

# HIST 375: Hollywood and History

May 12 to 30, 2025

Online—Asynchronous

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## **Class Location & Time:**

This is an online, asynchronous class, which means that all class activities will take place online, through WVU's eCampus portal (accessed at <http://ecampus.wvu.edu>). Please note that this is an online course and that you are responsible for having access to the internet.

## **Communications:**

With this being an online, asynchronous course, my primary means of communicating with students will be through my WVU mix email ([aes0049@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:aes0049@mix.wvu.edu)). With this being a three-week course, I strongly encourage you to contact me as soon as possible if you have any questions about the material, assignments, or the course in general. I will monitor emails and assignments daily. I will generally grade your assignments within two days of when a discussion or assignment closes.

## **Course Summary:**

This course is designed to make students conversant with the history of the United States using films as primary sources. When used as a primary source, movies can help us understand American society during the period the movie was made. For example, how can a movie made in the 1970s about the Civil War help us understand how society interpreted the history of the Vietnam War? How does a movie about the same topic but made twenty years later help us understand the changes in 20th Century American culture and society? By watching, discussing, and writing about these films while also incorporating information from assigned readings, you will examine how motion pictures contribute to our understanding of modern American society.

## **Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this HIST 375 course:

- (1) Students will be able to critically analyze and evaluate films as primary sources.
- (2) Students will be able to explain how films provide a window into the cultural, social, and political history of the United States.
- (3) Students will be able to distinguish between the film's presentation of American history and the underlying factual reality.
- (4) Students will be able to evaluate and analyze secondary sources, based on familiarity with the historiography and methodologies covered in their courses.

- (5) Students will be able to research and write scholarly papers that develop an argument on a defined historical topic, based on primary and secondary sources and that relates their work to the historical literature.

**Recommended Textbook:**

Students taking this course should already have a basic understanding of important events that occurred in the United States throughout the 20th Century. All the necessary reading assignments will be available to you on eCampus. However, if you need additional information, you can access Volume II of the free, online textbook via Stanford University press: [The American Yawp](#).

All movies assigned for this course will also be available on [e-reserves](#) through the WVU library website. To access this, you login using your WVU login information.

**Grading Scale:**

90-100:	A
80-89:	B
70-79:	C
60-69:	D
0-59:	F

**Grade Composition:**

Introductory Discussion Post:	100 points total
Discussion Posts (3):	100 points each
Discussion Responses (6):	25 points each
Movie Analysis Worksheet (3)	50 points each
Final Course Paper	300 points total

**Grade Components:**

Introductory Discussion Post (100 Points Total): Your first assignment for this course will be to complete an introductory discussion post to get familiar with creating and responding to discussion forums on eCampus. This post, along with the others throughout this course, are designed to create a dialogue between the instructor and your classmates about the material covered in this course. Keep in mind that you will only be able to see and respond to your classmates' posts after you create and submit your post.

Discussion Posts (300 Points Total): Each week there will be a new discussion forum addressing the topics and skills covered that week. Students are expected to contribute at least one thoughtful posting per week that addresses all the prompt questions for that week. Each numbered question must be answered with at least two paragraphs consisting of between 6-10 well-developed, clearly written sentences, using specific examples from the readings and films.

Discussion Responses (150 Points Total): Each week you will need to respond to at least two of your classmate's discussion posts. You do not have to reply to the same student for each category. Your response should be at least one paragraph in length (at least 4 well-developed and clearly written sentences) and should either elaborate on or challenge your classmate's thinking on the issues at hand by using specific examples from the reading and films. Each response should be coherent, well-written, and at least four sentences long.

Movie Analysis Worksheets (150 Points Total): Each week you will be assigned a movie that accompanies each of the historical units we are covering. You must complete a worksheet for each of the movies assigned. This assignment is meant to assist you in describing how each movie helps us better understand 20th century American culture.

Final Course Paper (300 Points Total): You are required to write a paper that must be at least 2,500 words (approx. 8-10 pages, although you can write more than this). Please double space your paper, use Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins. Your paper should contain a strong introduction, detailed body paragraphs with strong topic sentences, and a conclusion that clearly summarized your thesis. Papers will be due through Turnitin on eCampus. Your paper must contain specific examples from the movies and readings assigned for the paper. You may use other sources, but you must include the sources already assigned throughout the class.

### **Tips for Success:**

Let me offer a few quick tips for success in my course. **First, stay on task!** With this being a three-week course, you will struggle if you fall behind. **Second, be prepared!** Ensure you approach every week well prepared; follow the weekly modules the way they are laid out. Do the course readings before you write your discussion posts, complete your weekly primary source analysis worksheets, and prepare for your final paper. **Third, ask for help!** I know this is a fast-paced course, so I will try my best to respond to all emails as soon as possible.

