Course Description: This course provides a survey of selected civilizations in world history from 3,000 BC to 1300 AD. It focuses on de-constructing mythologies, false perceptions and popular misconceptions about those civilizations by examining popular Hollywood films and foreign cinematic spectacles. Students will study and discuss specific historical issues as they are properly understood from original primary sources, view the films and analyze discrepancies between fact and fiction by asking pertinent historical questions and applying proper historical methodology. At the same time, students will consider the efficacy and value of historiophoty or filmic history, which is an emerging field of professional historiography that advocates fictionalized historical films to recreate and understand historical processes. The course will study the strengths and limitations of film entertainment as a medium of historical expression. There is also the issue to consider the extent to which screenwriting--and its strict requisites--are compatible with the stringent requirements of historical writing and research. Hence, students will consider to what extent historical films might or might not portray an accurate view of the past, as well as how history itself--in film and elsewhere--is often distorted for a variety of reasons, including: dramatic license for entertainment purposes, to propagandize particular interpretations, to advocate change, as well as to accommodate a society's needs to sanitize and/or mythologize its (or another's) past, or else to indict or criminalize it.

Course Requirements

Project Essays: Students will submit regular reports (min. 2 pages per film, double spaced), on the historicity of the historical films shown in class and on the primary sources related to the films' contents. The specific format and details are noted below, “Project Paper Requirements.” Completion of all the essays is a necessary requirement for passing the course.

Course Discussions: Discussions of history and the films and class participation are a significant part of the course grade. As part of his lectures, the professor employs the question-and-answer method. Therefore, students are expected to keep up with the readings in order to answer questions correctly and contribute to discussions. They are encouraged to take notes on their own when reading the primary text assignments. The professor may call upon specific students to lead the discussion of the films.

Examinations and Quizzes: This course includes a cumulative final take-home examination on the historicity of the historical films. Quizzes will be scheduled when the instructor determines they are required in order to boost achievement and activities. Unannounced pop quizzes on the readings are real possibilities.

Student Learning Outcomes: General Education Student Learning Outcomes are assessed by means of the final exam essays (35% of the course grade), and they include:

1. Students demonstrate knowledge of history and awareness of the historical experience.
2. Students situate primary historical records in their context and use sources to construct historical arguments.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Discussion figures prominently in the class-program, and class participation and attendance will constitute a significant percentage of the course grade. Attendance and participation improve the functioning of the class as well as students’ grades. According to College policy, attendance will be taken daily; any and all unexcused absences will result in automatic grade reductions (see below for policies on athletes and consequences on missing classes).

**Film Schedule:** Seven (7) films and film-days are established for this course, in which students will watch a film, followed by a discussion of history and its historicity. Four days are set aside solely for lecture and discussion. A single 3½ hour (210 minutes) Maymester class equals more than 1.4 times a week's work of a regular 14-week term. That means missing one class means more than an entire standard week. Therefore, **students who are absent on any film days without valid and acceptable documented excuse will receive twice (i.e., 2 times) the deduction in the class Attendance-grade than for an absence on a lecture-discussion day.** Students missing films will be especially questioned in discussions about the films' contents. **Students who miss more than 3 classes, either with or without documented excuse will be dismissed from the course with an automatic grade of WA (Withdrawal due to excessive absences). However, any student with a perfect attendance record (i.e., attending every class without physical absence) will receive 3 points extra credit in the total attendance grade!**

If it is because of a valid medical reason that any student has missed the maximum number of classes, he/she should discuss the matter with the professor and, if appropriate, seek a Late Withdrawal based on medical grounds in the Registrar's Office. Students must apply for a medical withdrawal for all courses simultaneously (not just for a single course), and they must do so before the last day of classes.

If the instructor does not call the daily roll, a sign-in sheet will be circulated (especially on film days). Students are also marked as absent for the following reasons: they do not sign the attendance sheet; they sign the sheet then leave class early without authorization; they leave class for an inordinate period of time without valid reason, and if they arrive substantially late after the doors are closed and locked. Any student who leaves class without authorization and does not return after taking a quiz or exam will be recounted as absent, and the quiz/exam will receive an automatic failing grade (0 = F).

**Late for Class:** Students are expected to arrive to class on time and be ready to start at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving late for class will receive a deduction in the class participation grade. Those arriving late on a film day will receive twice the deduction as a non-film day. However, in any case, students should not use tardiness as an excuse to miss class, since the result of unexcused absences can result in even more severe grade sanctions.

**Make-Up Exams:** This course does not regularly provide make-up exams.

**Special Needs:** Any student who has been formally certified by the College through the SNAP Program as having special needs entailing accommodations for this course should consult with the instructor during office hours as soon as possible. They are also responsible for notifying him ahead of time before each accommodation is needed.

