

**HIST/SISJE 269 “The Holocaust: History and Memory”**  
University of Washington, Seattle (W course; 5 credits)

**This large (200 student) undergraduate lecture course was co-designed with Professor Uta Poiger (Associate Professor of Modern German History, UW) and was for the first time co-taught by Professors Poiger and Stein: subsequently, it has rotated annually between the two professors.**

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Office hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:30 and by appointment

**Course Description**

The Holocaust, the murder of six million Jews by Germans in Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II, is one of the crucial events of modern history. This course examines the origins of the Holocaust, the perpetrators and the victims, and changing efforts to come to terms with this genocide. Students will explore the forces that led to the Holocaust, including the emergence of scientific racism, anti-semitism, and the machinery of the modern state. We will consider debates about the implementation of genocide, including the significance of gender and sexuality; the relationship between war and genocide; the meanings of resistance and culpability; and political and philosophical implications of the Holocaust. We will explore how the genocide of European Jewry was intertwined with the targeting of other victims of Nazi rule, including Roma, Slavs, black Germans, the disabled, homosexuals, and political opponents of National Socialism. In addition to considering how the Holocaust unfolded in Europe, we will examine the ways in which changing political conditions in the post-WWII period have shaped and reshaped memories of this event. Finally, we will investigate the question of the “uniqueness” of the Holocaust relative to other genocides.

**Requirements:**

Students enrolled in this course are expected to attend lectures and sections regularly and to complete assigned reading by the date specified below. Students will also take two in-class examinations and complete two papers of 5-6 pages in length, due at the beginning of class on October 18 and November 22.

Each week, students will bring one paragraph to section that responds to the week's reading, addresses questions or themes raised in lectures, and raises further questions for discussion. These paragraphs are to be turned in and will receive a grade of "check" or "check plus."

**Grades:**

Students are required to complete *all* assignments in order to pass the course.

Grades will be determined on the basis of the following break-down:

Mid-term exam	20%
Final exam	25%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	25%
Participation in section, including weekly writing responses	10%

**Late Papers:**

Extensions will be granted only in cases of verified emergencies, such as illness. Late papers will suffer a drop in grade by half a grade per day (from a 4 to a 3.5, for example, or from a 3.5 to a 3).

**Readings:**

**Required Books (available for sale at the University Bookstore and on reserve at Odegaard Library):**

Jan Gross, *Neighbors*

Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Art Spiegelman, *Maus I and II*

Assigned readings marked "PD" [Primary Document] or \* are available from Odegaard Undergraduate Library **Electronic Reserves**. For more information about using this service:

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/services/course/>

A useful **reference tool** is the website of the "Holocaust Encyclopedia" of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at

<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/>

**Website**

The course has a website which contains information students can not access in any other forum, including extra credit options. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the contents of the web site and check it regularly for new information:

<http://courses.washington.edu/hist269/>

Login: hist269

Password: holocaust

Lecture outlines, including “terms to remember” will be posted on the website *after* lectures.

**Writing help**

All students, regardless of their major or year, are encouraged to seek help on papers from the History Writing Center. The History Writing Center offers half-hour, individual appointments with graduate student tutors who are well versed in the special demands of writing history papers. Students are invited to use the Writing Center at any stage in the composition process, from thesis development through multiple drafts of an essay. For more information:

<http://depts.washington.edu/histwrit/>

**Access Students**

Space permitting, access students are welcome to attend lectures. According to a new policy of the Registrar’s Office, access students are required to register for the course *and* a section. However, to avoid over burdening teaching assistants, access students are asked *not* to attend sections.

## Meetings

### 9/29 –9/30 Week One: Origins

**Thursday: Racism and the Rise of National Socialism in Germany**

**Friday: Discussion section**

#### Assigned reading:

**PD:** “Protocols of the Elders of Zion,” in *The Jew in the Modern World*. Please note that this document is *followed* by a brief historical summary that is best read first.

**PD:** “The Program of the National Socialist (Nazi) German Workers’ Party,” in Arad et al, *Documents on the Holocaust*.

