered in the first part of the course. The final exam (**Dec. 15, Wednesday**) will NOT be cumulative, and questions will cover the second half of the course. You will take the exams in Canvas, and they are going to be open at 9AM and close at 11:59PM on each scheduled date. You will be given two hours to take the test. Once you start taking the test, you are NOT allowed to take a break for return. The format of exams is a combination of multiple choice and short identification questions. You will receive a **study guide** a week prior to each exam day.

B. Class Discussion & Activities (40%)

You are required to attend all class sessions. It is your interest too. Students who regularly attend class generally enjoy the course more, learn more, and get the most out of their education with higher grades. In addition, you are expected to enrich the learning experience of fellow students and teachers through regular attendance and active participation in class. For most class times, you will be invited to complete a brief activity that help you better understand the topic of American Politics. These activities will promote in-depth class discussion and will be graded.

Because we only meet 15 times over the semester, 2 or MORE unexcused absences will result in an automatic F in the course. Please make sure to be aware of this policy. Please keep in mind that only few cases are considered as the excusable absences:

1. UWSP-sponsored activities (sport game, organization events, etc.)
2. The university-recognized religious holidays
3. The serious and extraordinary circumstances of your medical issues or your immediate family members

In the above-mentioned cases, you are required to submit the proof of evidence to the instructor in advance. For the 1st and 2nd case, you are supposed to know the schedule already or by the beginning

of the semester. Please check your schedule and the course calendar to see if any conflicts occur. Make sure to submit the official documents (letters, emails from the coach, etc.) by September 16 (TH).

For the 3rd case, you should inform your instructor immediately and provide the documentation within 48 hours of the event occurs. I reserve the right to review the document and determine if your absence is excusable. If you are simply sick or under the weather, you do not need to email me about it. I will give you ONE free tickets on your attendance record.

C. The “Politics & Art” Research Project and Presentation (20%)

You are asked to conduct research to analyze political messages of arts and their impact. In this project, you are invited to specifically focus on “art” such as painting, sculpture, literature, music, play, show, photography, and other forms **EXCEPT for films**. There are several ways that your project could be structured. First, your project can be “thematic” that examine several different forms of art from painting to poet to music based on your chosen theme (war, race, women, health, election, etc.; see the course calendar for the list of themes). Second, your project can be “genre-specific” in that you discover the connection of painting (or novel or hip-hop music or play) to politics. Third, your project can focus on a “time period” that you examine different kinds of art during a specific era (a silent era, the Cold War era, the Civil Rights Movement era, the post-911 era, etc.).

Your research project will be presented as a **Narrated PowerPoint presentation** or any other form of **video recording**. You can use the voice/video recording function in PowerPoint or the screen recorder program "Screencast-O-Matic," which is free and easy to use. Your oral presentation should be less than 7-minute long and must be submitted by 11:59 PM, **December 17** (Wednesday). You are also asked to watch and respond to TWO other students’ presentations. This **peer review** is a required component of this final project, and it should be completed by December 18 (Thursday). More detailed information will be posted on the course site at Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES

A. Films & Readings

Students are asked to complete each week’s learning materials (films, readings, etc.) BEFORE in-person class on Thursday. You are expected to apply the readings to analyze the showing film during the class discussion. Therefore, it is critical for you to complete the readings prior to our class time.

B. Office Hours

I will have regular office hours in two different ways. I will be in my office (Science Building D335) on every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM. And, you can reach out to me via Zoom on every Monday from 2 PM to 4 PM. Please utilize this opportunity to make yourself clear with course materials. If my regular online office hours do not work for you, you can certainly schedule an online meeting for the different time and date. Just email me to set up the appointment. The Zoom link will be post in the course site.

- **In-Person:** 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (T/TH) @ SCI D335
- **Online:** 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM (W) via Zoom

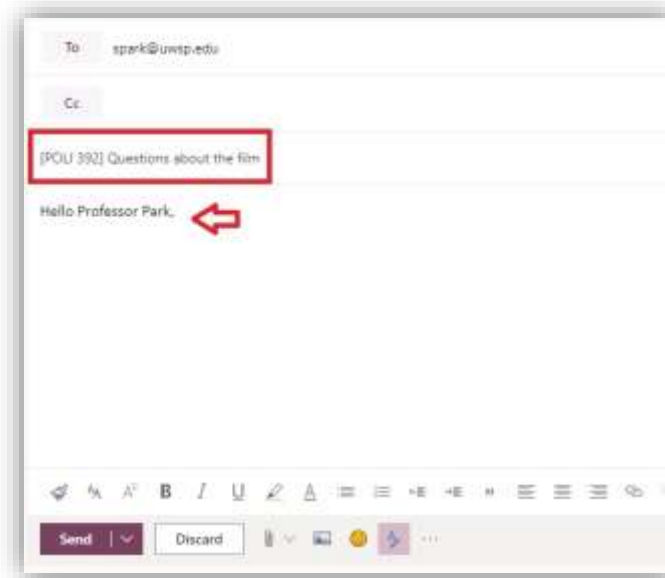
C. Canvas

I maintain a page for this course at the Canvas site. After the first day of class, the course site in Canvas will be open for you. You can find the assigned readings, review the supplemental learning materials, submit the research project, and/or complete the in-class activities if you are asked to do.

