

POS 4258: Politics in Fiction and Film
Class Periods: Wednesday periods 8-10, 3:00-6:00 pm ET
Location: MAT 013
Academic Term: Fall 2021

Instructor:

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Office Hours: Tue 1:00-2:30, Wed 12:00-1:30, and by appointment, Zoom id 831-661-6708. Unless you are notified otherwise, office hours will be held online via Zoom.

Web Page: <https://people.clas.ufl.edu/sccraig/>

Assigned Works:

Books (5):

Philip Roth, *The Plot Against America* (2004)

Thomas Mullen, *The Last Town on Earth* (2006)

Roland Merullo, *American Savior: A Novel of Divine Politics* (2008)

David Pepper, *The People's House* (2016)

Thomas Mullen, *Lightning Men* (2017)

Each of these titles can be purchased either new or (more cheaply) used on amazon.com. All except *American Savior* are available on kindle. If you choose to buy from a private seller, keep in mind that delivery could take up to two weeks or more.

Research articles (2):

Kenneth Mulligan and Philip Habel, "The Implications of Fictional Media for Political Beliefs," *American Politics Research* (January 2013).

Diana C. Mutz and Lilach Nir, "Not Necessarily the News: Does Fictional Television Influence Real-World Policy Preferences?" *Mass Communication and Society* (2010).

A copy of these articles (which also can be accessed directly through Smathers Library) are posted in the Files folder on Canvas (<https://elearning.ufl.edu>).

Films (16):

Guilty by Suspicion (Robert DeNiro, 1991)

Wag the Dog (Dustin Hoffman/Robert DeNiro, 1997)

Primary Colors (John Travolta, 1998)

Milk (Sean Penn, 2008)

Lincoln (Daniel Day-Lewis, 2012)

Eye in the Sky (Helen Mirren, 2015)

Sicario (Emily Blunt, 2015)

Spotlight (Michael Keaton/Rachel McAdams, 2015)

Suffragette (Carey Mulligan, 2015)

Miss Sloane (Jessica Chastain, 2016)

Snowden (Joseph Gordon-Levitt, 2016)

Detroit (John Boyega, 2017)

The Post (Tom Hanks/Meryl Streep, 2017)

The Front Runner (Hugh Jackman, 2018)
Bombshell (Charlize Theron/Nicole Kidman/Margot Robbie, 2019)
The Hunt (Betty Gilpin/Hilary Swank, 2019)

All titles can be streamed on amazon prime, though some are only available for purchase (not rental) or are free with a 7-day trial subscription to HBO, Starz, or Epix. New and used copies of the dvd's for these films also can be purchased either directly from amazon or from private sellers (again, take the delivery window for the latter into account when ordering).

Television (1):

The West Wing (Martin Sheen, selected episodes 1999-2006)

You can stream this series on Netflix or purchase it (dvd or streaming) on amazon prime.

Course Overview:

This course uses the sometimes true but other times make-believe stories told in popular novels and Hollywood motion pictures to provide insights into the nature of real-life politics in the United States. The focus is mainly on *process* (political competition and decision making) rather than *substance* (policy), and each of the stories we encounter raises issues that are as relevant today as they were when the tale was originally told. We will consider, for example, whether the temptations of politics and power are beyond the capacity even of fundamentally decent people to resist; whether the actions of organized interest groups promote or undermine the principles of representative government; whether the media glare of contemporary politics weakens the capacity of our leaders and institutions to govern; and whether modern candidate-centered campaigns pose as great a threat to popular democracy as some critics believe. Our goal is not to use politics as a basis for studying the mass culture; that is a course better taught elsewhere (say, in English or Fine Arts). Instead, we will be using elements of the mass culture as a means for better understanding the character of our politics.

Warning: Some of the assigned books and films contain strong language and/or adult themes. Students who might find these things offensive should consider taking another course.

