

# Film & Social Justice

## Syllabus / SPRING 2020

HUMN 4390 / FILM 4340

**Instructor:** John De Frank - [profile](#)

**Class:** Hybrid, face-to-face meeting on Wednesdays (Hybrid) 3:00 – 4:20 pm

**Conference hours:** Wednesdays at 1:00 or by appointment. Students may request a phone conference, IM dialog, or online video conference if they wish.

**Office Phone:** 747-5835

**Blackboard support:** 747-4357 / [helpdesk@utep.edu](mailto:helpdesk@utep.edu)

**Email:** [jdefrank@utep.edu](mailto:jdefrank@utep.edu)

**Humanities Website:** [utep.edu/liberalarts/humanities](http://utep.edu/liberalarts/humanities)

**Semester Calendar:** Please refer to Blackboard

**Course description:** The Film & Social Justice course is designed to review, discuss and understand topics and movements in social justice through the lens of film, and how film is used as a tool in both a narration of history as well as medium for social justice. This course counts as a Humanities or Film credit. Students will gain understanding of different social justice issues via selected films that are based on true events or stories that span back to the 1970's in which a social injustice was overcome. The films are paired with readings that will help compare and contrast how the film depicted that particular event or person(s) as well as correlate in relation to current issues and news. Students are expected to participate in discussion on each topic of the social justice issues and how they are told through the lens of film and how our society is comprehending and acting on these issues both in past and in present

**Course readings/videos:** This course will consist of required readings in which you are responsible for reading on your own time as well as other required research pertaining to your assignments and projects. Some readings and videos will be subject to change but an email announcement will be given.

Readings will consist of web links and will be posted in the “weekly folders” section on Blackboard by specific week.

**\*There are no text books assigned for the course but you will be responsible for streaming/renting films selected for the course.**

***\*The Film & Social Justice syllabus in terms of schedule, dates, readings and video are subject to change upon timely notice.***

**Academic dishonesty** is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, not doing one's own work, plagiarism, and unacceptable collusion. Not doing one's own work may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will

Understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts.

#### **ADA statement**

As per Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to CASS. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in order to meet any accommodations the student may need.

Monday thru Friday 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m.

Phone:(915) 747-5148

Union Building East Room 106

cass@utep.edu

## **Technology Checklist**

As you prepare to take an online course at UTEP, we want to share with you some basic information about technology to make this a successful experience. Having your computer requirements checked and all software up to date is essential to access course content. Please take some time to read through this page and ensure you have the information you need to get successfully started.

### Supported Browsers

For a PC: FireFox, Internet Explorer (Do NOT use IE7), and Chrome

For a Mac: Safari, Firefox, and Chrome

Browser performance hints include:

Clear browser cache

Allow pop-ups

Check Your Java

1. Go to <http://java.com>
2. Click on "Do I Have Java?"
3. Click on "Verify Java Version."
4. Update Java if needed.

In addition to having your web browser tested. You may also need additional browser plug-ins to view some content that your instructor may share on the learning management system.

Common plug-ins include:

Adobe Reader, Flash Player, Windows Media Player, QuickTime

### Additional Software

When creating documents, slide presentations, spreadsheets, etc., you must use Microsoft Office or a compatible program (see 10 Free MS Word Alternatives). The UTEP Technology Support Services (3rd floor, UTEP Library) can also provide you with any applications, compatibility packs, patches, and updates you may need.

## **Statement of (N)etiquette**

When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos is much more difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Hence, it is vitally important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

For example, avoid the use of caps in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting. The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

Please observe the following:

- You are required to check the Blackboard course shell daily for messages, updates and assignments.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to fellow classmates and the instructor at all times, in all contexts. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Be professional and careful in what you say about others.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address and focus on the ideas, not the person who posted them.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.

## **Online Communication Expectations and Discussion Board Tips**

### Communication Expectations

Learning online is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple tips to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

Ask questions: If you don't know the answer, someone else will. The discussion board is the area for asking questions related to content OR any problems, related to the class, you are having. Make sure that you have clearly indicated the subject of your message.

Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link or other item that can help others learn something you can share.

Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior will usually subject to disciplinary action, as well.

Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, make sure you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before rereading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.

Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.

#### Discussion Board Tips

We use an online discussion forum in our class. It is expected for you to discuss, demonstrate, and connect your understanding of the assigned readings and media. Questions will be provided to focus your attention on the important elements of each module. Discussion board postings are NOT a summary of course materials, debates, or your opinion. They are critical analysis and academic discussions among students. Your professor may participate with replies to some, but not all, of your postings because it is their job to facilitate the conversation as for the whole class, not just individuals.

Keep your messages concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop your thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter messages than long ones.

Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It's fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.

Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point." If you think someone has made an especially strong point and you want to say so, and then explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point.

## COURSE WORK & GRADING

**Students Responsibility for Assignments/Story Project Proposals and Drafts:** As part of their grade, students are required to complete readings, conduct research, participate in online/face-to-face discussions, posts or blogs, and submit work on time.

Instructions for any course work will be posted in the weekly folder section of Blackboard and sent via email announcement when assignment is issued.

**Course Readings & Materials:** All readings will be made available on Blackboard in the weekly folders.

### **Grade percentage breakdown:**

Attendance = 10 pts. (3 excused absences, student dropped on 5<sup>th</sup> absence).

Participation = 5 points – Overall participation in the course.

Blackboard Discussion Posts 5 points X 2 = 5 points

Quiz points: 5 quizzes X 12 points each = 60 points

Midterm = 10 pts

Final = 10 points

**Total points: 100 points**

## ATTENDANCE

**Attendance (10% of grade):** Because we only meet once a week, students are expected to attend the class sessions. Most of the work and curriculum and readings will be online. There will be lecture, discussions, quiz review and others things to be scheduled on Wednesdays during class. You have up to three (3) excused absences for which you will not be penalized points. The four (4) absences will result in a deduction of 5 points. **Five (5) absences will result in an automatic drop form the course.**

## PARTICIPATION

**Participation & Discussion Posts (10% of grade):** Participation will be based on student's ability to partake in online/ face-to-face discussions by offering insight on the subject matter including research information, asking questions, reiterating or disputing another student's view with sufficient backing and sourcing. Participation (attendance in class and online discussion), will be monitored every week by instructor. Some

discussion will be posted Blackboard for discussion posts. Participation DOES NOT include 'yes' or 'no' answers or repetition of another students POV or statement.

### QUIZZES

**5 Quizzes (60% of grade):** There will be five quizzes (each 12% of the grade) on readings, videos, films and online lectures, materials and discussions provided by the instructor. Quizzes will take place on scheduled Wednesdays (in-class) and Fridays (online); dates are marked on the calendar and in the syllabus. Quizzes are a combination of multiple choice, T or F, fill in the blank and one or two comprehensive questions. There will be a mix of online/Blackboard and in-class quizzes.

**There are NO make-up quizzes:** My responsibility is to this class, not student's personal life, job schedule or other classes, therefore, there will be no make-up quizzes. You have the dates ahead of time, refer to the semester calendar on Blackboard and please plan accordingly.

### MIDTERM & FINAL

Instructions will be sent via Blackboard announcement and posted in scheduled Weekly Folder. The midterm and Final are worth 10 points each.

### OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT

**Non-Profit Volunteer Extra Credit Assignment (Optional):** A student may replace a low grade by volunteering at a local, not for profit organization that is 501 c3 certified for five hours to receive 5 points. Student must submit organization name for instructor's approval before contacting the organization for volunteer time. If approved, student must submit organization's contact person with ph # and email to verify student hours. Further instructions will be given once student is approved for extra credit volunteer.

#### ***Grading scale:***

90% - 100% = A

80%-89% = B

70 % - 79% = C

60% - 69% = D

59 – 0 % = F