American Politics in Film
TH 2:45-5:35 pm
CH 151

Course Description
This course examines representations of American politics in film. We will use these representations as primary texts and will compare and contrast the facts, ideas, and symbols they provide with written accounts and analyses of the phenomena, processes, and events represented. Although this will not be the primary focus of the course, we will also explore a number of questions concerning the impact of visual representations of politics on political attitudes and behavior.

Course Requirements
Attendance 20%
- One absence equals three.
- More than one absence equals failure of this requirement.
- Justified absences require proper documentation. In these cases you are only entitled to make up missed work. Only two make ups per student will be allowed.
- More than two justified absences will result in failure of this requirement.
- Because of the large class size, there will be only two opportunities during the semester to make up missed work. The designated dates are October 15 and December 3 during office hours or by special appointment at the political science contact office in HU B-16.

Quizzes 80%
- Eleven (11) quizzes, each worth 10 points. The lowest-scoring quiz will not be counted.

Readings
Available online at BLS.

Office Hours
Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30am, Humanities B-16, and at any other day or time that is mutually agreeable by special appointment. Phone messages: 442-5377. E-mail: conga@albany.edu. Calls and e-mails will be returned only during business hours, M-F, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Schedule
September 3 The Manchurian Candidate (1962)
September 10 Dr. Strangelove (1964)

September 17 The Candidate (1972)
David A. Dulio, “Inside the War Room: Political Consultants in Modern Campaigns,” in Robert P.

**September 24 All the President’s Men (1976)**

**October 1 Twelve Angry Men (1957)**

**October 8 Missing (1982)**

**October 15 Born on the Fourth of July (1989) Mid-term point; Make-up opportunity.**

**October 22 Glory (1989)**

**October 29 Malcom X (1992)**

**November 5 Zoot Suit (1981)**

Montejano, ed., *Chicano Politics and Society in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Texas Press 1999), 234-257.

**November 12 City Hall (1996)**

**November 19 On the Waterfront (1954)**
**December 3 Norma Rae (1979) Make-up opportunity.**

**Selected American Politics Filmography**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Advise and Consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>All the King’s Men</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>And Justice for All</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>Apocalypse Now</td>
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<td>1982</td>
<td>The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez</td>
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<td>1946</td>
<td>The Best Years of Our Lives</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>Coming Home</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>El Norte</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>Fail Safe</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Four Days in September</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>The Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Full Metal Jacket</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>The Birth of a Nation</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>Born Yesterday</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Bulworth</td>
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<td>1979</td>
<td>The China Syndrome</td>
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<td>1941</td>
<td>Citizen Kane</td>
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<td>1947</td>
<td>Gentleman’s Agreement</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>Go Tell the Spartans</td>
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<td>1940</td>
<td>The Grapes of Wrath</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>Invasion of the Body Snatchers</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>The Last Hurrah</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Little Big Man</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Matewan (1987)
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)
Platoon (1986)
Primary Colors (1998)
The Seduction of Joe Tynan (1979)

The Senator was Indiscreet (1947)
Seven Days in May (1964)
State of the Union (1948)
Three Days of the Condor (1975)
Adaptation Sources
Books upon which some of the films in this course are based.

Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *All the President’s Men* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974).

The *New York Times* articles below chronicle key aspects of the 1986 New York City Parking Violations Bureau scandal. Some have claimed that *City Hall* is a remake of Robert Rossen’s 1949 film adaptation of Robert Penn Warren’s novel *All the King’s Men* but the more immediate source for *City Hall* is the 1986 scandal.


Reference Sources
Selected sources on the relationship between politics and film.