Several changes were made in this course when it was taught online during the COVID pandemic. Prior to that, much class time was spent watching an assigned film and then discussing it immediately after. With the online version, students were required to access and watch films on their own; then, after I spent some time at the beginning of each class session "lecturing" (though I use this term loosely) on one or two topics related to the week's assigned works, breakout groups were created to allow for discussion.

This format worked well enough that I have decided to stay with it going forward. The one difference is that our discussions will take place in the classroom rather than in breakout groups online. To facilitate a lively give-and-take, everyone is required to read – and comment on – one or more (usually) short internet articles relating to the week's main theme(s). In addition, students are required to submit talk points that will provide the basis for our weekly discussion. More about how this works **below**.

Grades:

Grades will be based on the following:

Periodic short essays	50 percent
Class participation	20 percent
Thematic Essay/Final Exam	30 percent (due Friday, December 10, 4:00 p.m.)

Minus grades will (if appropriate) be assigned in this course. Information about grades and grading policies at UF can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

The nature of the different components on which your grade will be based are as follows:

Short essays: Students will submit to Canvas a 2-page essay (**single-spaced** with a **bibliography** at the end that is not included in the page count) on five assigned works, at least two of which must be books. Your essay, which is due one week after we discuss the work in class, should examine one or (at most) two important themes raised in or suggested by the film/book. If multiple works assigned for a particular week are connected in a way that you find interesting, then you're free to reference both – but don't force the issue unless the connection makes sense. Strong essays from past students will be posted from time to time on Canvas to give you a better sense of what I'm looking for. In the meantime, here are some basic guidelines that you may find helpful:

- do not summarize at length (assume that I've read/watched the works you're writing about);
- do not review the book/film, except insofar as you think that it does or does not provide insights into the governmental or political process in the United States;
- do not simply regurgitate points made by myself or by other students during class discussion – bring some insight(s) of your own to the task; at the same time . . .
- purely personal opinions are bad (e.g., you're opposed to the U.S. using nuclear weapons), analytical discussions are good (e.g., what does the book/film tell us about the likelihood that such weapons will be used in a particular situation, or about the political consequences if they are used);
- it's usually best to focus on a single theme so that you're able to do it justice;
- referencing outside sources isn't required, but it can strengthen your essay – especially if you're dealing with a topic about which you have little personal knowledge;
- cite any book, article, internet source, film, TV show, or idea that is not your own; moreover . . .
- any assertion or observation that you make requires a supporting reference unless it is "common knowledge," e.g., Joe Biden was elected president in 2020 (a known fact) vs. the notion that President Trump's handling of the pandemic may have contributed to that outcome (supporting reference needed); and
- always remember that your challenge is to discuss the political process and government through the prism of what you have watched and read; making connections to the real world is very important here, i.e., provide examples (all the better if they're not the most obvious ones).

Essays should be submitted to the appropriate Assignments folder in Canvas **no later than 7 p.m.** on the day they are due. In most cases, they will be read, graded, and returned to students within a week of their completion. **Anything submitted after the deadline will be penalized up to one full letter grade, plus one additional letter grade if turned in the following day – after which the essay will not be read or graded at all.** With so many choices built into the structure of the course, there is no excuse for failing to complete all five short essays. Any missing essay will therefore receive a grade of zero, so don't lose track of where you stand. There will be no opportunities for extra credit at the end. There are two key dates to remember here:

- to encourage you not to procrastinate, and to save me from having to read an ungodly number of essays at the end, at least three of your short essays (including one that is based on a book) must be completed and turned in by **October 20** (there are 10 films and 3 books to choose from); a further incentive for you to get an early start is that . . .
- students who complete all five required essays by **November 3** will receive a one-half letter grade bonus on either the thematic essay or final exam (whichever you choose to do).

Any written assignment that does not constitute original work by the student will be subject to penalties consistent with the UF Code of Student Conduct, up to and including receiving a grade of zero and a failing grade in the class.

