

The University of Georgia
Department of International Affairs
INTL 4660 Politics, Film and Literature
Tuesday 3:30 to 6:15 p.m. Baldwin Hall, Room 322
Office Hours: W: 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Th: 2:00 to 4:00
Spring 2019
Dr. Markus M. L. Crepaz (mcrepaz@uga.edu)

Politics is not just what happens in campaigns, elections and in assemblies. It runs much deeper and affects every aspect of an individual's life. We encounter it in popular culture, "high culture", in boardrooms, bedrooms, around kitchen tables, playgrounds, nursing homes, and many other places. The impact of the fictional world of the arts on how people absorb "politics" or political commentary cannot be overstated. "Political" films, books or even songs have a power to mobilize people more than any dry fact in a newspaper. The purpose of this class is to sharpen the student's perception of political messages produced in the arts, connect them to the world of "political science", and relate them to contemporary political events.

In this seminar-style class we examine seven political themes as they appear in films and novels. This class takes a new approach to exploring political themes: we investigate how timeless political topics, such as the "authoritarian impulse", the "tyranny of the majority", or "revolution" has been dealt with in fictional form, as manifested in the forms of novels and films.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

This seminar is very heavy on reading and writing and requires **active participation** on the part of the students. The class requirements are as follows:

- 1) **Participation:** since this is a seminar, **participation is ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL**. This means that you will have to have **read and digested** the book and have seen the film that goes with each theme and the accompanying articles. While the movie and the book are "fictional" the articles are NOT. They are designed to help you understand the themes in more concrete political terms. Participation is measured in the frequency and quality of students' comments particularly as they are able to make connections between the books/films and the articles. **Clarification questions, while certainly encouraged, do not count towards participation.** Participation will count for 15 % of the final grade.
- 2) **Attendance:** You can miss **two classes** with no questions asked. For each additional classes missed, **no matter what the reason**, I will deduct 3 points from your final grade tally. If you miss more than five classes I will drop you from the roster! Attendance will be monitored via **Arkaive**, which is an attendance checker app. You will need to download the free app from the app store and is available both for i-phones and android phones. If you don't have a smart phone, let me know and I'll check you in manually at the beginning of class. Arkaive works on the basis of geolocation. At the beginning of class I will "open" the class on my phone and I'll give you a 4 letter/digit code which you will have to enter into your app to be recorded as "present" in the class. **Attendance counts for 11% of the overall grade.**
- 3) **Four pop quizzes:** (the weakest result will be dropped from the overall calculation of the final grade, i.e. only the strongest three pop quiz results will be counted). These quizzes will cover the readings for each theme either via multiple choice questions or short essays. Each pop-quizz will count for 3 % of the final grade for a total of 9 %.
- 4) **Mid-term paper:** each student must produce a typed paper between 8-10 pages in length (conventional fonts and margins) on the following topic: **Does Democracy require dissent or obedience?**

The first three themes deal with related topics, that is, the desire of people or groups of people (or animals in the first case) to control society. Please identify and articulate what you believe are the most compelling reasons why you take the position that you do. Convince me with logic, reason, data, and

other kind of evidence that you have the strongest possible justification for your position. Refer to all the sources we have used so far (plus you must add additional ones to make a convincing case) – movies, books, and articles. Feel free to make references to contemporary or historical events but **support your assertions with evidence.**

At least an additional 5 NEW sources have to be quoted (not cited) in order to support your argument. This paper will count for 25 % of the final grade. The mid-term paper is due on **February 26, 2019 at the end of our class.** (No e-mail with paper attached please!)

- 5) **Final paper:** the final paper will have to be 12-14 pages in length (with conventional fonts and margins). For this paper, at least 8 NEW sources will have to be quoted (not cited) in order to support your argument. The final paper will count for 30 percent of the final grade and is **due on Monday,**

Take any of the themes we have covered in this class and apply it to the current politics of a country of your choice (including the United States) and explore to what degree the themes covered reflect the actual policies and events in that country.