When completing the weekly readings, instead of reading every word, look at the discussion questions first and identify key pages or sections you need to read to help you respond to the questions. Also think of your discussion responses as building blocks for your final course paper. I recommend reading the guidelines for the final paper at the start of this course and start working on it as you complete the weekly discussion assignments.

Please note that all assignments have harsh deadlines, however, you can complete and submit assignments before the due date. This is a 3-week course, but still worth 3 credit hours. You will have a substantial number of readings each week, in addition to watching 3 films throughout this course.

### **Late Work Policy:**

Late work will not be accepted. Assignments submitted late will automatically receive no credit/zero points. Exceptions to this policy may occur in very rare cases (e.g., personal emergency or severe medical situations). These cases must be documented to my satisfaction, and you *must* contact me before the due date. Keep in mind that your assignments can be completed and submitted at any time before the due date. Time management will be extremely important. Please contact me right away if you have any questions about any of the assignments or their due dates.

### **Note on Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism**

To put it simply, don't cheat. Do your own work. Use your own words. If I discover you cheating on an assignment or exam, you will receive an immediate zero on the assignment with the possibility of further action, including failure of the course. Moreover, I want to warn you specifically against plagiarism: drawing upon other individuals' work or words without correctly citing them or pretending that another person's words are your own. If you are concerned you may be plagiarizing or that you are incorrectly citing a source, please come to me first. I will bend over backwards to help you in your thinking and writing, but I will not accept ignorance as an excuse when it comes to stealing others' work as your own.

### **WVU Statement on COVID-19:**

WVU is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students, faculty, and staff. Should campus operations change because of health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic or other campus-wide emergency, it is possible that this course will move to a fully online delivery format. If that occurs, students will be advised of technical and/or equipment requirements, including remote proctoring software.

In a face-to-face environment, our commitment to safety requires students, staff, and instructors to observe the social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines set by the University at all times. While in class, students will sit in assigned seats when required and will wear PPE according to current University guidelines. Students who fail to comply may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for sanctions.

COVID related absences fall under the University attendance policy found here: [attendance](#). As detailed in the policy, a student who becomes sick or is required to quarantine during the semester should notify the instructor. The student should then work with the instructor to develop a plan to complete the course learning outcomes while he or she is absent.

### **Statement on Academic Integrity:**

"The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, instructors will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of their courses. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Standards Policy (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification>). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter."

### **Inclusivity Statement:**

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise your instructors and

make appropriate arrangements with [the Office of Accessibility Services](https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/).  
(<https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>)

More information is available at the [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](https://diversity.wvu.edu/)  
(<https://diversity.wvu.edu/>) as well.

### **West Virginia University Sexual Misconduct Statement:**

West Virginia University does not tolerate sexual misconduct, including harassment, stalking, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, or relationship violence [ [BOG Rule 1.6](#)]. It is important for you to know that there are resources available if you or someone you know needs assistance. You may speak to a member of university administration, faculty, or staff; keep in mind that they have an obligation to report the incident to the [Title IX Coordinator](#).

If you want to speak to someone who is permitted to keep your disclosure confidential, please seek assistance from the [Carruth Center](#), 304-293-9355 or 304-293-4431 (24-hour hotline), and locally within the community at the [Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center](#) (RDVIC), 304- 292-5100 or 304-292-4431 (24-hour hotline).

For students at WVU-Beckley, contact the [Women's Resource Center](#) at 304-255-1585 (toll free at 1-888-825-7836) or [REACH](#) at 304-340-3676. For students at WVU-Keyser, contact the WVU-Keyser [Psychological Counseling Services Office](#) at 304-788-6976, and locally in Keyser, the [Family Crisis Center](#), 304-788-6061 or 1-800-698-1240 (24-hour hotline). For more information, please consult [WVU's Title IX Office](https://titleix.wvu.edu/resources-offices)(<https://titleix.wvu.edu/resources-offices>).

## **HIST 375 Course Schedule**

(Note: Instructor reserves the right to make changes in the course schedule and due dates)

**Last Day to Drop—May 14, 2024, by 11:59pm**

**Last day to Withdrawal—May 23, 2024, by 11:59pm**

### **Week 1: *Gone with the Wind* (May 12-May 18)**

#### Readings:

- Blackwelder, Julia Kirk. "Hard Times and White-Collar Growth, the 1930s." In *Now Hiring: The Feminization of Work in the United States, 1900-1995*, 96-122. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1997.
- Foster, Gaines M. "Lost Cause Myth." In *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Volume 4: Myth, Manners, and Memory*, edited by Charles Reagan Wilson, 240-242. University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

- Greenberg, Cheryl Lynn. "Last Hired, First Fired: Working through the Great Depression." In *To Ask for an Equal Chance: African Americans in the Great Depression*, 21-41. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009.
- Silber, Nina. "Look Away! Dixie's Landed!" In *This War Ain't Over: Fighting the Civil War in New Deal America*, 123-153. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018.