Class Participation: The first part of your grade on this component is attendance: you can't participate unless you're in class. The second part will be based on the extent to which you contribute to our discussions. The third part has to do with the **talk points** mentioned earlier. Students should submit at least one of these for each of the week's assigned works to the appropriate Canvas folder by **5 p.m. the day prior to our class on Wednesday**. (You also need to send them to **Nicole McEwan**, the teaching assistant for this course, as she is unable to access written assignments on Canvas. She will provide her contact information shortly after the beginning of the semester.) Each talk point should be in the form of a short, single-spaced paragraph that deals with an issue raised by the book/film (as opposed to bad acting, continuity errors, or anything along those lines). Do not simply ask a question without providing some thoughtful consideration about what the answer to that question might be. Failure to follow these guidelines will have the same result as not submitting talk points at all: You will receive a zero for the assignment.

Final Exam/Thematic Essay: Although the thematic essay (4-5 **single-spaced** pages in length) is similar to the weekly essays, it involves a more in-depth discussion of at least one additional book and one additional film (or two books, or three films) drawn from the supplemental list provided in the course syllabus or approved by the instructor. The word thematic is important here: The works you select should be substantively linked in some reasonably clear-cut way. I'm happy to discuss this more fully with students later in the semester, though after you write a few shorter essays it should not be too difficult to figure out how to approach the assignment. The final exam will be open-book, take-home, and in essay format. Questions will ask you to explain which assigned works best illustrate a particular idea, and whether those works are realistic in their portrayal of contemporary American politics.

Students often ask me to explain the difference between a thematic essay and a take-home final exam. To me, it's fairly straightforward: While both require you to discuss broad themes relevant to politics today, (a) the essay means a little more work but allows you to control the agenda; in contrast, (b) the exam does not require any additional reading or movie-watching on your part but lets me determine what you write about. If it were me, I'd probably opt for the essay – but it's your call as to which approach you're most comfortable with.

Also note the following:

- Students may submit only one essay based on an episode (or on both episodes) of *The West Wing*.
- Those who write a short report on an assigned film (such as *Primary Colors*) should not choose the corresponding book version for their thematic essay, or vice versa.
- For the two research articles assigned on December 1, it is likely that I will ask some specific questions for you to answer and submit as your "talk points" for the week. **These articles are not eligible for short essay topics** (stick with the movies/TV and books).
- If you cite one or more outside sources in any of your essays, be sure to include an alphabetical list of references at the end just as you would with a term paper in another class. In-text cites should take the following form: (Craig 2020) – do not use footnotes or insert full article/book titles in the text. If I want to know what (Craig 2020) is, I should be able to find out by looking at your list of references.
- For all written assignments, the only thing that should appear at the top of page one is your name. **Do not include the course number, my name, the date, a title for your essay, or any other information.**
- Before submitting any written assignment, review it carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and/or capitalization. Regarding the latter, here is a partial list of terms that should be capitalized: Democrat (or Democratic Party), Republican (or Republican Party), Congress, Senate, House of Representatives, Supreme Court, White House, First Amendment, and the proper name of any individual. Terms that should not be capitalized include: president, vice president, senator, congressman/women, governor (unless these are used as a title, e.g., President Biden), and constitution. Also, be sure to use paragraph

breaks as appropriate; paragraphs that run on for the better part of a page (or longer) and encompass more than one topic are difficult to read and will put your instructor in a grumpy mood as he decides what grade to assign to your work.

Some concluding points:

- Attendance is required. Students who can reasonably anticipate an absence should inform me by email as soon as is practical and prior to the anticipated absence. Absences may be excused with documentation of a University, military, or legal obligation, illness, or bereavement.
- As noted above, students are bound by the University of Florida's Student Code of Conduct. Anyone who commits an act of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on exams or committing plagiarism on the written essays, will suffer appropriate sanctions and be referred to university authorities for further action.
- There will be times when I need to communicate with the class as a group. In those instances, I will do so either through Outlook (using a listserv) or, more often, via Canvas. Students should check their incoming mail regularly so as not to miss any important information. The best way for students to connect with me directly is through Outlook (scraig@ufl.edu). If a reply is needed, I will try to get back to you fairly quickly.
- If you are unable to connect with me during my official office hours, or if you wish to discuss matters that are confidential, feel free to request a one-on-one meeting and we will determine a time that works for both of us.
- Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures (not including student presentations). However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.
- Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

