

GOV 371U 38335

Politics and Film-WB

Spring 2023

Instructor: Shannon Bow O'Brien, PhD
Location: online
Assignments: All papers, assignments and tests will be online to avoid cross-contamination.
Student Hours: I only have scheduled(booked) 15-minute appointments (not drop in) this semester to help with social distancing.
Online: I will have scheduled (booked) 15-minute appointments.

Book ALL Meetings here: <https://calendly.com/professorobrien/>

Note: I will add more times if deemed necessary and they will be announced on canvas.

Email: shannonbow@utexas.edu
Be sure to include something about the Film class in the subject line. I am teaching American Government, Film and Politics and Urban Politics this semester so an email saying 'question about class' needs to be more specific since I will have about 250 students between the three classes.

Course Description

Motion pictures were first invented in the 1890s. Thus, the entirety of the 20th century was captured on film. Many of us watch movies simply as a way to entertain ourselves and pass time. However, motion pictures are much more than just entertainment. Political life has been captured on film almost since the beginning of motion pictures. William McKinley was the first president captured on film in 1897. Since then, the medium has expanded from just documentary evidence into also passing on values and ideas in a visual format. This class explores the relationship between politics and film. Films function as a time machine for culture. Film from a period can inform us about the culture and priorities of a time. Film looking back onto a period (a film made in 2021 looking at 1980) tells us about how current culture views the past. Films looking into the future tell us about how some may view the direction a culture is changing.

Required Readings

There is ONE Book:

Projecting Politics, 2015, 2nd edition, Elizabeth Haas, Terry Christensen, Peter J. Haas, Publisher: Taylor and Francis

ISBN-10:0765635976 **ISBN-13:**978-0765635976

You will also be expected to locate films for the class via Netflix, Amazon Prime, Youtube, Google Play, iTunes, library, etc. The Fine Arts Library has an extensive collection of films. Kanopy streaming via Fine arts library works to stream are free.

I may assign other articles online related to the class. If I do distribute or assign a reading, consider it fair game for a test. I will announce it in class and also post a note Canvas giving the title and source of the reading.

Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA)

The materials for this class are available through the Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA) program, a new initiative between UT Austin, The University Co-op and textbook publishers to significantly reduce the cost of digital course materials for students.

You can access your required materials through the “My Textbooks” tab in Canvas. You are automatically opted into the program but can easily opt-out (and back in) via Canvas through the 12th class day. If you remain opted-in at the end of the 12th class day you will receive a bill through your “[What I Owe](#)” page and have until the end of the 18th class day to pay and retain access. If you do not pay by the 18th class day, you will lose access to the materials after the 20th class day and your charge will be removed. More information about the LTA program is available at universitycoop.com/longhorn-textbook-access.”

Technical Requirements for Politics and Film

All students are required to have access to a **laptop** or **desktop computer**, running either Windows or macOS operating systems. Tablets, smartphones, and Microsoft Surface devices are not supported. Your computer should meet the following requirements:

- Modern and up-to-date operating system (macOS or Windows)
- Browser: Chrome (highly recommended), Safari or Firefox. If using Safari or Firefox, be prepared to download Chrome and use it.
- Internet connection speed: 5 Mbps download speed. Check your speed here.
- Functional webcam and microphone
- Zoom installed and configured

Confirm that your computer is able to stream video by visiting <https://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.php>

For the best experience:

- Close all unnecessary browser windows and tabs and programs
 - Streaming music (Pandora, Spotify, etc.)
 - Social media sites
 - YouTube or other video sites
 - Online/Offline Gaming
- Check your computer is free of viruses, malware, and spyware ([UT recommendations](#))
- Clear the browser's cache before class ([here's how.](#))

Technical Support

If you experience a technical problem, click on the "***Online Course Tech Support***" item in the left-side navigation bar. The Online Course Tech Support chatbot, called "LAITS Bot", will assist with technical problems and can escalate your question to a human if it cannot readily answer your question.

