Global Film History: Encouraging Students to Develop Arguments that Connect Different Industries and Time Periods
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Why this Project Matters:

The intention is to encourage the following things:
- Small group student interaction within a large enrolment on-line class
- More flexibility in how students present their work
- The ability for each student to see progression and development in their work

For Example: Considering Connections

French Impressionism, German Expressionism and Soviet Montage are all influential film movements from the 1920s. What similarities do they have in terms of aesthetics, themes, politics, attitudes to other art forms?

Challenges We Encountered:

- Many students insisted on answering pre-set questions
- Many students did not amend their entries after significant feedback
- Blog format was not as flexible as first thought in terms of grading individual entries
- A single rubric cannot provide enough clarity for all the possible interpretations of the assignment and a student’s development

What We Recommend:

The discussion board, while not as fashionable provides more flexibility of entries and grading.

Separate rubrics are required to reflect the development of student learning from the early entries through to the later ones.

Project Structure:

• The group tool in blackboard randomly sorted the class into groups of 6
• A group blog was created for each group
• Each student posted 6 entries over the course of the semester
• They were allowed to comment on each others’ blog
• Each film screening included suggested blog topics, but students were encouraged to create their own
• A grading rubric was provided to give guidance on good practice as well as grading criteria

Positive Outcomes:

• Some students discussed topics that meant more to them personally
• Some students focused on areas/topics I may not have considered before
• Students were able to see others’ work and this inspired them to do better, or help