D. Email Communication

I will do my best to help to make your learning experience as smooth and enjoyable as possible. If you have questions, please email me via spark@uwsp.edu. I will check my email twice a day during the weekdays (in the morning & the afternoon before 5 PM). You can expect me to respond to your email within 24 hours. If you don't hear from me within 24 hours, please email me again to remind your previous inquiry. Please note that I may not be able to respond to you at late night and/or during the weekend.

When you email me, please follow **the professional email format** shown in the picture below:



- Include the course # and a brief topic in the subject line: “[POLI 392] exam questions”
- Have a proper salutation
- Indicate your name
- Brief contents

E. Honesty:

Any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Talk to me if you are having a problem so I can try to help you work out a solution.

F. FERPA: Important Policy on Instructional Materials

Lecture materials and recordings for POLI 392 Politics, Art and Films are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1]

Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

G. The Muddiest Point Forum

I create the forum where you can post questions. If you have a **general course question** (not confidential or personal in nature), please post it to the Muddiest Point Forum found on the course homepage.

- *Do you have hard time to understand concepts or theories?*
- *Do you want to be checked if you correctly comprehend the topics?*
- *Is the paper guideline unclear to you?*

Please post these questions to the Muddiest Point Forum. I will post answers to all general questions there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to answer each other's questions too.

H. Academic Coaching

If you feel you need help with any of the following skills - time management strategies, note-taking, study skills, communication on campus, or preparing for mid-terms, please consider scheduling an appointment with an Academic Coach on campus or virtually. They are here to help you be successful in your online courses when you feel you need extra support. Email **Kari Van Den Elzen** (kvandene@uwsp.edu) to schedule an appointment or use the Navigate student app by selecting

Tutoring Learning Center. You can meet as many times as you need. Coaches are also available to review campus technology platforms with you. (Canvas, AccesSPoint, Office 365, Navigate, etc.)

Students with disabilities: Any student with a special documented disability (sight, hearing, language, mobility, etc.) which may affect class activities should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (715-346-3365). Please find more information from:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>

I. Ground Rules

This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting history, theories, and policies. Students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in class. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of fellow students and me.

Course Calendar

(Topics, readings, films, and schedule are subject to announced change by instructor.)

Week	Theme	Topic & Screening	Date
W1	<i>Logistics</i>	Introduction to POLI 392 (movie clips from propaganda films)	9/2
W2	<i>Theoretical Framework</i>	"Citizen Kane (1941)" or "The Incredibles (2004)"	9/9
W3	<i>Political Representation I</i>	"Selma (2014)" or "Just Mercy (2019)" or "Green Book (2018)"	9/16
W4	<i>Political Representation II</i>	"Suffragette (2016)" or "Marry Poppins (1964)"	9/23
W5	<i>War</i>	"1917 (2019)" or "Grave of the Fireflies (1988)"	9/30
W6	<i>Elections & Campaigns</i>	"The Distinguished Gentleman (1992)"	10/7
W7	<i>The Media</i>	"The Post (2018)" or "Truth (2015)"	10/14
W8		The Midterm Exam	10/21
W9	<i>Exploring Opera & Play</i>	"Porgy and Bess (2019)" or "Hamilton (2020)"	10/28
W10	<i>Class & Wealth Inequality I</i>	"Parasite (2019)"	11/4
W11	<i>Class & Wealth Inequality II</i>	"Hillbilly Elegy (2020)" or "The Florida Project (2017)"	11/11
W12	<i>Education</i>	"The College Admission Scandal (2021)" or "Waiting for Superman (2010)" "Freedom Writers (2007)" or "To Sir, With Love (1967)"	11/18
W13	<i>Exploring Art & Music</i>	Thanksgiving week & online activity "Anima (2019)" or TBA	11/25
W14	<i>Environment</i>	"Ice on Fire (2019)" or "Plastic Wars (2020)"	12/2
W15	<i>Immigration</i>	"The Farewell (2019)" or "Minari (2020)"	12/9
		The Final Exam	12/15
		The Final Research Project Presentation	

The List of Course Readings

(Topics, readings, films, and schedule are subject to announced change by instructor.)

