

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS in FILM

POLS 2998-004
Th 6:30pm – 9:00pm
MCHU 206

Professor: Dr. David L. Richards
Office: Oak Hall 448
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11am-12:30pm and Thursdays 3pm-4:30pm. Appointments are available in 15-minute increments and are to be made in advance via ADVAPP (<http://www.advapp.uconn.edu/>), where I am listed under Political Science.
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The cinematic medium provides an abundance of riches for the study of international relations. Not only have films addressed seemingly every possible issue in the realm of world politics, but the medium itself allows these issues to be explored in ways that inform and connect to us differently than can a book, journal article, or newspaper story. Thus, as students of international relations, we do ourselves a favor in taking seriously the intellectual possibilities offered to us by films. We won't be trying to define a particular genre called "international relations films", rather, we will be discussing films from across a wide spectrum of well-established genres, including: science fiction, comedy, anime, drama, romance, and documentary. Our goal is not to simply see whether the films we watch together affect our views about world politics but, instead, to see whether they affect *how* we think about world politics.

GRADED COMPONENTS:

- 1. Exams (Two @ 35% each):** You will take two take-home exams, each worth thirty-five percent of your overall grade for the course. On both October 18th (midterm) and December 6th (final), you will watch a film in class. Before each film starts, you'll be given an essay theme. To satisfactorily address the essay theme will require you to use knowledge from and about films we've discussed up to that point in the semester, in comparison to the film you watched that day.¹ You'll be given until 6:30pm on 10/23 (midterm) and 12/10 (final) to email your finished exam to the professor.
- 2. Film Audits (30%):** Each week, you will turn in a completed form (in paper copy, not electronic) pertaining to the previous week's movie/readings. The first one is due on 9/13, addressing the film and readings for 9/6. *The purpose of doing these audits is to put you in a position for getting the best grades possible on the midterm and final exams.* The blank form to be printed, completed, and handed in each week can be found as the last page of this syllabus and is also available online at the class website. Each audit will be worth 10 points, with a total of 100 possible points across all ten audits. Your point total across all ten audits will constitute your grade for this section of the course. Completed audits will be collected at the beginning of each class, after which point late penalties begin to accrue immediately at the rate of one point per hour.

¹ For the midterm exam, you'll compare the new film to films we've watched since the beginning of the semester. For the final exam, you'll compare the new film to films we've watched since the midterm exam.

ABOUT READING FILMS:

Taking high-quality notes on the films we watch is *crucial* given that you need to compare these films in detail on your exams. Also, you need to have quality information about the films to discuss them in class and to do well on your weekly film audits.

Each week, we will watch a film and then discuss it together. A productive discussion will absolutely require (a) having done the readings for that week, and (b) having watched the film closely for particular things. The list of questions below is designed to help you know what types of information to keep track of while watching these films, as well as the central framework for our discussions.

- A. What is the main message or point of view of the filmmaker(s)? What is the message that the filmmakers wanted viewers to take away?
- B. How is this film about a problem or question that is relevant to international relations?
- C. Who were the major characters (*make sure you have their names correct!*)? How did their traits, acts, and relationship to one another affect the film's message?
- D. What symbols/stereotypes/archetypes, if any, were used to help convey the main message?
- E. Which scene(s) was/were most important to conveying the message(s)? In detail, why?
- F. How did the *acting / directing / scenery / camerawork / editing / soundtrack / score* affect delivery of the message?

SEMESTER SCHEDULE / READINGS

Accessing Materials

Readings marked “[OD]” in the schedule below can be obtained at <https://tinyurl.com/2998film>

8/30: WELCOME! WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE? READING FILMS.

9/6: FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT?

Brewer, Paul R., Kimberly Gross, Sean Aday, and Lars Willnat. 2004. “International Trust and Public Opinion About World Affairs.” *American Journal of Political Science* 48.1: 93-109. [OD]

Fensterwald, Jr., Bernard. 1958. “The Anatomy of American ‘Isolationism’ and Expansionism. Part I.” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2.2: 111-139. [OD]

9/13: PROPAGANDA

Boyle, Peter. 1997. "Reversion to Isolationism? The British Foreign Office View of American Attitudes to Isolationism and Internationalism during World War II." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 8.1: 168-183. [OD]

Steele, Richard W. 1978. "American Popular Opinion and the War Against Germany: The Issue of Negotiated Peace, 1942." *The Journal of American History* 65.3: 704-723. [OD]