\*Norman Naimark, “The Nazi Attack on the Jews,” in *Fires of Hatred, Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*

### 10/4-10/7 Week Two: Historical Contexts

Assignment for first paper handed out in class Thursday

**Tuesday: Jews and Non-Jews in Pre-WWII Europe.**

**Thursday: German Jews in the 1930s**

**Friday: Discussion section**

#### Assigned Reading:

\*Marion Kaplan, “Jewish Women in Nazi Germany: Life, Daily Struggles, 1933-1939” *Feminist Studies* 16, no 3, Fall, 1990.

**PD:** “Organization of the Anti-Jewish Boycott of April 1, 1933,” in Arad et al, *Documents on the Holocaust*.

**PD:** “First Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law, November 14, 1935,” in Arad et al, *Documents on the Holocaust*.

### 10/11-10/14 Week Three: World War II and Violence

**Tuesday: The Spirit of Science and the Origins of the “Final Solution:**

**Thursday: Toward an ‘Aryan’ Europe.**

**Friday: Discussion section**

#### Assigned reading:

\*“Detlev Peukert, “The Genesis of the Final Solution and the Spirit of Science,” in Crew, ed., *Nazism and German Society*.

**PD:** “Selected Documents from the Adult ‘Euthanasia’ Programme” in Noakes et al., *Nazism 1919-1945*, Chapter 36, pp. 996-1048.

### 10/18-10/21 Week Four: Toward the “Final Solution”

First paper due at beginning of class Tuesday

**Tuesday: The Eastern Front**

**Thursday: Toward the “Final Solution”**

**Friday: Discussion section**

#### Assigned reading:

Jan Gross, *Neighbors*

### 10/25-10/28 Week Five: Implementing Genocide

**Tuesday: In-class mid-term exam**

**Thursday: Ghettoization, Deportations, and Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe**

**Friday: Discussion section**

**Assigned Reading:**

Browning, *Ordinary Men*, pages 1-78, 133-191.

\*Daniel Goldhagen, "Police Battalion 101: Assessing the Men's Motives," in *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.

**11/1-11/4 Week Six: Death and Labor Camps**

**Tuesday: The Mechanics of Genocide I**

**Thursday: The Mechanics of Genocide II**

**Friday: Discussion section**

**Assigned reading:**

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

**11/8-11/11 Week Seven: Diverse Enactments I**

**Assignment for second paper handed out in class Tuesday**

**Tuesday: Deportations and Survival in Germany**

**Thursday: Vichy France and Northern Europe**

**Friday: No discussion section (Veterans Day)**

**Assigned Reading:**

\*Nathan Stoltzfuss, "The Limits of Policy: Social Protection of Intermarried German Jews in Nazi Germany," in Gellately and Stoltzfus, *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*, 117-144.

**PD:** ETTY HILLESBAUM, "A Letter from Westerbork," in RITTNER and ROTH, eds., *Different Voices: Women and the Holocaust*, pp. 46-57.

**11/15-11/18 Week Eight: Diverse Enactments II**

**Tuesday: Southeastern Europe**

**Thursday: North Africa**

**Friday: Discussion section**

\*Mark Mazower, *Inside Hitler's Greece: The Experience of Occupation 1941-1944*, pp. 235-261.

**PD:** MARCO NAHON, *Birkenau, The Camp of Death*, pp. 17-35.

**11/22 Week Nine: Seeking Justice**

**Second paper due at beginning of class Tuesday**

**Tuesday: Postwar Trials, International Justice, and Definitions of Genocide**

**Thursday-Friday: No classes (Thanksgiving Break)**

Begin Art Spiegelman, *Maus I and II*.

**11/29-12/2 Week 10: The Politics of Memory**

**Tuesday: The Politics of Memory**

**Thursday: Commemorations**

**Friday: Discussion section**

**Assigned reading:**

Finish Art Spiegelman, *Maus I and II*.

**12/6-12/9**      **Week Eleven: The Holocaust in Comparative Perspective**

**Tuesday: Can It Happen Again? Or Has It Already? And Did it Happen Before?**

**Thursday: Conclusions**

**Friday: Discussion section**

**Assigned reading:**

\*Isabel Hull, "Military Culture and the Production of 'Final Solutions' in the Colonies: The Example of Wilhelminian Germany," in Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, 2003), 141-162.

**12/13**              **Tuesday 4:30-6:20 Final Exam** (Bagley 131)