

**ENGLISH 4109-01W: FILM AS LITERATURE**  
***FILMING THE RESISTANCE***

**12:30-1:45pm; TLC 1200**

**SPRING 2019**

**DR. PATRICK ERBEN**



**OFFICE LOCATION: TLC 2239**

**OFFICE HOURS: MW 11am-12pm & 2pm-4pm; & by appointment**

**PHONE NUMBER: 678-839-6144**

**EMAIL ADDRESS: [perben@westga.edu](mailto:perben@westga.edu)**

“STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, EVEN IF  
YOU ARE STANDING ALONE.” ---Sophie Scholl

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In film, the rebel (with or without a cause) is one of the most intriguing figures. Resistance against social, political, cultural, individual, and sexual injustice, power, and oppression, moreover, can create a powerful mythos (such as the Star Wars franchise's driving principle of rebellion against the empire), and it can chronicle, honor, and perhaps even launch concrete protest movements (such as the film *13<sup>th</sup>* and its lambasting of racial injustice in the U.S. prison and criminal justice system). This course will read films about resistance as literary texts, while taking seriously their potential for agency in the public sphere. Perhaps, resistance is *not* futile.



David Oyelowo in *Selma* (Dir. Ava DuVernay, 2014)



Harvey Milk in *The Times of Harvey Milk* (Dir. Rob Epstein, 1984)

### COURSE TEXTS:

The films listed are required viewing and will be available either on reserve in the library and/or through a streaming service. All secondary, critical, historical, and other contextual readings (usually articles/essays) will be made available electronically through CourseDen. Please see the course schedule for details on film viewing assignments (some films are assigned viewing at home, and some films are viewed in class with interruptions for scene analysis).

### Films:

- *Spartacus* (Dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1960). Amazon video.
- *Casablanca* (Dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942). Library reserve and Amazon video.
- *The White Rose (Die weiße Rose)*; dir. Michael Verhoeven, 1982). Library reserve.
- *The Times of Harvey Milk* (Dir. Rob Epstein, 1984). Amazon video.
- *The Piano* (Dir. Jane Campion, 1993). Library reserve and Amazon video.
- *The Lives of Others (Das Leben der Anderen)*; dir. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, 2006). Library reserve and Amazon video.
- *Selma* (Dir. Ava DuVernay, 2014). Library reserve and Amazon video.
- *The Post* (Steven Spielberg, 2017). Amazon video.
- *Beatriz at Dinner* (Miguel Arteta, 2017). Amazon video.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

### Students will learn to

- 1) Analyze films as texts in discussion and in written work;
- 2) Examine how film employs the aesthetic and cultural techniques of other literary forms;
- 3) Describe film's distinctive characteristics;
- 4) Evaluate the ways in which social, political, economic, and historical influences affect the production and consumption of film texts;
- 5) Investigate film as literature and film's multiple contexts using thesis-driven analytical prose.



Holly Hunter and Anne Paquin in *The Piano* (Dir. Jane Campion, 1993)

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (KEYED TO LEARNING OUTCOMES):

### Participation (Learning Outcomes 1-5):

Active participation is the essence of a lively and productive course. I encourage you to cultivate an engaged reading and viewing style, especially keeping detailed notes while viewing the films. Classroom discussion will usually involve close readings and scene analyses, and I may ask you to support your comments with evidence from the text/film. I evaluate both the quality and quantity of your contributions, so less vocal students may excel through fewer, but thoughtful comments. I will help you prepare for your reading and classroom discussion by posting specific questions for each film on CourseDen. I may restate these questions in class to guide discussion, and you may use them to cultivate active note-taking. You should also regard your **journal entries** (see below) as preparation for class participation. We can discuss at any point during the semester how you are doing on your participation grade.

### Online Journal and Discussion Forum (LOs 1-5):

The course schedule (see below) will tell you when journal entries are due and what your journal entry should cover. I will announce in class (and state along with the posted journal prompts/questions in CourseDen) whether only a journal entry is required or whether I also want you to respond to other students' postings in discussion format. For each film (and occasionally the contextual readings), I will post questions on a designated discussion forum on CourseDen. **Each** journal entry must respond to one (1) of the questions provided, **plus** it must reflect on one issue or observation from your viewing/reading that was *not* covered in my questions.