Here are a few hints in writing this paper: make sure there is a good fit between the themes and the actual political events in the country of your choice. Be as empirical as possible, i.e. demonstrate empirically how the various elements covered in the themes manifest themselves in your country of choice. What are the challenges this country faces? Provide examples of policies that correspond or not, with the theme covered. At what cost are these policies enacted? Are the actions of the government legitimate, i.e. supported by a majority of the people?

Example questions: Is country x becoming more authoritarian?

Does our “thing addiction” undermine community in country X or in x countries?

Is immigration a cultural and economic threat to country X, or in x countries?

Are capitalism and democracy compatible?

How are the state of the environment, migration, and security connected?

If you perceive laws to be unjust, do you feel compelled to follow them?

I’ll be more specific as to how to write this paper as the deadline draws nearer.

The final paper is due on April 30, 2019 (last day of class) in hard copy form.

- 6) **Final exam:** the final exam (determined by final exam schedule) will cover the materials I introduce to the class at the beginning of each theme and will count for 10 percent. *The final exam is comprehensive* and is a mixture of multiple choice, “fill in the blank” questions, “true/false”, questions etc.

Required readings:

George Orwell. Animal Farm (1946).

Sinclair Lewis. It can’t happen here (1935).

B. F. Skinner. Walden Two (1951).

Jhumpa Lahiri. The Namesake (2003).

Ernest Callenbach. Ecotopia (1977).

Upton Sinclair. The Jungle (1906).

Sinclair Lewis: Babbitt (1922).

In addition, there are various articles, chapter of books, magazine reports, etc. required also. If they cannot be directly found on the internet (as indicated in this syllabus) they are available on electronic reserve and can be downloaded and/or printed to your personal computer or printer. The password for these readings is: napoleon The

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Some ground rules:

1. This is not a lecture-style class. I will encourage as much participation as possible. How much you will get out of this class will depend on your own willingness to participate!
2. Late papers are not acceptable. They are a burden for me and are unfair to your colleagues who do their work on time. Therefore, I will deduct a FULL letter grade for each day a paper is late. Extensions may be given but only if they are requested well in advance of the deadline, and if there is a compelling reason.
3. It is not my practice to give incompletes. However, if there is suitable reason -- subject to my approval and supported with appropriate written documentation -- an exception to the "no incompletes" rule may be possible. With respect to these first two ground rules, if you have problems in completing assigned work, please let me know about it.
4. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student turning in a written assignment which is not your own work will receive a failing grade for the course, and may have further implications. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>
5. The use of sources is essential. On the midterm paper and on the final paper, you must make reference to the sources from which you drew your information. For information on how to cite correctly go to the APSA manual of style: <http://www.apsanet.org/media/pdfs/publications/apsastylemanual2006.pdf>
6. **Laptops, tablets, phones, etc. ARE NOT ALLOWED!** Be ready with pen and paper to take notes during my brief introduction of each theme.
7. I do not expect that your views and perceptions of these controversial themes are identical with mine or your classmates', either now or at the completion of the course. The Politics, Film and Literature course is a place for the free and perhaps even heated exchange of ideas. **Thus I expect you to challenge viewpoints that differ from your own, but I also expect you to substantiate your arguments from the readings, lectures and discussions.**
8. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers or other electronic devices that will disturb either your classmates – or your professor – during class. We are only in class for 3 hours a week, so being off the "infogrid" for that short amount of time won't really be a problem, will it?
9. If you need to use outside reference works, please consult Joel Krieger, et. al., *Oxford Companion to Politics of the World*, Oxford University Press, 2001 as a place to start for political terms or concepts – **DO NOT USE WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE DEFINITIONS.** For outside research sources, please use Galileo.
10. Do not sign up for this class if you have social or other engagements (sports classes, meets, etc) that interfere with the time length of this course. I expect all students to be on time, be present and alert **for the entirety of the class period.** While I do not take attendance, I reserve the right to make notes of students who come late, are not alert, or leave early (only acceptable on the basis of medical necessity for which I would need to see a medical excuse asap). Such behavior will result in a reduction of total course points.
11. If you believe that you should have received a better grade, please provide an explanation to me *in writing within a week* of receiving the grade. I will then grade your exam/paper again and I will issue a "new" grade which will be either the same, a higher, or a lower grade.
12. Grading structure:

