SYLLABUS

History Through Film is a course in which students use films as historical documents or resources. The course will challenge students to critically analyze selected films for a deeper understanding of various people, periods, and events in history. In doing so, students are expected to be actively engaged thinkers while viewing, contemplating, and discussing the films. Through studies of selected films, students will broaden their understanding and perspective of history, develop a greater cultural literacy, as well as hone their critical thinking skills.

The following Focus Questions will serve as guides for extracting meaning from and discussing each of the films studied in the course:

Focus Question #1: Describe the setting, main characters, and plot of the film. What do these reveal about the time period and society in which the film was made?
Focus Question #2: What point do you think the filmmaker is trying to make? What themes are apparent? Offer evidence.
Focus Question #3: How is the film still relevant today? What connections can be made? Offer evidence.
Focus Question #4: What did you think of the film? Write a review.

In answering these questions, students will consider and discuss numerous elements of the film itself (setting, characters, plot, ...). Students will also consider the period of time in which the film was made (and/or when the storyline was written) as well as the background of the filmmakers. Students will then be able to analyze the selected film within an appropriate context.

Grades are based on total points earned in discussions and participation and on written assignments. Particular emphasis will be placed on thoughtful analysis. The nature of this course makes it especially important to be in class daily and to be attentive. Students are responsible for making up for points missed due to absence. Concerns regarding grades, as well as plans for making up missed work should be discussed with the instructor. Additionally, students are encouraged to ask the teacher for extra help and/or advice for succeeding in the course.