Theoretical Framework

- From *Projecting Politics: Political Message in American Films* by Elizabeth Hass, Terry Christensen and Peter J. Hass, 2nd Edition (2015): Routledge
 - “Setting the Scene: A Theory of Film and Politics” (**Required**)
 - “Making of a Message: Film Production and Techniques, and Political Message”
- From *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* by Timothy Corrigan, 8th Edition (2012): Pearson
 - “Writing About the Movies” (**Required**)
 - “Six Approaches to Writing about Film”

Political Representation I: African Americans & the Jim Crow Era & Voting Rights Disputes Today

- “Film and the Politics of Race: The Minority Report” in *Projecting Politics*
- “Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes” by Zoltan Hajnal, Nazita Lajevardi, and Lindsay Nielson from *The Journal of Politics* (2016)
- “The Sociology of Discrimination: Racial Discrimination in Employment, Housing, Credit, and Consumer Markets” (2008) by Devah Pager and Hana Shepherd, *Annual Review of Sociology*. 34:181–209

Political Representation II: Women’s Suffrage Movement

- From in *Here’s Looking at You: Hollywood, Film & Politics* by Ernest Giglio, 4th Edition (2014): Peter Lang
 - “Hollywood and Women: Cracks in the Celluloid Ceiling”
- **And one of the following readings (TBA)**
 - ““Cast Off the Shackles of Yesterday”: Women’s Suffrage in Walt Disney’s *Mary Poppins*,” by Ana Stevenson from *Camera Obscura*, 2018; 33 (2 (98)): 69–103.
 - “The forces that shaped the women’s movements: 1820s-1850s,” by Christine Bolt in *The Women’s Movements in the United States and Britain from the 1790s to the 1920s*

War

- “Hollywood Goes to War: From the Great War to the Good War to the Forgotten War” in *Here’s Looking at You*
- “The Impetus of Wartime: The Political Importance of War Film Propaganda” in *Film Propaganda and American Politics: An analysis and Filmography* by James E. Combs and Sara T. Combs (1994): Garland Publishing, Inc.

Elections & Campaigns

- from *The Politics of Congressional Elections* (2020) by Gary C. Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson
 - “Congressional Candidates”
 - “Congressional Campaigns”

The Media

- “Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models” by Dietram A. Scheufele¹ & David Tewksbury, from *The Journal of Communication* (2007)
- “Hostile News: Partisan Use and Perceptions of Cable News Programming” by Kevin Coe et al. from *The Journal of Communication* (2008)

Exploring Opera & Play

- “Headfirst into an Abyss: The Politics and Political Reception of Hamilton” by Elizabeth Titrington Craft from *American Music*, Vol. 36, No. 4, Hamilton (Winter 2018), pp. 429-447
- “Race-Conscious Casting and the Erasure of the Black Past in Lin-Manuel Miranda’s Hamilton” by Lyra D. Monteiro from *The Public Historian*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (FEBRUARY 2016), pp. 89-98

Class & Wealth Inequality I: The Global Perspectives

- “Inequalities in household wealth across OECD countries: Evidence from the OECD Wealth Distribution Database” from OECD (2018)
- “Review: Class warfare is on full display in director Bong Joon-ho’s provocative ‘Parasite’” from *The Washington Post* (2019)
- “‘Parasite’ paints grim image of Korean inequality. U.S. inequality is worse.” from *The Washington Post* (2020)

Class & Wealth Inequality II: United States

- “American Politics and Political Science in an Era of Growing Racial Diversity and Economic Disparity” by Rodney E. Hero, *Perspectives on Politics* (2016)
- “Racial residential segregation and economic disparity jointly exacerbate COVID-19 fatality in large American cities” by Qinggang Yu et al. (2021), *Annals of the New York Academic of Sciences*

Education

- “New Directions in the Study of Asian American Politics, Part I: Affirmative Action” by Vivien Leung and Daeun Song (2021), *Perspectives on Politics*
- “Racial Misdirection: How Anti-affirmative Action Crusaders use Distraction and Spectacle to Promote Incomplete Conceptions of Merit and Perpetuate Racial Inequality” by Malerie Beth Barnes and Michele S. Moses (2021), *Education Policy*

Exploring Art & Music

- [“We Insist: A Century Of Black Music Against State Violence”](#) from NPR (2020)
- [“We Asked, You Answered: How Should Beyoncé Portray Africa In 'Black Is King'?”](#) from NPR (2020)
- TBA

Environment

- “Climate Change Politics” by Thomas Bernauer from *The Annual Reviews of Political Science* (2013)
- “Geographic variation in opinions on climate change at state and local scales in the USA.,” in *Nature Climate Change*, by Howe, P., Mildenerger, M., Marlon, J. et al. 5, 596–603 (2015)

Immigration

- Schwartz SJ, Unger JB, Zamboanga BL, Szapocznik J. “Rethinking the concept of acculturation: implications for theory and research”. *American Psycholgy*. 2010;65(4):237-251.
- “White Nationalism as Immigration Policy” (2019) by Jayashri Srikantiah and Shirin Sinnar, *Stanford Law Review*, <https://www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/white-nationalism-as-immigration-policy/?fbclid=IwAR1fbzJvDzqtYeZtQTYmizZB1WpZTS7LqjA6Lo42nbl6Fa-i3Dp6YDiA8I>