**Each journal entry must be a minimum of 250-300 words long**, which is the equivalent of roughly one double-spaced, typed page. Following my questions/prompts, the journal entries should critically engage and analyze the films, not provide plot summary or simple gut reactions (however, your initial gut response to a film may be a good departure point for your analysis/evaluation). You should also think of your journals as an essential tool for exploring ideas and arguments for your more formal papers. You must complete your required journal entry *before* the beginning of the class period for which it is listed in the schedule. If I require discussion response postings, you will have to respond to two (2) initial journal entries by other students in the class, also *before* the beginning of the class period for which the journal is assigned. Please take this assignment seriously, as I use it instead of pop quizzes. Thus, your journal entries will help me evaluate whether you have watched the assigned films and read the assigned texts. **I will hand out a grading rubric for the journal/discussion.**

**Scene Analysis (LOs 1-3):**

This paper functions essentially the same way as a short, analytical paper about a literary text you practiced in other classes. You should pick a specific scene (or a few related scenes) and perform a “close reading,” i.e. analyze the scene cinematic and narrative techniques in their relation to the film’s larger artistic, cultural, sociological, historical, or political messages. **A detailed assignment description and grading rubric will be provided. 3 full pages minimum, plus Works Cited.**

**Film Review (LOs 1, 4):**

For this assignment, you will write a film review, such as you might find in magazines, newspapers, or websites. The twist, however, will be to write the review not for a general audience but for a specific readership defined by the publication of your choice. For example, a review written for the *Wall Street Journal* (a conservative, pro-business paper) would probably look very different from a review of the same film written for *Mother Jones*, a progressive/liberal-leaning new magazine/website. The point is not to encourage partisanship but to hone your understanding of the ways in which a variety of circumstances or contexts (education, class, politics, race, age, etc.) influence the consumption and reception of films. **A detailed assignment description and grading rubric will be provided. 2-3 pages minimum for the film review, plus ½ page describing your chosen publication, its audience, and the ways in which this context shaped your review.**

**Oral Presentation (LOs 1-4):**

For this assignment, you partner with three students (groups of four) to present on a film (or, for example, a film trilogy) of *your group's choice* (i.e. something not on the syllabus but relating to the course topic on resistance). Your presentation should

- summarize the main elements (plot, setting, characters, etc.)
- analyze how the film deals with the theme of resistance
- show a brief (circa 3 minute) video produced by your group (for example, a short interview or a series of questions about the film posed to random strangers on the street/on campus), along with your oral commentary on the video during your presentation in class.



**A detailed assignment description and grading rubric will be provided. Presentation length: circa 15 minutes.**

**Research Paper (LOs 1-5):**

This paper will be a longer analytical, argumentative essay comparing/linking two or more of the films we covered in class (as well as the film/films you discussed in your oral presentation and/or other relevant films connected to the theme of resistance). An original argument, based on your analysis of the film(s), should stand in the foreground, supported by research in literary criticism, film criticism, and historical, sociological, cultural background. I *encourage* you to build on previous work in the semester. **A detailed assignment description and grading rubric will be provided. The research paper consists of three stages: 1) proposal & annotated bibliography; 2) full draft; 3) final version (Minimum 8 FULL pages; minimum 5 scholarly sources)**

**GRADING SCALE:**

Participation (Learning Outcomes 1-5):	15%
Online Journal & Discussion Forum (LOs 1-5):	20%
Scene Analysis (LOs 1-3):	10%
Film Review (LOs 1, 4):	10%
Oral Presentation (LOs 1-4):	15%
Research Paper (LOs 1-5): (total 30%)	
• Proposal & Annotated Bibliography:	5%
• Draft:	10%
• Final Version:	15%

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

*All changes are at the discretion of the instructor and will be announced in class, through email, and on CourseDen. Important: All assignments, including readings and film viewings, are to be completed for the date listed in the schedule!*