Grades:

Grades will be based on the following:

1. Each Chapter Lecture will have a random question in the video you need to answer.
 - Participation Quiz (watching the lecture) (14 questions, 12 will be counted) 10%
2. At the end of each online Chapter Lecture, there will be a short 5 question module (open note/open book/open material)
 - Module Quiz (14 quizzes, lowest 2 will be dropped: total counted: 12) 20%
3. Two online exams (open book, open note, 60 minutes timed, multiple choice/matching)
 - Monday February 27 (must take on this day 9am-10pm window) 20%
 - Monday April 24 (must take on this day 9am-10pm window) 20%
4. Three short 2 page papers (must be uploaded by assigned day)

- Short Paper 1 uploaded by February 4 at 11:59pm 10%
- Short Paper 2 uploaded by March 4 at 11:59pm 10%
- Short Paper 3 uploaded by April 1 at 11:59pm 10%

Overview of Class

Each Class Lecture will be released on Sunday (with the exception of the very first one since the semester begins on Monday). The class is divided by chapters. You will be expected to complete the week's chapter by the next Saturday at 11:59pm.

Each Chapter lecture will have a randomly embedded question you will be expected to answer. The random insertion time is created by the people managing the online component (not the professor or TA). This question will count towards your participation grade.

At the end of each Chapter, you will get a short module of approximately 5 questions addressing the material covered in the lecture. These modules are open book/open note. These modules will have to be completed by Saturday at 11:59pm of that lecture week. These questions will count towards your overall grade.

You will have two tests. These tests are on Mondays. These tests will be online, timed, and multiple choice or matching. They will cover material from the book and lectures in the specific chapters. They will be open book/open note. You are forbidden to collaborate with others during the exam.

You will also have three short papers in this class which will be uploaded throughout the semester by specific days. You will be assigned two films (at least) for each assignment. You will be expected to watch one of the films. You will receive questions about each film. You will be expected to write a short paper (2-3 pages) addressing the questions for the film you watched. These papers will be uploaded to Canvas.

Your professor will post a short quiz in Canvas each week to poll to see if you have questions about that week's material. It will not be graded, but will give you an opportunity to pose questions you may have about what is covered. These have to be completed by Tuesday night at 9pm. Each Wednesday, your professor will host a recorded Zoom meeting on Canvas where you are welcome to attend live and ask questions as well on a drop-in basis. Your professor will also answer each of the questions asked in the previous week. Any questions up to that point in the class are fair game for that week's set. If you ask the questions online, you will not be identified as the person who asked.

This format is designed to give students who are interested in the opportunity to have face to face access and pose questions. It also is designed to allow students who are uncomfortable being recorded the opportunity to ask questions and they can watch the recording later at their convenience.

These meetings will run as long as there are questions.

Your professor will also hold individual office hours throughout the semester.

All Tests, Paper Assignments and Quizzes will be ONLINE in Canvas this semester.

I also reserve the right to make any changes to the grading system I see fit during the semester. This may include, but is not limited to additional paper assignments (if I determine they are needed), or moving the test

dates to accommodate unforeseen circumstances (think hurricanes and natural disasters, not doctor's appointments).

If you become ill and are unable to participate in the course, you need to contact the professor and/or the Dean of Students office about your situation.

Grade Scale:

The University uses a plus/minus system. Here is the scale I will use for the class for grades. I do NOT round up or negotiate grades. You will receive your earned grade based on performance.

| | | | |
|-----|----------|-----|--------------|
| A: | 93-100 | C: | 73-76.99 |
| A-: | 90-92.99 | C-: | 70-72.99 |
| B+: | 87-89.99 | D+: | 67-69.99 |
| B: | 83-86.99 | D: | 63-66.99 |
| B-: | 80-82.99 | D-: | 60-62.99 |
| C+: | 77-79.99 | F: | Less than 60 |

The test days are fixed and announced the first day of class. They will not be changed or negotiated. If these test days do not fit your personal schedule, do **NOT** enroll in this course. There are too many students in this course to work with you to make these dates fit vacations, trips, or other such matters. While I will abide by university approved absences and work with students, make up exams are only given for approved absences.

All assignments must be turned online. They will be uploaded to Canvas (or another system if necessary). There will be due dates and due times for each assignment. You will be assessed a late penalty if you do not turn it in on time. If there is an emergency or other extenuating circumstance, the professor and TA have the authority to waive it with documentation or reasonableness.

