CONSPIRACY ON FILM

SOCIOCY 394
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Conspiracy narratives have become one of the postwar period’s most durable genres. They have also become an important expression of social anxieties and desires, and an important way to understand the relationship between the individual and the modern state. In this course we will approach conspiracy narratives and the theories they embody both as symptoms and as modes of knowledge. We will examine popular conspiracy films to ask: What is the cultural and psychological work of this popular genre? What do conspiracy narratives accomplish? What do they explain about our own experience—especially of freedom, what it is to be human, the exercise of power, and what counts as knowledge? How can we apply tactics to understand and debunk them?

STUDENT EVALUATION

PARTICIPATION & DISCUSSION BOARD 25%
ATTENDANCE (EACH ABSENCE WILL REDUCE GRADE BY ONE LETTER) 20%
CONSPIRACY PAPER 20%
MIDTERM 25%
MOVIE REVIEW 10%
MOVIE COMPARISON PAPER 20%
Course Learning Goals and Assessment

**Goal 1: Remember course content**: Students will be able to arrange, choose, find, label, recall, and recognize facts and information about human rights and the movies they watch. To assess this, students will take a midterm exam.

**Goal 2: Understand course concepts**: Students will be able to interpret, exemplify, classify, summarize, illustrate, compare, and explain human rights topics or ideas and how they relate to the movies watched in class. Students will post to weekly “Discussion Board” threads by the end of the day on Sunday of each week.

**Goal 3: Apply course concepts**: Students will be able to construct, estimate, implement, and illustrate course concepts. Students will produce a movie review of a current film.

**Goal 4: Analyze and Evaluate course material**: Students will be able to differentiate, organize, attribute, and modify course concepts. Students will take a midterm.

**Goal 5: Create clear and well-written work**: Students will be able to generate or produce original work based on the analysis and evaluation of course concepts. Students will write papers. A conspiracy paper and a comparison paper.

**Evaluation**: Your final grade will be based on the combination of the activities outlined below based on a 10-point grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90% - 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80% - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70% - 79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% - 69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0% - 59%</td>
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**Papers (40%)**: During the semester, students will write two (2) formal papers (20% each paper). Each paper (6-7 double spaced pages) will address a theme from the course. See assignments for specifics. **Due date for 1st paper**: 2/22 at the end of the day; Second paper is due 5/3 at the end of the day.

**Blackboard Discussion Forum (25%)**: Active contribution to the online discussion forum represents a significant portion of your grade. For each film we view in class you will be required to participate in the discussion by responding to a previously posted question on the reading/film and responding to two of your peers’ posts. Responses will be graded on content rather than length. Your responses need not be long, but they should directly address the themes of the course and should draw together the readings and the films. The grading rubric for the discussion boards is found in the Assignments Folder.

**Midterm (25%)**

**Movie Review (10%)** Due anytime before 5/3.
Late assignments (those that are turned in after the end of the day the assignment is due) will receive a letter grade deduction each day late.

**Expectations:** Students are expected to complete assignments and readings prior to class, and to be prepared to participate in respectful class discussions. The syllabus is a contract between us for the course requirements; I reserve the right to make changes, but I will announce these changes in class and post any revisions on Blackboard as soon as possible.

Students are required to take examinations at the scheduled time. Make-up exams will only be given under the most unusual circumstances, and only if the instructor is notified prior to the exam period.

*As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University’s educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community.*

The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/)

Students are expected to read, understand, and comply with University standards for academic integrity and the policy on plagiarism. Violations of the Code in course work may lead to grade penalties including failure of the course.

Class papers should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines for source citations and references. A complete set of endnotes (or internal citations) and a bibliography should be included for all papers.

**Electronics:** Please turn off your cell phone and refrain from texting and emailing during class.

**Accommodations:** Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. There are official forms you need to file with the university and share with me for the arrangement of certain accommodations. Please feel free to email me and arrange a private meeting to discuss this further.

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Students with Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact ODS, register, have an initial appointment, and provide documentation. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and documentation submitted) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided to the student. The student must give the LOA to each course instructor, followed by a discussion with the instructor. This
should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations**: Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Counseling Services**: Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall, (973) 353-5805 or http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/.

- **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries**: Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu.

- **Students Who are Pregnant**: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

- **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment**: Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does NOT have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.