**E-mail Contact Policies:** The professor will generally contact students outside of class by e-mail, using the address they officially designate with the college. If students regularly use addresses other than the former, they still must check their official addresses on a regular basis to insure they have received all mail. The professor can be reached by e-mail with the following limitations. He cannot
guarantee to reply to every e-mail within 24 hours. Since, he does not assiduously check e-mail on weekends, students should not expect replies on Saturday or Sunday.

**Course Textbooks**

*Internet Medieval Sourcebook: The Crusades* ([http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1k.html)). Accessible directly on the World Wide Web or through "Reading Assignments"-page on class Web pages.


**Grading Policy**

Final course-grades will be constituted according to the following formula: *final exam 35%, Project Essays (7) 40%, attendance and class participation 25%*. For the purposes of calculating the attendance grade, film-days have twice the value as lecture-discussion days. That means any unexcused absences on film-days carry 2 times the deduction as other days. DON'T MISS THE FILMS!

Grades in this course are issued according to the following numerical scale: A = 92-100 [superior]; A- = 90-91; B+ = 87-89 [very good]; B = 82-86 [good]; B- = 80-81; C+ = 77-79 [above average]; C = 72-76 [average]; C- = 70-71; D+ = 67-69 [unsatisfactory]; D = 61-66 [poor, passing]; D- = 60 [barely passing]; F = 0-59 [failure]; WA = administrative withdrawal for excessive absences (= F); XF = failure due to academic dishonesty.

**Project Essays Requirements**

*(see Web-page, "Essay Requirements")*

**Due dates:** Seven (7) essays, each due regularly. Papers should be submitted in paper copy only; electronic submissions are not permitted. See "Reading Assignments" or Film Schedule for due dates. Papers arriving after 12:00 pm on due days will be counted as late.

**Length:** Minimum two (2) pages per film, double spaced (not including bibliography). Failure to provide the minimum number of pages of text will result in a grade reduction.

**Specific Essay Assignments:** Each essay consists of a short study on each film analyzing the historicity of the film and the extent to which it portrays an accurate view of the past, focusing on the appropriate primary sources. The topics can include any issues of historicity that the student chooses, including the modern context in which a film is made. The essays will include any outside history readings the student must do (secondary and primary sources), including the readings assigned for each specific film in the "Reading Assignments". Failure to meet these necessary reference minimums will result in deductions in the paper grades.

**Primary Sources.** The essays must focus on primary sources in their argumentation. Historical interpretation is founded first on an analysis of written primary sources (i.e., original ancient documents from the past) combined with modern secondary sources (which provide context or theoretical bases). History is not done by merely by recompiling what other people have already said in their
modern secondary studies. Any papers that do not include references and analyses of primary-text documents will receive substantial reductions. **If the professor assigned three (3) documents to read for a film, then students are expected to analyze at least those three (3) documents in their papers in relation to the film's content. Additional documents means additional points!**

**Late Policy, Submissions, etc.** Late papers will be penalized 5 points for each day late after 12:00 pm on the due date (including weekends), up to three days, after which they will be graded not higher than 59% (F).

**Form and Format.** See course Web page, “Project Paper”-link, for detailed information, requirements and advice on form, format, writing strategies and grading criteria for the project papers. In general, the essay and paper should contain 1-inch margins all around. They should be formatted double space in a 12-point type. They should include any proper footnote citations plus a separate “Bibliography” at the end of the paper. Students may not use "parenthetical references" and "reference lists" for any paper or essay in this course, neither may they use the MLA style of notes and references.

**Required Style Guide.** In the preparation and execution of all papers for the class, students are required to follow the format presented by **Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)**, especially in regard to the style of block quotations, footnotes, and bibliographies. Look over Chapters 8-11 on how to cite references. Use footnotes +"Bibliography". Read Chapter 11 (pp. 185-213) to compare their forms and styles. Use footnotes only; do not use parenthetical references.

**Execution.** As a rule of thumb, **never quote from general encyclopedias, dictionaries, or class lecture notes (e.g., Wikipedia, Encyclopedia Brittanica, etc.). However, you may used specialized encyclopedias (e.g., encyclopedias of film, history, etc.). You may not cite references from the course textbook (Spodek, The World's History), although the primary-text reader is allowed (Riley et al., The Global Experience). **Never cite course lecture notes or professor’s essays.** Treat lecture contents as common knowledge, and use them only as the building blocks of new interpretations, and not as an end to themselves. If you want to use lecture material mentioned in class as an end, you must find it independently in published sources among the course readings and in other print publications. **For information on film history or film production only, you may use the Internet and pages on the World Wide Web.** Feel free to consult the instructor at any time for advice on preparing the papers or about writing strategies. Alternatively, students may consult the writing counselors in the **Writing Lab of the Center for Student Learning**, Addlestone Library, 1st Floor (http://www.cofc.edu/~csl/writing/writing_lab.html).