Vedantam, Shankar. 2003. "Propaganda Seen as Key for Military, World Opinion." March 24. *The Washington Post* [OD]

9/20: PRINCIPALS, AGENTS, AND TORTURE

Mitchell, Neil. 2012. "The Theory of the Fall Guy" IN *Democracy's Blameless Leaders: From Dresden to Abu Ghraib, How Leaders Evade Accountability for Abuse, Atrocity, and Killing*. New York: NYU Press. [OD]

Mitchell, Neil. 2012. "Evading Accountability" IN *Democracy's Blameless Leaders: From Dresden to Abu Ghraib, How Leaders Evade Accountability for Abuse, Atrocity, and Killing*. New York: NYU Press. [OD]

9/27: AREA BOMBING...A VIEW FROM THE GROUND

Armstrong, Charles K. 2009. "The Destruction and Reconstruction of North Korea 1950-1960." *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 7.0: 1-8. [Read pages 1-4] [OD]

International Committee of the Red Cross. 2018. "Rule 13. Area Bombardment" *Customary International Humanitarian Law* https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule13

International Committee of the Red Cross. 2018. "Practice Relating to Rule 13. Area Bombardment" *Customary International Humanitarian Law* https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v2_rul_rule13

New York Times. 1942. "A Blow At Japan's Heart." *The New York Times* April 20. [OD]

Ralph, William W. 2006. "Improvised Destruction: Arnold, LeMay, and the Firebombing of Japan." *War in History* 13.4: 495-522. [OD]

United States Strategic Bombing Survey. 1945. "Kobe Report" IN *Effects of Air Attack on Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto* [Read book pages 148-170 (PDF pages 167-189)] [OD: Note this is a huge file –90MB—so give it time to download if on a slow connection]

10/4: THE ATOMIC THREAT: DISARMAMENT & SCIFI

Boyd, Dallas. 2010. "Unconventional Thinking: Why Conventional Disarmament Must Precede Nuclear Abolition." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* [OD]

Sontag, Susan. 1965. "The Imagination of Disaster." *Commentary* October 1 [OD]

Vizzini, Bryan E. 2008. "Cold War Fears, Cold War Passions: Conservatives and Liberals Square Off in 1950s Science Fiction." *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 26.1: 28-39. [OD]

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10/11: THE ATOMIC THREAT: THE LOGIC OF MAD

Brown, Andrew, and Lorna Arnold. 2010. "The Quirks of Nuclear Deterrence." *International Relations* 24.3: 293-312.

Tetlock, Phillip, Charles McGuire, and Gregory Mitchell. 1991. "Psychological Perspectives on Nuclear Deterrence." *Annual Review of Psychology* 42: 239-276.

10/18: MIDTERM EXAM FILM [Final exams due back by 6:30pm on 10/23]**10/25: TO BOMB OR NOT TO BOMB**

Brym, Robert J., and Bader Araj. 2006. "Suicide Bombing as Strategy and Interaction: The Case of the Second Intifada." *Social Forces* 84.4: 1969-1986.

Victoroff, Jeff. 2005. "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49.1: 3-42.

11/1: THE WALL IS BUILT. WHICH SIDE, DYSTOPIA?

Carter, David B., and Paul Poast. 2017. "Why Do States Build Walls? Political Economy, Security, and Border Stability." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61.2: 239-270. [OD]

Hurd, Ian. 2017. "Targeted killing in international relations theory: Recursive politics of technology, law, and practice." *Contemporary Security Policy* 38.2: 307-319. [OD]

Snukal, Katia, and Emily Gilbert. 2015. "War, Law, Jurisdiction, And Juridical Othering: Private Military Security Contractors And The Nisour Square Massacre." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 33.4: 660-675. [OD]

11/8: ARE WE ALLOWED TO LAUGH AT THIS?

