FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
REL 3194: The Holocaust/IDS4920-JM01 Liberal Studies Colloquium
Fall 2013, Hybrid course (1/2 online via Blackboard, 1/2 in-person)
In-person class meetings on Thursdays, 7:00-8:15pm at the JMOF-FIU
Dr. Oren B. Stier
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This course is supported by a Mellon Infusion Grant offered by The Wolfsonian–FIU
This syllabus is subject to change; it is current as of May 21, 2013

Course Orientation:

Description: This hybrid course is a survey of historical, ethical, and theological issues relating to the Holocaust, the systematic destruction of Jews and Jewish life by the Nazi regime during World War II. A specific focus of the course is on relations between Jews and Christians before, during, and after the Nazi era. This is not a class on the history of the Holocaust itself, though a basic familiarity with the facts of the Nazi assault on Jewry will be necessary. Students without such a background may wish to read any one of a number of works on Holocaust history on their own to supplement their knowledge (extra credit may be available). This course is also infused with material from the Wolfsonian-FIU collection, which will provide critical visual and material cultural background to and context for the rise of Nazism. The subject of the class is engaging, disturbing, and taxing: sensitivity and thoughtfulness are essential throughout! Regular class lectures and seminal readings from the course texts will be supplemented by excellent audio-visual material and special guest lectures. A tour of the Holocaust Memorial-Miami Beach will also be arranged.

Objectives:

- Students will learn to see the Holocaust in greater historical, religious, and cultural context.
- Students will gain an understanding of classical antisemitism and its implications.
- Students will consider the roles religion plays in situations of extremity, as well as the ethical choices people make in such situations.
- Students will examine material and visual culture objects relating to the Nazi period and understand them in context.
- Students will develop critical thinking skills in close reading, reflection, and response.

The course is divided into four parts.

- Introduction: We discuss the general background of the Holocaust as well as key questions and theories central to the course.
- Before the Nazi Era: We discuss the historical and religious issues and events that led up to the Holocaust.
- During the Nazi era: We discuss life under the Nazi regime and in the ghettos and camps, Jewish and Christian responses, ethics, resistance, and survival.
- After the Nazi era: We discuss liberation, survivor “guilt” and silence, life in the aftermath, Christian and Jewish theological responses, the moral legacy of the Holocaust, and contemporary remembrance issues and activities.
**Texts:**

**Required Books:**


**Required Reserves and Handouts:**

- New Testament Gospel excerpts. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- Steven Katz, typology of religious responses to the Holocaust. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- Selection of online readings/links. **DOC posted on Blackboard.**

**Assignments and grading:** All students will complete the following (Students must fulfill all categories to receive a grade for the course):

1. **Eleven** quizzes (through FIU Online/Blackboard): each is designed to apply to the week that precedes it and is meant to be taken at the end of each week; however, quizzes close on Mondays at 11:59 pm to allow for sufficient time. Quiz #1 will be open an extra week to accommodate late registrations. **There will be no extensions on the quizzes.** It is recommended you attempt the quiz for the first time on Fridays after completing the week’s readings and lectures; if you are not satisfied with your grade, review the material and take it again on Sunday. You may attempt each quiz up to three times, but the questions will vary with each attempt. Each quiz is worth 3% of your final grade; the **lowest grade** will be discarded, totaling **30% of your final grade**.
2. **Two take-home** essay exams, to be submitted to turnitin.com via Blackboard (no separate turnitin registration required) of about 1000 words per essay; each is worth 15% of your final grade.

3. **One** 750-word (minimum) Comparative Object Study/Essay on two items displayed in the virtual exhibition, “Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism;” further details will be provided. The essay is worth 15% of your final grade.

4. **A Final Examination** (details TBA) consisting of an essay and a series of paragraph-long term identifications. **The Final Exam is worth 15% of your final grade.**

5. **Class** attendance and participation (including submission of weekly discussion questions, details TBA): 10% of your final grade.

**Grading Criteria:**

All student work will be assigned numerical grades, corresponding to the following letter grades, according to the criteria below. Final grades will be calculated according to the percentages outlined above and converted to final letter grades for the course.