Improper form and misspellings will reduce the grade of the term paper. To be certain of your spelling, use a dictionary. Use a spell-check program only after you have already manually checked your spelling. **You must proofread your paper before submitting it, and make any final corrections cleanly in ink, if necessary. Why the emphasis on form?** A research paper is a means of communication. The purpose of any paper is to convey an argument as logically as possible according to standards of form that facilitate its communicative function. Form is not merely format and correct spelling; it also includes the logical arrangement of an argument and the rational ordering of historical and textual data to support a particular historical interpretation. Poor form can impede the communication of a valid point of view. When a paper cannot communicate due to a lapse of form, it has failed in its purpose.

**Using the World Wide Web for Research and as a Source of Quotations**
One does not do research merely by sitting at a computer and browsing the Web (not yet anyway). One does research by paging through books and journal articles and by following sources backward from one footnote to another. Students should confine the bulk of their research to printed publications. However, they may also use the World Wide Web selectively to help research the paper topic. Beware! A great deal of pseudo-historical trash exists on the Web that does not conform to modern academic standards. The World Wide Web contains three types of historical materials:

1. primary sources, i.e., collections of original historical documents and inscriptions;
2. synthetical reports and essays prepared by professional historians and which are published in professional Web-based electronic journals, or they were published originally in paper then scanned on to the Web;
3. idiosyncratic essays, polemical tracts, and document collections of uneven and inconsistent quality, prepared by non-professionals, dilettantes, and hobbyists which are often biased in their presentations, inaccurate and/or misleading in content.

Sadly, this cyber-trash [no. 3] permeates much of the historical matter on the Web, and students must learn to recognize and avoid it. Many of the primary sources on the Web [no. 1] include translations of foreign language documents into English. However, these translations are usually obsolete, incomplete, or idiosyncratic (which is why they are freely available on the Web). More modern and accurate translations are published in print (books and journals), and they supercede the less correct obsolete translations on the Web.

**Library Electronic Databases.** On the other hand, many legitimate and professional peer-reviewed historical academic journals are also scanned and published on restricted portions of the Web (requiring password access). They are collected together into electronic databases or digital archives for easy searching. The Addlestone Library of the college subscribes to these electronic databases, and they are available through the Library catalogue under the heading, "Databases" (soon to be available through the library catalog). Students should use these databases and sources to find articles for writing their papers, and they do not need the instructor's permission to use them, e.g.: Academic Search Premier; Jstor; Lexis-Nexis, and Infotrac.

Students should never quote from any dictionaries and encyclopedias, such as Wikipedia, Encyclopedia Britannica, etc. With the exception of film-history and film-production information, students should not quote from any public or open Web pages, including translations, reports, and essays without prior approval of the instructor (i.e., nos. [1], [2], [3] above). Of course, students may always quote from any on-line sources found through the Addlestone Library Catalog of electronic databases and e-journals (see above). The professor reserves the right to fail any paper outright that egregiously violates the prohibition against employing unauthorized Web sources for historical information, whether footnoted or not.

While students may not quote from any Web source, they can still consult reliable Web pages (i.e., those that are authored by professional scholars) in order to identify issues, printed books, and other paper-form sources of information, which they may then quote in their papers. Use these Web pages to lead you to printed books. Wikipedia is not consistently reliable because most of its articles are written by biased amateurs and ill-informed non-specialists. However, articles in Wikipedia might contain bibliographies of some usefulness. Potentially reliable pages on the World Wide Web are usually identifiable by the domain-markers “.edu” or “.ac.uk” or “.org” in their addresses, while much less trustworthy pages are often identifiable by the domain-markers “.com” “.net” or in their Web addresses. If in doubt about the appropriateness of any research source—either on the Web or in print—consult the instructor, and run these pages by him.
Policy on Plagiarism, Cheating, and Disruptive Behavior

Academic Honor Code. As you prepare your papers for this course, do not plagiarize any of your sources. Plagiarism is copying or paraphrasing the words and ideas of others and passing them off as your own or misleading the reader into thinking that the words and ideas of other writers are your own. Any plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, whether blatant or merely inappropriate paraphrasing, cannot be tolerated.

WARNING: Never ever(!) copy and paste from the Internet !!