<b>DATES</b>	<b>COURSE TOPICS AND ASSIGNED READINGS and VIEWINGS</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE/DEADLINES</b>
<b>M 1/7</b>	Introductions and syllabus.	
<b>W 1/9</b>	Establishing the framework: Resistance in Film Start viewing <i>Spartacus</i> in class.	
<b>M 1/14</b>	View (at home): remainder of <i>Spartacus</i> . Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 1/16</b>	Cont. <i>Spartacus</i> .	
<b>M 1/21</b>	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; no classes</b>	
<b>W 1/23</b>	View in class with step-by-step scene analysis: <i>Casablanca</i> . Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	
<b>M 1/28</b>	View in class with step-by-step scene analysis: <i>Casablanca</i>	
<b>W 1/30</b>	View in class with step-by-step scene analysis: <i>Casablanca</i>	Journal entry due.
<b>M 2/4</b>	Standing Alone: <i>The White Rose</i> (view at home for class). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 2/6</b>	<i>The White Rose</i> , cont. discussion.	
<b>Fri 2/8</b>		<b>Scene Analysis due by 5pm as email attachment (MS Word) to <a href="mailto:perben@westga.edu">perben@westga.edu</a>.</b>

<b>M 2/11</b>	Queering the Resistance: <i>The Times of Harvey Milk</i> (view at home for class). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 2/13</b>	<i>The Times of Harvey Milk</i> , cont. discussion	
<b>M 2/18</b>	Gender and Resistance: <i>The Piano</i> (view at home for class). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 2/20</b>	<i>The Piano</i> , cont. discussion	
<b>M 2/25</b>	Resisting the Machine from Within: <i>The Lives of Others</i> (view at home). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 2/27</b>	Dr. Erben at conference. <b>NO CLASS.</b>	
<b>M 3/4</b>	Civil Rights on Screen: <i>Selma</i> (view at home for class). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 3/6</b>	<i>Selma</i> , cont. discussion	
<b>Fri 3/8</b>		<b>Film Review due by 5pm as email attachment (MS Word) to <a href="mailto:perben@westga.edu">perben@westga.edu</a>.</b>
<b>M 3/11</b>	The First Amendment as Resistance: <i>The Post</i> (cont. discussion). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.
<b>W 3/13</b>	<i>The Post</i> , cont. discussion	
<b>M 3/18 &amp; W 3/20</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES</b>	
<b>M 3/25</b>	A film for the Age of Trump: <i>Beatriz at Dinner</i> (view at home for class). Contextual readings on CourseDen (read at home for today).	Journal entry due.

W 3/27	<i>Beatriz at Dinner</i> , cont. discussion.	
M 4/1		<b>Oral Presentations Groups 1-3</b>
W 4/3		<b>Oral Presentations Groups 4-6</b>
M 4/8	Intro to final research paper.	
W 4/10	Proposal and Bibliography workshop. Bring your laptop and research material.	
Friday 4/12		<b>Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due by 5pm as email attachment to <a href="mailto:perben@westga.edu">perben@westga.edu</a>.</b>
M 4/15	No joint class meeting. See Signupgenius for your individual appointment.	Mandatory Conferences
W 4/17	No joint class meeting. See Signupgenius for your individual appointment.	Mandatory Conferences
M 4/22	<b>Research paper draft workshop (bring your laptop to class).</b>	
W 4/24	<b>Research paper draft workshop (bring your laptop to class).</b>	<b>Research paper draft due by 5pm as email attachment (MS Word) to <a href="mailto:perben@westga.edu">perben@westga.edu</a>.</b>
M 4/29	<b>Last day of class. Revision workshop.</b>	Bring your laptop to work on your draft.
W 5/1	<b>Final exam period: 11:00 am-1:00 pm</b> <b>Final proof-reading of research paper.</b>	Bring two (2) PRINTED copies of your research paper draft (already revised following my comments).
Thu 5/2		<b>Final version of research paper due by 5pm as email attachment (MS Word) to <a href="mailto:perben@westga.edu">perben@westga.edu</a>.</b>

