

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: **THE HOLOCAUST** (HIST 330)  
Credits: 3 Credits  
Instructor: Dr. Olga Baranova, Ph.D



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**Fall Semester 2010.** Meeting Times: **Monday, Wednesday 2:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.**

## OFFICE HOURS

By appointment. Available from Monday to Friday by e-mail [baranova@gonzaga.edu](mailto:baranova@gonzaga.edu) or mobile phone: +39.329.804.7457

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the historical problems associated with Holocaust - Nazi systematic mass murder of European and Soviet Jews between 1933 and 1945. The main issues discussed in the course include the origins of anti-Semitism in Europe; the development of National Socialist ideology in Germany; the Nazi and fascist racial policies in the 1930s; the mass extermination of Jews during World War II; Jewish resistance to the Holocaust and survival strategies; the assistance offered by non-Jews to mitigate the Holocaust, and participation of local non-Jews in the Nazi occupied countries in the campaign for the annihilation of their Jewish "neighbors".

This course attempts to deal with some of the most difficult questions of the twentieth century Who were the Jews? What was the status of Jews in Europe and Russia in modern period? What was their relationship with other ethnical groups in the societies they lived in? What were the first instances and expressions of Anti-Semitism? What were the reasons for Anti-Semitic feelings amongst non-Jews? Was the annihilation of the Jews planned from 1933 when the Nazi party came to power in Germany or even earlier? Were all the murderers of Jews Nazis? Was it the German army (*Wehrmacht*) responsible for extermination of Jews or was it primarily the Nazi SS and its affiliates responsibility? Were civilians of occupied countries involved in the Holocaust? What were the motives behind the perpetrators? Did most of Europe know what was happening? Did the Jews resist or didn't they? What was the response of Vatican on the Holocaust? What was the reaction of American Jews on Holocaust in Europe? What was the aftermath of Holocaust? Is Holocaust different from other forms of genocide - the Armenian, Cambodian, Rwanda's, native American, or Bosnian? Which lessons can we learn from this dark page of European history?

The study of the Holocaust is difficult and extraordinarily challenging because of the additional emotional and moral demands it makes on us. The course does not provide simplified answers and does not draw generalised conclusions, but examines variety of cases (countries and individuals) and discusses the complexity of the issue from historical, political, sociological, psychological, philosophical, and ethical perspectives.

## COURSE METHOD

The course adopts interdisciplinary approach and provides interweaving of the concepts and notions from such disciplines as history, political science, sociology, philosophy, and psychology. The course is not a narrative of events and facts but rather their academic evaluation and interpretation. The framework of the classes is chronological - problematic, examining some of the key issues and events as they unfolded. The course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminars / workshops. Students will be provided with a variety of primary and secondary source materials and some extracts from films to discuss. A wide use of audio-visual sources will be made by instructor to illustrate various issues discussed during this course.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this course is to stimulate students' better understanding of the Holocaust in the context of the European history. The aim of the course is to provide students with the necessary basic stable knowledge about the most important events and processes, to make them reflect on and discuss origins and moral legacy of Holocaust, and to further encourage their interest in the subject.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The main learning objectives are to develop students' critical thinking, analytical and research skills (through readings, internet and periodicals), presentation and writing skills (through written paper, exam essays and oral presentations).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

During this course students are expected not only to attend classes on regular basis, but also to actively participate through discussions of readings and presentations.

Apart from mid-term and final exams, students are expected to give one/two class presentations, and to write one analytical research paper on any of the issues discussed in class. The paper should be of about 3.000 words including footnotes and a short bibliography. Critical evaluation of the information is required for this paper, plagiarism is not acceptable.

## GRADING SYSTEM AND POLICIES

Gonzaga University grading system.<sup>1</sup> The final grade will be the outcome of:

- class participation (including attendance and presentations) - 15%
- mid-term exam (written) - 30%
- paper - 25%
- final exam (written) - 30%.

## READINGS <sup>2</sup>

- Bauer, Yehuda. *The History of the Holocaust*. Franklin Watts, 1982.
- Bergen, Doris L. *War and Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust. Critical Issues in World and International History*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.; 2nd edition, 2009
- Botwinick, Rita. Steinhardt. *A History of the Holocaust: From Ideology to Annihilation*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1996.
- Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1993.
- Dawidowicz, Lucy S. *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945*. New York: Bantam Books, 1986.
- Edelheit, Abraham, Edelheit Hershel, and Edelheit, Ann. *History Of The Holocaust: A Handbook And Dictionary*. Westview Press, 1995.
- Friedländer, Saul. *Nazi Germany and the Jews*. vol. 1, *The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*. New York: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Hilberg, Raul. *The Destruction of the European Jews*. 3 vol. set (third edition), Yale University Press, 2003
- Kaplan, Marion. *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Landau, Ronnie S. *The Nazi Holocaust*. First American edition. Ivan R. Dee, 1994.