If you have any questions as you prepare your assignments, please ask the advice of the instructor. If in doubt about anything, quote it—even indirect quotations! The Honor Code of the College of Charleston strictly prohibits plagiarism, cheating, and attempted cheating. Students found by the instructor to commit these offenses will automatically fail the course with an "F", or else they will be reported to the College Honor Board and receive an "XF"-grade ("Failure due to Dishonesty"), which will appear as such on the college transcript. Additional penalties can include suspension or expulsion, depending on the severity of the plagiarism, as determined by the instructor, the Dean and/or the Honor Board. For definitions of these offenses and explanations of sanctions, see: "The Honor Code," in College of Charleston Student Handbook, §9.6-7, pp. 11-12

You are responsible for informing yourself of all definitions and regulations on this subject. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse before the College Honor Board. Protect yourself; when in doubt, footnote it!

Classroom Behavior. Eating, drinking, and smoking are prohibited in the classrooms of the College of Charleston. DON'T BRING YOUR BREAKFAST INTO CLASS! The classroom is an inappropriate venue for eating meals, reading newspapers, personal grooming (such as combing hair, applying makeup, etc.), or even sleeping. The instructor reserves the right to expel any student from the classroom for unruly or disruptive behavior, and to contact Campus Police when necessary.

No Electronic Devices in Class. Students may not operate ANY type of personal electronic device in class, especially: iPods, Blackberrys, Android and Android-like devices of any kind, etc., MP3 players, iPhones, cell phones, smart telephones, cameras of any kind, and any similar devices. Students may not use voice or video recorders of any kind, nor may they record any lectures without the prior permission of the instructor.

!! NO COMPUTERS IN CLASS !!

Students are not permitted to employ laptop, hand-held computers, digital notebooks, netbooks, iPads, Chromebooks, smartphones, nor any other electronic computing device in class without prior permission of the instructor. Any student authorized, but who abuses this privilege by engaging in activity unrelated to the class (checking e-mail, messaging, surfing the Web, recording, gaming, etc.), will forfeit permission to use the device in class for the rest of the term and will receive a 3--point reduction in the final course grade.

Several major studies by Stanford University and other schools have shown, independently, that typically, students who type notes during class usually have less comprehension of the lectures' contents and implications than students writing notes by hand. Similarly a recent study by McMaster University shows that students multi-tasking with a laptop in class—including those students sitting near them using pen and paper(!)—both achieve average lower grades than other students. Freaky but true.
**Cell Phones in Class and Exams.** Students may not make or receive cellular telephone calls, podcasts, text messages of any kind, nor accept any electronic pages during the class period. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, iPods, iPads, and all other devices at the start of class.

---

Each time a cell phone or pager goes off or is activated in class during lectures and discussions, it will result in a 3-point reduction in the FINAL(!) course-grade for the student. However, if a student is found to be texting or receiving a text, it will result in a 5-point reduction in the final course-grade.

Any cell phone, pager or electronic device going off or activated during an quiz, in addition to the 3-point course-grade reduction, will also result in a 15-point grade reduction for that exam. Any student found even handling a cell phone or electronic device, texting or receiving a text, during an exam will be considered cheating and will receive an automatic failing grade for the entire course, as well as be remanded to the College Honor Board for institutional sanctioning.

---

**Copyrights, Class Access, etc.** All lectures are the copyright of the instructor. He is their owner, and he reserves all rights to their content. Students do not purchase the lectures, but similar to computer software, they license access to them and their content for study purposes. Students may take and keep written notes from them, as detailed as they wish, and make all necessary use of them for their studies and to meet the academic requirements of this and other courses. Only registered students (or students in the process of registering) and those formally auditing are permitted to sit in this class. Any unregistered persons and guests must have the prior permission of the instructor to sit in on any class.

---

**Lectures and Assignments Schedule**

The complete schedule of lectures and assigned readings for this course are found on the course Web pages under the link, "Reading Assignments," URL:

http://www.cofc.edu/~piccione/hist115film/hist115assign.html

The readings consist of the texts and Internet source described above, as well as a large selection of other documents freely available for downloading (marked "W" in the Reading Assignments-schedule).

Class will adhere to the assignments and course schedules found there. **The instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule of lectures, discussions, video presentations, and reading assignments, quizzes and exams at any time.** Students are responsible for the full course material through the readings listed on the Web pages. Students should keep up with the schedule of weekly reading assignments, regardless of any deviation in the schedule of classroom lectures. Students must obtain or acquire access to all the textbooks and readings, since the exams and quizzes include significant amounts of reading material not covered in class lectures. Thank you. Have a nice course!