COVID guidelines:

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to

enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and others.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit the link below for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus. <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class. Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect, you are not permitted to use any on-campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.
- Depending on external events, the technological capability of our classroom, and other factors, it is possible that this class will also be offered synchronously (via HyFlex Zoom) at some point during the semester. The main idea here would be to provide an alternative platform for students who are uncomfortable with the idea of attending class in person. Moving exclusively online is also an option (for a period not to exceed 14 days according to current university policy) if your instructor contracts COVID. or is determined to have had close contact with someone who is infected, and is no longer cleared for coming to campus.
- Be aware that any student who is not cleared for coming to campus is not permitted to attend class. Should you choose to attend without receiving clearance, you will be asked to leave.

COURSE OUTLINE

August 25

- General discussion

September 1

- Film: *Lincoln*

- Sidney Blumenthal, "Sidney Blumenthal on How Lincoln Played the Political Game to Win," *Newsweek* (10/15/12).
- Bill Scher, "What Warren and Sanders Get Wrong about FDR," *Politico* (11/1/19).
- Ken Rudin, "Assessing Ronald Reagan at 100," npr.org (2/4/11).
- Jonathan Bernstein, "The Presidency Is All About Politics," *Washington Post* (8/29/12).

September 8

- Film: *Guilty by Suspicion*
- Book: *The Plot Against America*
- Krishnadev Calamur, "A Short History of 'America First,'" *The Atlantic* (1/21/17).
- Jeffrey Frank, "The Willkie What-If: F.D.R.'s Hybrid-Party Plot," *The New Yorker* (7/28/15).

September 15

- Film: *Spotlight*
- Film: *The Post*
- Mark Jurkowitz et al., "U.S. Media Polarization and the 2020 Election: A Nation Divided," Pew Research Center (1/24/20).
- Aaron Blake, "A New Study Suggests Fake News Might Have Won Donald Trump the 2016 Election," *Washington Post* (4/3/18).

September 22

- Film: *The Hunt*
- Book: *The Last Town on Earth*
- Lee Drutman, "How Hatred Came to Dominate American Politics," fivethirtyeight.com (10/5/20).
- Amelia Thomson-Deveaux, "Republicans and Democrats See COVID-19 Very Differently. Is That Making People Sick?" fivethirtyeight.com (7/23/20).

September 29

- Film: *Primary Colors*
- Film: *Milk*
- Jill Lepore, "The Lie Factory: How Politics Became a Business," *The New Yorker* (9/24/12).
- Samantha Schmidt, "Americans' Views Flipped on Gay Rights. How Did Minds Change So Quickly?" *Washington Post* (6/7/19).

October 6

- Film: *Eye in the Sky*
- Film: *Sicario*
- Lauren Cassani Davis, "Would You Pull the Trolley Switch? Does It Matter?" *The Atlantic* (10/9/15).
- Ron James et al., "No, Americans Don't Support Airstrikes That Kill Civilians, Even When They Target Terrorists," *Monkey Cage* (5/6/19).

October 13

- Film: *Detroit*
- Book: *Lightning Men*
- Alex Samuels, "How Views on Black Lives Matter Have Changed – and Why That Makes Police Reform So Hard," fivethirtyeight.com (4/13/21).
- Meredith Conroy and Perry Bacon, Jr., "There's a Huge Gap in How Republicans and Democrats See

Discrimination," *fivethirtyeight.com* (6/17/20).

October 20 (all students must complete at least three short essays, including one on a book, by this date)

- Film: *Suffragette*
- Film: *Bombshell*
- Erin C. Cassese et al., "How 'Hostile Sexism' Came to Shape Our Politics," *Monkey Cage* (10/2/18).
- Kathryn Casteel and Andrea Jones-Rooy, "We Need a Better Way to Talk about 'Sexual Misconduct,'" *fivethirtyeight.com* (4/17/18).
- Madison Hoff, "Americans Have Complicated Feelings on the 3-Year-Old #MeToo Movement – and Some Still Can't Decide If It's Been Good for the Country," *businessinsider.com* (3/11/20).

October 27

- Book: *The People's House*
- Film: *Snowden*
- Sarah Bush and Lauren Prather, "How Do Americans React When Warned That Other Countries Are Meddling in U.S. Elections," *Washington Post* (8/21/20).
- Alex Tausanovitch and Danielle Root, "How Partisan Gerrymandering Limits Voting Rights," Center for American Progress (7/8/20).

November 3

- TBA (extra credit bonus to students who have completed all five short essays by this date)

November 10

- Film: *The Front Runner*
- Film: *Wag the Dog*
- Lisa Lerer, "In the Age of Trump, Can Scandal Still Sink a Politician?" *New York Times* (12/4/18).
- David Campbell and Geoffrey Layman, "How Trump Has Changed White Evangelicals' Views about Morality," *Monkey Cage* (4/25/19).
- Thomas L. Friedman, "Trump's Wag-the-Dog War," *New York Times* (7/21/20).

November 17

- TV: *The West Wing*, "Pilot" (S01 E01) and "The Supremes" (S05 E17)
- Book: *American Savior*
- Jeremiah J. Castle et al., "Why Young White Evangelicals Aren't Likely to Leave the Republican Party," *Monkey Cage* (9/3/19).
- Kaleigh Rogers, "Why QAnon Has Attracted So Many White Evangelicals," *fivethirtyeight.com* (3/4/21).
- note that students may write only one essay on *The West Wing*

November 24

- No class: Thanksgiving

December 1

- Film: *Miss Sloane*
- Lee Drutman, "What We Get Wrong about Lobbying and Corruption," *Monkey Cage* (4/16/15).
- Kenneth Mulligan and Philip Habel, "The Implications of Fictional Media for Political Beliefs," *American Politics Research* (January 2013).
- Diana C. Mutz and Lilach Nir, "Not Necessarily the News: Does Fictional Television Influence Real-

World Policy Preferences?" *Mass Communication and Society* (2010).

- research articles cannot be used for a written book (or film) essay

December 8

- TBA
- final exam will be posted on Canvas immediately after class
- thematic essays and final exams are due by 4 p.m. on Friday, December 10

Supplemental List for Thematic Essays:

Books:

- Robert Penn Warren, *All the King's Men* (1946)
 Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (1951)
 Edwin O'Connor, *The Last Hurrah* (1956)
 Allen Drury, *Advise and Consent* (1959)
 Robert A. Heinlein, *Starship Troopers* (1959)
 Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle* (1962)
 Irving Wallace, *The Man* (1965) / *The R Document* (1976)
 Gore Vidal, *Washington, D.C.: A Novel* (1967) / *Lincoln: A Novel* (1984)
 William Safire, *Full Disclosure* (1977) / *Scandalmonger* (2000)
 Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986)
 John Buckley, *Family Politics* (1988) / *Statute of Limitations* (1990)
 Ward Just, *Jack Gance* (1989) / *Echo House* (1997)
 Christopher Buckley, *Thank You for Smoking* (1994) / *The White House Mess* (1995) / *Florence of Arabia* (2004) / *Supreme Courtship* (2008)
 Joe Klein (Anonymous), *Primary Colors* (1996) / *The Running Mate* (2000)
 Jim Lehrer, *The Last Debate* (1995)
 Jeff Greenfield, *The People's Choice* (1995)
 Ev Ehrlich, *Big Government: A Novel* (1998)
 Tom Lowe, *Spin* (1998)
 Brendan DuBois, *Resurrection Day* (1999)
 Richard North Patterson, *Protect and Defend* (2000) / *Balance of Power* (2003) / *The Race* (2007)
 William Kennedy, *Roscoe* (2002)
 Max Barry, *Jennifer Government* (2003)
 Jeffrey Frank, *Bad Publicity: A Novel* (2004)
 David Mizner, *Political Animal* (2004) / *Hartsburg, USA: A Novel* (2007)
 Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Power Game: A Washington Novel* (2004)
 Hannes Artens, *The Writing on the Wall* (2007)
 Christopher Buckley, *Boomsday* (2007)
 Brendan DuBois, *Twilight* (2007)
 Jeffrey Frank, *Trudy Hopedale* (2007)
 Jamie Malanowski, *The Coup* (2007)
 Thomas Mallon, *Fellow Travelers* (2007)
 Tom Perrotta, *The Abstinence Teacher* (2007)
 Dennis Lehane, *The Given Day* (2008)
 Ralph Reed, *Dark Horse: A Political Thriller* (2008) / *The Confirmation* (2010)
 Curtis Sittenfeld, *American Wife: A Novel* (2008)

William R. Forstchen, *One Second After* (2009)
 Allan Airish, *The Faithless: A Political Thriller* (2012)
 Thomas Mallon, *Watergate: A Novel* (2012)
 Steven Jacques, *Advance Man* (2014)
 James R. Duncan, *Blood Republic: A Political Thriller* (2016)
 Thomas Mullen, *Darktown* (2016)
 Stuart Stevens, *The Innocent Have Nothing to Fear: A Novel* (2016)
 Jennifer Close, *The Hopefuls* (2016)
 Ben H. Winters, *Underground Airlines* (2016)
 Jake Tapper, *The Hellfire Club* (2018)
 David Pepper, *The Wingman* (2018); *The Voter File* (2020)
 Tom Rosenstiel, *Oppo* (2019)
 James Grippando, *The Big Lie* (2020)

Movies and TV:

The Birth of a Nation (Lillian Gish, 1915, 180-minute version)
Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (James Stewart, 1939)
The Grapes of Wrath (Henry Fonda, 1940)
All the King's Men (Broderick Crawford, 1949) / (Sean Penn 2006)
Born Yesterday (Judy Holliday/Broderick Crawford, 1950)
A Face in the Crowd (Andy Griffith, 1957)
The Last Hurrah (Spencer Tracy, 1958)
Advise and Consent (Henry Fonda, 1962)
The Manchurian Candidate (Frank Sinatra, 1962) / (Denzel Washington, 2004)
The Best Man (Henry Fonda/Cliff Robertson, 1964)
Dr. Strangelove (Peter Sellers, 1964)
Fail Safe (Henry Fonda, 1964)
Seven Days in May (Kirk Douglas/Burt Lancaster, 1964)
The Candidate (Robert Redford, 1972)
The Conversation (Gene Hackman, 1974)
The Parallax View (Warren Beatty, 1974)
All the President's Men (Robert Redford/Dustin Hoffman, 1976)
Network (Faye Dunaway, 1976)
Being There (Peter Sellers, 1979)
Norma Rae (Sally Field, 1979)
The Seduction of Joe Tynan (Alan Alda/Meryl Streep, 1979).
Missing (Jack Lemmon/Sissy Spacek, 1982)
Silkwood (Meryl Streep/Cher, 1983)
Power (Richard Gere, 1986)
Matewan (Chris Cooper/James Earl Jones, 1987)
RoboCop (Peter Weller, 1987)
Betrayed (Debra Winger/Tom Berenger, 1988)
Born on the Fourth of July (Tom Cruise, 1989)
Bob Roberts (Tim Robbins, 1992)
Hoffa (Jack Nicholson, 1992)
The American President (Michael Douglas, 1995)
Nixon (Anthony Hopkins, 1995)
City Hall (Al Pacino/John Cusack, 1996)
Lone Star (Chris Cooper/Kris Kristofferson, 1996)

