GROSSMONT COLLEGE

Official Course Outline

POLITICAL SCIENCE 160 – POLITICS IN FILM

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units Semester Hours

POSC 160 Politics in Film 3 3 hours lecture: 48-54 hours

96-108 outside-of-class hours

144-162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

None.

Corequisite

None.

Recommended Preparation

None.

3. Catalog Description

This course uses film to explore major aspects of political life and to examine the cultural creation of meaning about social and political power, values, and activities. Films are studied as social and political products and to enhance understanding of political phenomena in the American and other cultures. These phenomena include social/political movements, civil liberties, electoral politics, war, law, political economy, and race, gender, and class differences and conflict. This course explains for students how they can view films in different political contexts and view politics from different theoretical lenses to gain insight about contemporary political life.

4. Course Objectives

The student will:

a. Analyze how political and economic phenomena are presented in feature length films.

b. Identify key concepts of political science in feature length films.

c. Apply different political theories as vehicles to understanding political phenomena as they are portrayed in film.

d. Compare and contrast techniques used by filmmakers to present political viewpoints or phenomena in film.

e. Explain the role of film in constructing popular conceptions of politics.

5. Instructional Facilities

a. Audiovisual equipment – television, video clips, overhead projector, projection screen, digital processing presenter, computer with data projector monitor and internet access.

b. Chalkboards or dry-erase boards.

6. Special Materials Required of Student

None.

POLITICAL SCIENCE 160 – POLITICS IN FILM Page 2

7. Course Content

a. The relationship of politics and film.

b. Analysis of contemporary political life.

c. Illustration of particular political concepts and phenomena.

d. Analysis and discussion of specific films.

e. Theories relevant to discussions of films.

8. Method of Instruction

a. Films.

b. Class discussions.

c. Readings and lectures.

d. Quizzes, examinations and written projects.

e. Multimedia presentations, including video and computer presentations.

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

a. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their comprehension of the subject matter and on their ability to apply this knowledge with insight to politics and film today.

b. Quizzes and examinations, including a final exam with objective and essay questions.

c. Group discussions.

d. Research projects on topics such as theoretical perspectives on political issues or significant political controversies.

10. Outside Class Assignments

a. Text reading

b. Homework to include such items as responding to questions about the film and how the film relates to the readings and contemporary politics.

c. Preparing research on topics such as theoretical perspectives on political issues or significant political controversies.

11. Texts

a. Required Text(s):

(1) Christensen, Terry. *Projecting Politics: Political Messages in American Films*. Armonk NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005

(2) Franklin, Daniel P. *Politics and Film: The Political Culture of Film in the United States*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006

(3) Kellner, Douglas. *Cinema Wars: Hollywood Film and Politics in the Bush Cheney Era*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009

(4) Di Paolo, Marc. *War, Politics and Superheroes: Ethics and Propaganda in Comics and Film*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011

b. Supplementary texts and workbooks:

None.

Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

* 1. Critically evaluate how films transmit a variety of perspectives on political phenomena.
  2. Examine political issues from different theoretical perspectives and contexts.

Date approved by the Governing Board: May 21, 2013