Assignments are always accepted early if you choose to turn it in. If papers are late without an acceptable excuse, they lose 1/4th a grade for every day they are late (and yes, weekends, non-class days, and breaks count!... email the paper to stop penalties! Day one late: top grade is 4.75 or 95%, Day two: 4.5 or 90%, etc.). While I do not make it a point to accept late papers without penalty, I will listen to any pressing reasons you have for not having it ready to turn in on the assigned day. All papers are due in class. I stop late penalties at 50%. All papers turned in past 10 days late start at 50% regardless of when they are turned in for the rest of the semester.

Late assignments are only accepted until April 16, 2023. No late assignments will be accepted after that day.

All assignment grades can only be questioned or challenged for 2 weeks after the date they are made available to the class on Canvas. If the grade is not questioned or challenged in this time frame, it stands as recorded. This is designed to encourage students to retrieve their papers and also to not question grades in May that were handed back in March because they decide they do not like their final class grade.

Two exams will be given. They will cover material presented in lectures and in the readings from the text, as well as any other material assigned/presented in class (including videos and lectures). The exams are **NOT** comprehensive. However, most of concepts in this course build upon each other so you will be expected to retain information from earlier portions of the class. If you ask me in class if the final is comprehensive, I reserve the right to raise my eyebrow at you and/or roll my eyes.

Your exams will be ONLINE this semester. I will announce the format prior to the exam. All work should be your own with no collaboration (on either exams and papers).

The short paper assignments will be 2-3 pages each, double spaced, Times Roman (or equivalent) 12 point font, with 1 inch margins. (Honestly, I don't care exactly what font you use, but I expect it to be at a minimum 2 full

pages (not one and a half, not one and three quarters). Also, if you turn in a Courier 14 font paper with 1.5 margins with triple spacing, don't be surprised to see it heavily penalized. I stop reading after 5 pages on the short paper assignments. You will be given a list of movies (think 2-3) for each short paper assignment. You will select one of them to watch and write the paper. It is not designed to be comprehensive. They will be selected for specific reasons. The films selected will all (or partially... meaning at least on one format) be available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, Youtube (for some of the early ones), the library, or another similar service. You will be expected to watch the film and write a short paper discussing aspects of the film which will be included in the question prompt. The idea behind having a short list of films in each section is to facilitate class discussion while respecting not all students have the same tastes in movies.

Class Recordings: Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Academic Dishonesty/Cheating

You will be expected to adhere to the UT Honor Code: *The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.*

Though obvious, cheating is not allowed on any assignments. Plagiarism is prohibited. It refers to copying any work from any source (electronic, paper, etc.) without noting/citing its original source. It is important to note that using ideas (and not just quotes) from other sources without proper citation also counts as plagiarism. For additional information on these items, see the University General Information Catalog at:

<https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/> and <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>. **Any assignments turned in will be assumed to be the final version of the assignment and any inappropriate material will be considered intentional and not accidental.**

Any class materials may not be uploaded onto 3rd party websites without the professor's explicit permission. If you do so, it will be considered a violation of the honor code. The professor has the right (even after the class is completed) to submit these violations to Judicial Affairs for adjudication.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>

Canvas

I will attempt to use Canvas as a way to provide information to the class. In the past, I have regularly made RTF versions of my Powerpoint slides available prior to class. However, if I encounter problems utilizing Canvas, I may shift my materials (including test guides and other things) to another website devoted to making material available to the class. I will announce any changes of this sort to the class.

I will try to post on Canvas review sheets prior to each exam. These sheets should not be considered the definitive study guide for the test. Rather, they are a list of major concepts and ideas you should definitely know for the exam.

Additional information

Do NOT phone or email me about a grade (i.e. "What did I get?"). We will post grades electronically as soon as practical.

If you need extra time on a test and/or require special physical accommodations, please contact me in confidence as soon as possible at the beginning of the course. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs within the guidelines set forth by the University.

Accessible, Inclusive, and Compliant Statement: The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Instructor Survey/Evaluation:

An evaluation of the course and instructor will be conducted at the end of the semester using the approved UT Course/Instructor evaluation forms.