< 60	F
60-69	D
70-72	C-
73-76	C
77-79	C+
80-82	B-
83-86	B

87-89	B+
90-92	A-
> 93	A

Reading assignments and dates: Each theme consists of two classes. The first class of each segment is the “movie class”, the second is the discussion and presentation class for each theme. **Make sure that you have read and digested the readings before the discussion and presentation meeting.**

- January 15:** Introduction of the class, explanation of themes, and expectations.
- January 22:** **The authoritarian personality (Theme 1)**
Movie: **The Last Supper**
- January 29:** Readings: Animal Farm (George Orwell)

[Authoritarianism Goes Global: The Leninist Roots of Civil Society Repression](#). In: Journal of Democracy, 2015:26: pp.21-27
- February 5:** **Tyranny of majority and the culture of dissent (Theme 2)**

Movie: **Good Night and Good Luck**.
- February 12:** Readings: Book: (Sinclair Lewis: It can't happen here).

Freedom under Fire: http://www.aclu.org/FilesPDFs/dissent_report.pdf

Omer Aziz (2019), “[America through Nazi Eyes](#)” in : Dissent, Winter 2019.

“Who voted for the Nazis?” Read this summary here:
http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6_Geary.htm
- February 19:** **Social engineering and its limits (Theme 3)**

Movie: **Skin**
- February 26:** Readings: Book: B.F. Skinner: Walden Two.

Hermann Gilliomee, [The Making of the Apartheid Plan](#) 1929-1948

[Selling Eugenics: the case of Sweden](#): Maria Bjorkman and Sven Widmalm. The Royal Society, 2010.

Visit this site: <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/>
- March 5:** **Immigration, Integration, and identity (Theme 4)**

Movie: **East is East**.

March 12: **Spring Break**

March 19: Readings: Book: *The Namesake* (Jhumpa Lahiri)

Jeffrey C. Alexander. [Theorizing Modes of Incorporation: Assimilation, Hyphenation, and Multiculturalism as Varieties of Civil Participation](#). *Sociological Theory* Vol. 19, No. 3 (Nov., 2001), pp. 237-249

[To become French, abandon who you are](#): Reuters, 2015

The Atlantic: [Does Immigration Harm Working Americans?](#) (2015)

March 26: **Political activism and revolution (Theme 7)**

Movie: **The Motorcycle Diaries**

April 2: Readings: Book: Upton Sinclair (*The Jungle*).

[Gizachew Tiruneh \(2014\) Social Revolutions: their causes, patterns and phases](#). Sage Open Publications.

[Gabriel A. Almond \(1991\). Capitalism and Democracy](#). PS: *Political Science and Politics*.

April 9: **Between conformism and anomie (Theme 6)**

Movie: **American Beauty**

April 16: Readings: Book: *Babbitt* (Sinclair Lewis)

Eva Bertram and Kenneth Sharpe (2000). "[Capitalism, Work and Character](#)". *American Prospect*. Vol: 11 (20)

Scott London (1999). On Fraternity, Social Capital and the American Community. Can be found here:

<http://www.scottlondon.com/articles/wcm.html>

Cecile Andrews (no date). "Simplicity as Community". Can be found here:

http://pages.infinit.net/msl/cecile_community.htm

William R. Mattox Jr (1998) "Bawling alone" in: *Policy Review* (91). Can be found here: <http://www.unz.org/Pub/PolicyRev-1998sep-00040>

April 23: **Environmental thought and action (Theme 5)**

Movie: **Princess Mononoke**

April 30: Readings: Book: *Ecotopia* (Ernest Callenbach)

Do the ecological footprint quiz. You can find information on it and do your own calculation (i.e. to find out what would happen if everybody else lived like you) here: <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>

Garrett Hardin (1968) "The Tragedy of the Commons". *Science*. 162, (3859) 1243-1248.
Can be found here:
<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/reprint/162/3859/1243.pdf>

[The Dire Warnings of the United Nations' latest Climate Change Report](#). The New Yorker, October 8, 2018.

Bill McKibben "[A Deeper Shade of Green](#)" *National Geographic*, August 2006, in: