Writing Project Guidelines

As stated in the syllabus, this class has one writing project. The project requires you to select one film **from the list below**. You are to discuss the film you have selected for this project along several class-related topics. These issues include but are **not necessarily limited to**

civil law, criminal law, common law, the adversarial system, federal courts, state courts, specialty courts, courts of limited jurisdiction, courts of general jurisdiction, appellate courts, prosecution, defense, judges, judicial selection processes, legal ethics, interest group impact, media impact, the criminal trial process, the civil trial process, jury selection, instructions, and verdict.

Please note that all of the listed issues are directly related to material from the text. Keep in mind that not all films will have all of these court-related issues and some will include issues not listed here. The narrative of your project will include:

* Provide a **brief** but complete summary of the film so that someone who hasn’t seen it can understand the story line
* Make sure to identify the title of the film and year of production. The year of the film may play a major role in that it will be important to know what the law was at that time. Make sure that you interpret the film in its proper context.
* Describe the central characters and the key contributions **each** made to the film.
* Identify the court-related issues in the film (See issues identified above as an example).
* What court-related issues were central to the story? What court-related issues were “in the background” of the story?
* What parts of the film were portrayed realistically? What parts were contrary to what we know about court-related issues?

It is your responsibility to acquire the film you choose. Some of these may be available in the Library. You are to submit your movie choice to the appropriately labeled drop box no later than NOON, Saturday, **January 28, 2017**. In addition to providing your selection, you are to provide a narrative description of why this film is of interest to you and what you THINK makes it relevant to the course material. Please do not simply indicate that you've seen the film before and you like it. You should aim for a word count of 250-300 words. It is probably a really good idea to select and secure your movie in advance of this first assignment. Once you submit the title assignment, you will not be able to change your mind.

The final assignment is due to the appropriately labeled drop box no later than NOON, **Saturday, April 15.**It is worth **75 points**. The grade on your project will be posted in elearning within one week of the due date.

Grading Rubric

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CATEGORY** | **Excellent****23-25 points** | **Very Good****21-22 points** | **Good****17-20 points** | **Fair****15-16 points** | **Poor****<15 points** |
| Film summary, central characters, and actors | Are complete, accurate, and supported by specific examples from the movie  | Are mostly complete, accurate, and supported by specific examples from the movie | Are mostly incomplete, inaccurate, or not supported by specific examples from the movie | Are incomplete, inaccurate, or not supported by specific examples from the movie | Are incomplete and inaccurate and not supported by specific examples from the movie |
| The central and background court-related issues | They are complete, accurate and supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | They are mostly complete, accurate and supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | They are mostly incomplete, inaccurate, or not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | They are incomplete, inaccurate or not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | They are incomplete, and inaccurate, and not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials |
| Real and movie perspectives | Are complete, accurate, and supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | Are mostly complete, accurate, and supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | Are mostly incomplete, inaccurate, or not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | Are incomplete,  inaccurate, or not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials | Are incomplete and inaccurate and not supported by specific examples from the movie and the class materials |
| Writing guidelines\* | The project contained 2 or less errors | The project contained 3 or 4 errors | The project contained 5 or 6 errors | The project contained 7 or 8 errors | The project contained 9 or more errors |

Writing Guidelines\*

Assignment is double spaced, normal sized font and margins, left justified, numbered pages, no first person [do not refer to “I”, “we”, “us” etc], name is on (at least) the first page, no cover page, met word count of 1200-1500 words (include that at the end of your paper), APA formatting for references and citations, reference page, proper grammar, correct spelling, transitions from section to section, clear and concise writing

Remember, if you do not know how to properly cite in APA, click this link to [Purdue OWL](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/). You should have, at a minimum, proper citations for the film and the text book.

**Film Options:**

My Cousin Vinny (1992)

Kramer vs. Kramer (1979)

A Civil Action (1998)

The Lincoln Lawyer (2011)

Runaway Jury (2003)

The Verdict (1982)

The Insider (1999)

12 Angry Men (1957)