Undergraduate Student Drop Policy

From the 1st through the 12th class day, an undergraduate student can drop a course via the web and receive a refund, if eligible. From the 13th through the university's academic drop deadline, a student may Q drop a course with approval from the Dean, and departmental advisor.

Religious Holy Days: A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Office for Inclusion and Equity. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

Restricting Information: If you want your personal information restricted in the directory, the information is located here: <https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/records/restrictmyinfo>

Make-up exams/Excused Absences

Absences on exam days may be excused if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or university or legal obligation. Unexcused absences from examinations will result in a score of zero for that exam.

I **STRONGLY** encourage you not to miss an exam. The makeup may be different from the exam given to the rest of the class and the exam format is at my discretion.

One more thing: If a true emergency occurs that you know you can document, take care of yourself first and we will sort it out later. You do not need to call me from the ER or jail to let us know you won't be there. In those situations, you have bigger problems than this class at that moment in time.

Class Calendar

Please note: *The readings for this day are the readings I expect you to have done PRIOR to that day. They are the readings we will discuss in class that day, not the readings assigned to read on that day and discussed on the following day. The schedule may change depending on the class and how quickly or slowly we get through material.*

| Week | Material Covered | Due this Week |
|--|---|---|
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 9-14 | Syllabus/Introduction Chapter 1: Setting the Scene: A Theory of Film and Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Monday January 9 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday Jan 14 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 1 Module 1 immediately following Chapter 1 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 15-21 | Chapter 2 The Making of Message: Film Production and Techniques, and Political Messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday January 15 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday Jan 21 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 2 Module 2 immediately following Chapter 2 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 22-28 | Chapter 3 Causes and Special Effects: The Political Environment of Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday January 22 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday Jan 28 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 3 Module 3 immediately following Chapter 3 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 29-February 4 | Chapter 4 Politics in the Silent Movies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday January 29 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday February 4 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feb 4: Short Paper 1 due by 11:59pm Participation Quiz during Chapter 4 Module 4 immediately following Chapter 4 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 5-11 | Chapter 5 The 1930s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday February 5 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday February 11 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 5 Module 5 immediately following Chapter 5 |
| Week of | Chapter 6: The 1940s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 12-18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday February 12 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday February 18 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6 Module 6 immediately following Chapter 6 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 19-25 | Chapter 7: The 1950s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday February 19 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday February 25 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 7 Module 7 immediately following Chapter 7 |
| Monday February 27 | Test covers Chapters 1-7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feb 27: Test 1 (complete between 9am and 10pm) |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 26-March 4 | Chapter 8: The 1960s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday February 26 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday March 4 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 4: Short Paper 2 due by 11:59pm Participation Quiz during Chapter 8 Module 8 immediately following Chapter 8 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 5-11 | Chapter 9: The 1970s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday March 5 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday March 11 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 9 Module 9 immediately following Chapter 9 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 12-18 | Spring Break (No Classes) | Spring Break |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 19-25 | Chapter 10: 1980s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday March 19 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday March 25 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 10 Module 10 immediately following Chapter 10 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 26-April 1 | Chapter 11: 1990s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday March 26 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday April 1 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 1: Short Paper 3 due by 11:59pm Participation Quiz during Chapter 11 Module 11 immediately following Chapter 11 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2-8 | Chapter 12: 2000-now <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday April 2 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday April 8 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 12 Module 12 immediately following Chapter 12 |
| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 9-15 | Chapter 13: True Lies? The Rise of Political Documentaries The 1970s <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday April 9 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday April 15 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Quiz during Chapter 13 Module 13 immediately following Chapter 13 |

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| Week of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 16-22 | Chapter 16: White House Down? Politics in Disaster <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures released on Sunday April 16 Lectures expected to be fully viewed/completed by Saturday April 22 11:59pm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 16: Last Day all Papers Must be Turned in Participation Quiz during Chapter 14 Module 14 immediately following Chapter 14 |
| Monday April 24 Last Class Day | Test 2 (Chapters (8,9,10,11,12,13,16)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 24: Test 2 (complete between 9am-10pm) |