- 98-100 A+  “As” are awarded for excellent to exceptional work, free of technical and stylistic errors, showing sustained thought and engagement with the material on an appropriate but impressive academic level.
- 93-97 A  “Bs” are awarded for good to very good work, with some occasional errors, but nonetheless clearly indicating a good grasp of the material and assigned task.
- 90-92 A-  “Cs” are awarded for average to above average work, meeting minimal standards but marked with errors, and exposing gaps in student performance and/or fulfillment of the assignment.
- 88-89 B+  “Ds” are awarded for barely passing to below average work, usually riddled with errors and seriously deficient in fulfilling the assignment.
- 83-87 B  “Fs” are awarded for unacceptable work.
- 80-82 B-  “As” are awarded for excellent to exceptional work, free of technical and stylistic errors, showing sustained thought and engagement with the material on an appropriate but impressive academic level.
- 78-79 C+  “Bs” are awarded for good to very good work, with some occasional errors, but nonetheless clearly indicating a good grasp of the material and assigned task.
- 73-77 C  “Cs” are awarded for average to above average work, meeting minimal standards but marked with errors, and exposing gaps in student performance and/or fulfillment of the assignment.
- 70-72 C-  “Ds” are awarded for barely passing to below average work, usually riddled with errors and seriously deficient in fulfilling the assignment.
- 68-69 D+  “Fs” are awarded for unacceptable work.
- 63-67 D  “As” are awarded for excellent to exceptional work, free of technical and stylistic errors, showing sustained thought and engagement with the material on an appropriate but impressive academic level.
- 60-62 D-  “Bs” are awarded for good to very good work, with some occasional errors, but nonetheless clearly indicating a good grasp of the material and assigned task.
- < 60 F  “Cs” are awarded for average to above average work, meeting minimal standards but marked with errors, and exposing gaps in student performance and/or fulfillment of the assignment.

**Course Regulations and Expectations:**

- **READINGS** must be completed during the week they are assigned, prior to class discussions. Careful preparation of readings is essential for comprehension, participation, and overall performance!
- **DUE DATES:**
  - **Online quizzes** are designed to be attempted on each Friday of the week indicated in the class schedule but remain open through the weekend to accommodate students who may have missed material during the preceding week; all quizzes close at 11:59 pm on Mondays unless otherwise noted and will not be re-opened. Students not completing quizzes by closing time will receive a zero for that quiz.
  - The two **Take-Home Exams** and the **Comparative Object Study** will remain open past the due date and time but will be penalized **one half letter grade** (five points) for each day late, or part thereof, up to a **maximum** 30 point deduction.
  - Students are required to submit questions for discussion prior to class meetings; missed submissions will negatively affect the participation grade. Details TBA.
• PLAGIARISM and any and all forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is stealing someone else’s words or original ideas. Plagiarism occurs in two forms: (1) uncredited quotations (including words copied from elsewhere but not bracketed by quotation marks and quotations without proper citations and documentation) and (2) uncredited paraphrases. In both cases, to avoid plagiarism, students must properly cite the source material. Only commonly known facts and concepts, general material learned in the course of research and study, and students’ original ideas do not require citation. Students found violating standards will fail the course and will be reported directly to the Office of Academic Affairs. For useful guidelines, go to the Plagiarism Prevention section on the FIU Library’s website: http://libguides.fiu.edu/plagiarism.

• ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY in class are required and expected. Tardiness is disruptive and will be noted, and repeated tardiness will negatively impact the student’s attendance grade; the professor reserves the right to refuse entry to students arriving late.

• FIU’s CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN WRITING offers free services. Take advantage of them! See http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/

• EXTRA CREDIT is always available for the diligent student. For this course, there are two options for extra credit: (1) You may attend and write (2-3 pages) about a pre-approved Holocaust-related event scheduled during the semester or (2) you may view one of the videotaped testimonies of Holocaust survivors available at the BBC library, take notes, and write up a summary (2-3 pages). See me for further guidelines and suggestions. Due no later than 12/6. No exceptions to this deadline will be permitted.
Schedule of Lecture/Discussion Topics and Readings (subject to change):

Part I  Introduction

Week 1  Orientation; What is the Holocaust? What’s in a name?
Readings:
•  Browse the textbooks
•  Review the syllabus
•  Rubenstein & Roth, pp. ix-22
•  Hochstadt, pp. 1-6.
View:
•  Online Lecture 1: What is the Holocaust?
Discussion on 8/29: Why Study the Holocaust?
Online quiz #1 (remains open until end of week 2)

Part II  Before the Nazi Era

Week 2  Judaism and Early Christianity
Readings:
•  Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 25-47
•  Hochstadt, pp. 7-21
•  Gospel excerpts (handout).
View:
  o  Available on Netflix or at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call # BM645.H6 C76 1992 or NVS 567)
  o  NOTE: 2nd of two features—make sure to watch the correct film!
•  Online Lecture 2: The Jew as Outsider
No Discussion on 9/5 due to Rosh Hashanah
Online quiz #2