### SUPPORT (QUICK LINKS):

- Accessibility Services: <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php>
- Center for Academic Success: <http://www.westga.edu/cas/>
- CourseDen D2L Home Page: <https://westga.view.usg.edu/>
- Counseling Center: <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/>
- Ingram Library Services: <http://www.westga.edu/library/>
- University Bookstore: <http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/>
- University Writing Center (UWC):  
<https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/index.php>
- UWG Cares: <http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>

### COURSE POLICIES:

**ATTENDANCE AND DEADLINES:** Regular and timely attendance is **MANDATORY**. You have **four (4) allowed absences**. Each additional absence will result in a full letter grade deduction from your *final* course grade (A to B, B to C, etc.). All absences will be treated the same (i.e. no distinction between excused and unexcused absences). Thus, you do not need to turn in a doctor's note or any excuses for absences, email me, or call me about your absence. Everyone is responsible for signing an attendance list circulated at the beginning of every class meeting. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to request the attendance list at the end of class. Failure to sign up on the attendance list may be counted as an absence for that day. In case of absence, you are responsible for keeping up with all assignments, readings, and in-class work. **I do not make lecture notes etc. available to students who missed class** (please get in touch with a fellow student). I can only accept late work if you discussed the issue with me ahead of time. All exceptions and acceptance of excuses are completely at my discretion.

**TARDINESS:** A roll book will circulate at the BEGINNING of class. Everyone who is late will be noted as tardy. **Three (3) "tardies" will result in one (1) absence!**

**PLAGIARISM:** There are different forms of plagiarism, from blatant theft of entire papers to negligence in acknowledging a source in your writing. However, you will be held responsible for any form of plagiarism—whether intentional or not. Consequences and responses to plagiarism are at the discretion of the instructor. Please pay specific attention to the English Department's site on plagiarism: [www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/plagiarism.php](http://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/english/plagiarism.php). I expect all out-of-class work to abide by MLA Format (See: *MLA Handbook for the Writers of Research Papers*) for proper documentation of sources (primary and secondary).

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:** *NB: Before you read the following, keep in mind that I wouldn't have to address these issues if they hadn't caused problems in the past.* I expect everyone to be ready to work at the beginning of class. This means in particular having ALL reading materials assigned for that day as well as any tools for note-taking on hand and ready to use. You MAY bring drinks

and/or non-smelly or non-noisy food to class. Most importantly: Be respectful toward the opinions, ideas, and personal identity of all members of our class! **The following actions will result in an immediate dismissal from class and result in an absence for that day (and may result in the administrative withdrawal from the course):**

- Using the internet, email, or social media on a personal laptop (you may use a laptop for note-taking)
- using any other electronic devices, such as smart phones, etc. In particular, I am allergic to students text-messaging during class. Please turn off any of these devices *before* class.
- sleeping or even acting like you're sleeping (e.g. putting your head on your desk)
- disruptive behavior, such as interrupting other students or the instructor while they're speaking, insulting or disparaging the opinions of other students, etc.

**UWG EMAIL POLICY:** University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

**DR. ERBEN'S E-MAIL ETIQUETTE:**

- All messages must include a subject line
- All messages must include an address line (e.g. "Dear Dr. Erben")
- Use polite and appropriate language, as well as reasonably edited prose (i.e. complete sentences, correct spelling, etc.)!
- No text-messaging language and abbreviations.
- Always sign your name!

**ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact Accessibility Services.

**CENTER FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS:** The Center for Academic Success provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or [cas@westga.edu](mailto:cas@westga.edu)

**UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER** ([www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/](http://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/)): The University Writing Center assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or [writing@westga.edu](mailto:writing@westga.edu). Please also consult the very useful page of student writing resources compiled by the University Writing Center: [www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/writing-resources-undergrad.php](http://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/writing/writing-resources-undergrad.php).

**CREDIT HOUR POLICY:** The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

**UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA HONOR CODE:** At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG. Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the Student Handbook.

**HB 280 (Campus Carry):** UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: [http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information#](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#). You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>.