## SOME ENTRIES TO FURTHER READING (NOT REQUIRED)

- Abzug, Robert. *America Views the Holocaust*. Bedford, St. Martin's, 1998.
- Dalin, David G. *The Myth of Hitler's Pope: How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2005.
- Gross, Jan T. *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne Poland*. Penguin, 2002.
- Fleming, Gerald. *Hitler and the Final Solution*. UC Press, 1984.
- Fogelman, Eva. *Conscience & Courage: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*. Anchor, 1994.
- Lipstadt, Deborah. *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. Free Press, 1993.
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. New York: Bantham, 1982.
- Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York: Touchstone Books, 1995.

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<sup>1</sup> 0 - 59 = **F**, 60 - 69 = **D**, 70 - 72 = **C-**, 73 - 76 = **C**, 77 - 79 = **C+**, 80 - 82 = **B-**, 83 - 86 = **B**, 87 - 89 = **B+**, 90 - 92 = **A-**, 93 - 100 = **A**.

<sup>2</sup> Selected readings (book chapters and articles) will be presented as copies by the instructor. If you wish to purchase one of these books, I would recommend the first book by Yehuda Bauer.

## ON-LINE RESOURCES

- *The Holocaust Timeline*: <http://www.webster.edu/~woolfm/chronology.html>  
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html#1942>
- *Holocaust and Genocide Studies Journal*: <http://www.oup.co.uk/holgen>
- *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*: <http://www.ushmm.org/>
- *Holocaust / Shoah Educational Resources and Projects*: <http://ddickerson.igc.org/education.html>
- *The Holocaust History Project*: <http://www.holocaust-history.org>

## FILMS

If the time permits, some excerpts from the following films might be screened and discussed during this course:

*Night and Fog* (1955) by Alain Resnais;  
*The Sorrow and the Pity* (1970) by Marcel Ophuls;  
*The Partisans of Vilna* (1986) by Aviva Kemner;  
*Shoah* (1986) by Claude Lanzmann;  
*Lodz Ghetto* (1989) by Alan Adelson;  
*The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (1970) by Vittorio de Sica;  
*Come and See* (1985) by Elem Klimov

## COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1:

What was Holocaust? Why is it important to study it? Introduction, Terminology and General Background. The History of Anti-Semitism. Why Jews?

### WEEK 2:

Anti-Semitism in Europe. Jewish Life in Europe Before Nazism: The Relations between Jews and non-Jews in Modern Period.

### WEEK 3:

WWI and its Aftermath. New Ideologies: Totalitarianism, Fascism, Communism. Anti-Semitism in Germany in the Period of Weimar Republic, 1918-32. Why Germany?

### WEEK 4:

The Nazi Party in Power and its Ideology: Racism, Anti-Semitism and Extreme Nationalism. The Jews of Germany and Central-Eastern Europe during the 1930's.

### WEEK 5:

The Struggle for Pure Arian Race: the Nazi Persecution of Other Groups: Gypsies, Black, the Disabled, Homosexuals, and "Asocials"

### WEEK 6:

Towards Genocide? 1938 – 1941. Occupation of Poland: Expulsion, Deportation and Concentration. Life of Jews in Ghettos.

### WEEK 7:

Operation *Barbarossa* and the Occupation of the Soviet Union. Barbarization of Warfare. Fate of the Soviet (Belarusian, Ukrainian and Lithuanian) Jews, 1941 – 1942.

### WEEK 8:

The Final Solution: Plans and Decisions. The Nazi Death Camps and Hitler's Full Scale War of Extermination against the Jews, 1942 - 1944.

### WEEK 9:

Jewish Responses in Eastern and Western Europe. Resistance as Survival Strategy.

**WEEK 10:**

Pope Pius XII, the Response of Vatican to the Holocaust.  
The American Jewish Response to the Holocaust under the Roosevelt Administration.

**WEEK 11:**

Righteous Gentiles: Christians Who Rescued Jews from the Nazis during the Holocaust.

**WEEK 12:**

Perpetrators, Collaborators, Bystanders. Motives, Considerations and the Possibilities of Empathy.

**WEEK 13:**

Liberation, 1944 - 1945. Nuremberg Trials. Aftermath and Legacy.

**WEEK 14:**

Recollections of Holocaust Survivors. Representation and Memory of Holocaust.