Week 3  Antisemitism
Readings:
•  Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 49-70
•  Littell, pp. 24-43 (.pdf on Blackboard)
•  Hochstadt, pp. 22-35
View:
•  Online Lecture 3: Christian Antisemitism from the Gospels to the Enlightenment
Discussion on 9/12: The Jew in the Gospels
Online quiz #3
Week 4  The Failure of Emancipation and the Rise of Nazism  
**Readings:**  
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 71-117  
- Heller  
**View:**  
- Online Lecture 4: The Jewish Question  
- Special Online Lecture: Antisemitism in Europe, Francis. X. Luca, Senior Librarian, Wolfsonian-FIU  
*No Discussion on 9/19 due to Sukkot*  
*Take-Home Exam #1 due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/22*

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**Part III  During the Nazi Era**

**Week 5  Towards The Final Solution**  
**Readings:**  
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 121-142  
- Hochstadt, pp. 36-84  
**View:**  
- Online Lecture 5: Towards the “Final Solution”  
- Online Lecture 6: Kristallnacht & The St. Louis  
*No Discussion on 9/19 due to Shemini Atzeret*  
*Online quiz #4*

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**Week 6  The Final Solution**  
**Readings:**  
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 143-166  
- Hochstadt, pp. 85-178  
**View:**  
- Online Lecture 7: War and the “Final Solution” to the Jewish Question  
*Discussion on 10/3: Genocide as State Policy*  
*Online quiz #5*

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**Week 7  Industrialized Murder**  
**Readings:**  
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 167-213  
- Hochstadt, pp. 179-221  
**View:**  
- Online Lecture 8: The Mechanics of Murder  
*Visit* the Holocaust Memorial-Miami Beach (tours TBA)  
*Discussion on 10/10: 1942 as a Turning Point*  
*Online quiz #6*
Week 8  Propaganda

Readings:
- Aynsley
- Heller (review)

View:
- Special Online Lecture: Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism
- Special Online Lecture: Branding the Nazis, Steve Heller, School of Visual Arts
- Online Exhibition, “Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism”

Discussion on 10/17: Branding the Holocaust

Online quiz #7

Week 9  The End of World War II

Readings:
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 217-247

View:
- Online Lecture 9: Victims, Resistors, Survivors
- Special Online Lecture: Antisemitism in the Dock: Julius Streicher, Dr. Thomas Bryant, Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin—University of Applied Sciences

Discussion on 10/24: Resistance vs. Complicity: Revisiting Hannah Arendt

Work on Comparative Object Studies

Week 10  “Life” During the Holocaust

Reading:
- Wiesel

View:
- Online Lecture 10: The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part I)
- Online Lecture 11: The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part II)

Discussion on 10/31: Why is This Night Different?

Work on Comparative Object Studies

Week 11  Survival in Auschwitz

Reading:
- Levi

View:
- Online Lecture 12: The Jewish Experience: Primo Levi

Discussion on 11/7: Ethics during the Holocaust

Take-Home Exam #2 due by 11:59 pm, Sunday, 11/10
Part IV  After the Nazi Era

Week 12  Testimony

Reading:
• Hochstadt, pp. 222-54

View:
• Video: “Witness: Voices from the Holocaust,” a production of Stories To Remember in association with the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, Yale University (NY: Joshua M. Greene Productions, 1999)
  ○ Available on YouTube or at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call # RESAV 170.2)

• Also available at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call # D809.F7 W43 1989 or NVS 70)

Online quiz #8

Week 13  Commemoration

Reading:
• Magilow

View:
• Video: “Paper Clips,” directed by Elliot Berlin and Joe Fab (NY: Hart Sharp Video, 2006)
  ○ Available on Netflix or at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call # D804.3 P3747 2006)

• Special Online Lecture: Archaeology at Sobibor, Dr. Richard Freund, University of Hartford

Discussion on 11/21: Special Guest Lecture: Muslim Perspectives on the Shoah, Dr. Mehnaz Afridi, Manhattan College

Online quiz #9

Week 14  Theology

Comparative Object Study due by 11:59 pm, Tuesday, 11/26

Readings:
• Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 249-290; 327-354
• Katz typology

View:
• Online Lecture 13: A Broken Covenant?
• Online Lecture 14: God after Auschwitz

No Discussion on 11/28 due to Thanksgiving

Online quiz #10
Week 15  Ethics after the Holocaust

Readings:
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 355-377.
- Hochstadt, pp. 255-99
- Online readings (.doc with links posted in Blackboard)

View:
- Online Lecture 15: Ending Auschwitz
- Special Online Lecture: Remembering the Holocaust through Photographs, Dr. Marta Zarzycka, Utrecht University

Discussion on 12/5: Then and Now: Remembering the Holocaust

Online quiz #11

Week 16  Final Exam TBA

• THIS syllabus outlines everything you need to know for this course. Please make sure you have read it through carefully.