Bulworth (Warren Beatty, 1998)
Pleasantville (Tobey Maguire, 1998)
Election (Reese Witherspoon, 1999)
The Insider (Al Pacino/Russell Crowe, 1999)
The Contender (Joan Allen, 2000)
Deterrence (Kevin Pollack, 2000)
Thirteen Days (Kevin Costner, 2000)
The Day Reagan Was Shot (Richard Dreyfuss, 2001)
Path to War (Michael Gambon/Donald Sutherland, 2002)
The Quiet American (Michael Caine/Brendan Fraser, 2002)
Silver City (Chris Cooper, 2004)
Good Night, and Good Luck (David Strathairn, 2005)
Syriana (George Clooney, 2005)
Babel (Brad Pitt, 2006)
Thank You for Smoking (Aaron Eckhart, 2006)
The State Within (Jason Isaacs, 2006)
V for Vendetta (Natalie Portman, 2006)
Charlie Wilson's War (Tom Hanks, 2007)
The Kingdom (Jamie Foxx/Jennifer Garner, 2007)
Rendition (Reese Witherspoon/Jake Gyllenhaal, 2007)
Body of Lies (Leonardo DiCaprio/Russell Crowe, 2008)
Frost/Nixon (Frank Langella/Michael Sheen, 2008)
Nothing But the Truth (Kate Beckinsale, 2008)
Recount: The Story of the 2000 Presidential Election (Kevin Spacey, 2008)
W. (Josh Brolin, 2008)
District 9 (Sharlto Copley, 2009)
State of Play (Russell Crowe, 2009)
Casino Jack (Kevin Spacey, 2010)
Fair Game (Naomi Watts/Sean Penn, 2010)
The Company Men (Ben Affleck, 2010)
The Ides of March (Ryan Gosling/George Clooney, 2011)
The Iron Lady (Meryl Streep, 2011)
Too Big to Fail (William Hurt/Paul Giamatti, 2011)
Boss season one (TV/Starz, Kelsey Grammer, 2011)
Game Change (Julianne Moore, 2012)
The Newsroom season one (TV/HBO, Jeff Daniels, 2012)
Argo (Ben Affleck, 2012)
The Company You Keep (Robert Redford, 2012)
Elysium (Matt Damon, 2013)
The Fifth Estate (Benedict Cumberbatch, 2013)
House of Cards season one (TV/Netflix, Kevin Spacey, 2013)
Cesar Chavez (Michael Peña, 2014)
Selma (David Oyelowo, 2014)
Snowpiercer (Chris Evans, 2014)
Madam Secretary, season one (TV/CBS, Téa Leoni, 2014-15)
Our Brand Is Crisis (Sandra Bullock, 2015)
The Runner (Nicholas Cage, 2015)
Trumbo (Bryan Cranston, 2015)
Truth (Cate Blanchett/Robert Redford, 2015)

All the Way (Bryan Cranston, 2016)
The Birth of a Nation (Nate Parker, 2016)
Confirmation (Kerry Washington, 2016)
The Handmaid's Tale season one (TV/Hulu, Elisabeth Moss, 2016)
Chappaquiddick (Jason Clarke, 2017)
The Circle (Emma Watson/Tom Hanks, 2017)
Get Out (Daniel Kaluuya, 2017)
Blackklansman (John David Washington/Adam Driver, 2018)
On the Basis of Sex (Felicity Jones, 2018)
The Hate U Give (Amandla Stenberg, 2018)
Vice (Christian Bale/Amy Adams, 2018)
Dark Waters (Mark Ruffalo, 2019)
Just Mercy (Michael B. Jordan, 2019)
The Assistant (Julia Garner 2020)
Irresistible (Steve Carell, 2020)
The Trial of the Chicago 7 (Eddie Redmayne, Mark Rylance, 2020)
The Mauritanian (Jodie Foster/Benedict Cumberbatch, 2021)