Landler, Mark. 2007. "In Germany, a Hitler Comedy Goes Over with a Thud." *The New York Times* January 11. [OD]

Novotný, Lukáš. 2009. "Right-wing Extremism and No-go-areas in Germany." *Czech Sociological Review* 45.3: 591-609. [OD]

Sorce, Giuliana. 2015. "Hitler and Humor: Coming to Terms with the Past Through Parody." *Global Media Journal: German Edition* 5.2: 1-12. [OD]

11/15: WHEN COWS ATTACK

Meneley, Anne. 2014. "Resistance is Fertile!" *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 14.4: 67-78. [OD]

Smith, Ron J., and Martin Isleem. 2017. "Farming the Front Line." *City* 21.3-4: 448-465. [OD]

11/22: THANKSGIVING BREAK**11/29: HOW TO GET THINGS DONE**

Çuhadar, Esra, and Bruce W. Dayton. 2012. "Oslo and its Aftermath: Lessons Learned from Track Two Diplomacy." *Negotiation Journal* 28.2: 155-179. [OD]

Nye, Jr., Joseph S. 2008. "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616: 94-109. [OD]

Zhu, Yuchao. 2011. "China and International 'Human Rights Diplomacy'." *China: An International Journal* 9.2: 217-245. [OD]

12/6: FINAL EXAM FILM [Final exams due back by 6:30pm on 12/10]

CLASS RULES:

Notes/Photos/Videos/Sound Recording, Etc.

You do not have permission to record any sounds or images from or during class. You do not have permission to make publicly available any class notes or materials – complete, partial, or summarized -- for paid or unpaid access by any other persons via any forum and/or via any medium. Any violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

Lateness

Habitual lateness to class is unprofessional and disrespectful to other students and to the professor. Habitual lateness to class is disruptive and will be handled as such.

Phones / Other Electronic Devices:

- Turn off the ringer of your phone/electronic devices BEFORE class begins. You will not be in trouble for a single accident of forgetting to turn off your phone and having it ring in class -- once in a while, everyone (*including the professor*) forgets to turn off his/her phone. So, if your phone rings in class, *please have the decency to turn it off and not let it ring* and ring until the caller hangs up or voicemail kicks in.
- Chronic cases of disruption via electronic devices will be referred to the Office of Student Services & Advocacy.
- You MAY use a laptop/tablet, etc. during lectures.
 - If the professor sees that too much laptop activity is being devoted to non-course activities (e.g., social media, etc.), permission to use laptops/tablets/etc. will be revoked.
- Use of earbuds/earphones is strictly prohibited.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be powered up or on during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be visible during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- If you are caught using *any* kind of electronic device during an exam, you will automatically receive a zero on the exam.

E-Mail:

You are responsible for checking your UCONN-registered e-mail every day, especially before classes and exams. Notices, important dates, reading changes, and the like will be announced via e-mail.

Communicating & Making Appointments With Me

E-mail is the single-best way to reach me. *Be sure to use ADVAPP to make appointments.*

Makeup Exams:

Makeup exams present severe equity problems for everyone involved in the course. Makeup exams will ONLY be scheduled for those with DOCUMENTED medical, University-sanctioned activity, or direct family member's death- associated excuses. ***There are NO exceptions to the makeup exam rule.*** For example, exams missed because of vacation, weddings, oversleeping, sickness not bad enough to get a doctor's excuse, etc, cannot be made up.

Excused Absences:

Excused absences are limited to absences where there is a documented medical excuse for that/those date(s) missed, a University-sanctioned event directly affecting the student, or the documented death of an immediate family member.

Late Penalty

Late penalties begin accruing immediately after I have collected work from all those in attendance at the beginning of class, rounded up to the hour.

Academic Integrity

In this course we aim to conduct ourselves as a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. You are encouraged to study together, discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, and go to the Writing Center with your drafts. In this course, those activities are well within the bounds of academic honesty. However, when you use another's ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation. Even one occasion of academic dishonesty, large or small, on *any* assignment, large or small, will result in failure for the entire course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs. For University policies on academic honesty, please see UConn's *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* and the Office of Community Standards: <http://www.community.uconn.edu>

Students With Disabilities

Please contact me during office hours to discuss academic accommodations that may be needed during the semester due to a documented disability. The Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature and functional limitations of a student's documented disability, he/she may be eligible for academic accommodations. CSD collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the CSD website at www.csd.uconn.edu.

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate Romantic relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate Romantic relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. More information is available at <http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=2884> .

Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

To protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report assaults they witness or are told about to the Office of Diversity & Equity under the Sexual Assault Response Policy. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at <http://sexualviolence.uconn.edu/> .

GRADE CALCULATION:

Your final grade will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{FINAL GRADE} = [.35 (\text{Exam 1}) + .35 (\text{Exam 2}) + .30 (\text{Film Audits})]$$

Final class grades will be assigned as such:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	59 or below