Watching:

- *Gone with the Wind* (1939)

Assignments:

- **Introductory Discussion Post due by Wednesday, May 14 at 11:59pm**
- **Week 1 Discussion Post and Week 1 Movie Analysis Worksheet due by Friday, May 16 at 11:59pm**
- **Week 1 Discussion Post Responses due by Sunday, May 18 at 11:59pm**

**Week 2: Shenandoah (May 19-May 25)**

Readings:

- Horowitz, Daniel. "The Development of *The Feminine Mystique*, 1957-63." In *Betty Friedan and the Making of The Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism*, 197-224. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.
- Isserman, Maurice and Michael Kazin. "1963." In *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 83-102. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Kirby, Dianne. "Anglo-American Relations and the Religious Cold War." *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 10, no. 2 (2012): 167-181.
- Pash, Melinda L. "Coming Home." In *In the Shadow of the Great Generation: The Americans Who Fought the Korean War*, 183-218. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Watching:

- *Shenandoah* (1965)

Assignments:

- **Week 2 Discussion Post and Week 2 Movie Analysis Worksheet due by Friday, May 23 at 11:59pm**
- **Week 2 Discussion Post Responses due by Sunday, May 25 at 11:59pm**

**Week 3: The Outlaw Josey Wales (May 26-May 30)**

Readings:

- Critchlow, Donald T. "The ERA Battle Revives the Right." In *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade*, 212-242. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

- Isserman, Maurice and Michael Kazin. "‘No Cease-Fire’ 1969-1974." In *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 261-292. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Jack, Bryan M. "You're Not the South: The Outlaw Josey Wales, Ride with the Devil, and Confederate Guerrillas in Modern Films." In *Southern History on Screen: Race and Rights, 1976-2016*, edited by Bryan M. Jack, 53-75. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2019.
- Richardson, Heather Cox. "Movement Conservatives Capture the GOP." In *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party*, 273-306. New York: Basic Books, 2014.

Watching:

- *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976)

Assignments:

- **Week 3 Discussion Post and Week 3 Movie Analysis Worksheet due by Thursday, May 29 at 11:59pm**
- **Week 3 Discussion Post Responses due by Friday, May 24 at 11:59pm**
- **Final Course Paper due by Friday, May 30 at 11:59pm**

**Final Course Paper (DUE Friday, May 30 at 11:59pm)**

You are required to write a paper that must be at least 2,500 words (approx. 8-10 pages, although you can write more than this). Please double space your paper, use Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins. Your paper must contain a well-written introduction, detailed body paragraphs with strong topic sentences, and a conclusion that clearly summarized your thesis. Papers will be due through Turnitin on eCampus.

Your paper must contain specific examples from the movies and all of the assigned readings from this class. You may use other sources, but you must include the sources already assigned throughout the class. You must connect the films and readings arguments to support your paper's claims.

**Final Paper Prompt:** *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *Shenandoah* (1965), and *The Outlaw Josey Wales* (1976) present very different interpretations on the Civil War era. Using the films and the various readings from this course, compare and contrast these movies. Specifically discuss how each film portrays race, gender, and society. Explain how these themes were depicted differently in each film and how events during the three film's release impacted these transformations. Make sure your paper explains why these films present such different interpretations of the Civil War era and how 20<sup>th</sup> century culture, society, and politics impacted these storylines.

For this final paper, you are strongly encouraged to use your discussion posts within this paper. You must write an introduction, and revise and synthesize your earlier discussion posts into a polished final paper that makes a clear and persuasive argument. Be sure to reorganize your discussion post responses around specific themes for this essay and add

transitions when writing this final paper. This paper should be analytical in nature. I will evaluate it on the basis of your attention to organization (including an introduction with a thesis statement, body paragraphs with topic sentences, specific examples that support your thesis, and a conclusion that explains the significance of the thesis in encompassing terms); clear and persuasive writing (including grammar and spelling); and the strength of your essay's argument and content.

Historians use the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) for citations in research papers. You must use the Chicago Manual of Style for your paper in this class. This is important because it shows that you acknowledge the sources of all your information and any ideas you have taken from other works. These references are placed into footnotes. I provided the bibliography citations for all the readings in this class, but you will need to provide the footnote citations for your paper.

**Final Course Paper due by Friday, May 30 at 11:59pm**

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