

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

REL 3194: The Holocaust

Fall 2015, Online course

Dr. Oren B. Stier

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment

Email: stiero@fiu.edu

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Course Orientation:

Description: This online 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. 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!

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 **three** modules.

- *Course Introduction & Before the Nazi Era:* We address the general background of the Holocaust as well as key questions and theories central to the course. We then address the historical and religious issues and events that led up to the Holocaust.
- *During the Nazi era:* We address life under the Nazi regime and in the ghettos and camps, Jewish and Christian responses, ethics, resistance, and survival.
- *After the Nazi era:* We address 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.

These modules are subdivided into individual units corresponding to the week of the semester, but within each module you may work through the week’s assignments at your own pace: *all work within each module is due by the **module end date***; estimated approximate time necessary for each individual unit is noted as a helpful guide.

Success in this course is heavily dependent on consistent and regular work: I recommend you schedule and devote at least one hour per day for the duration of the semester to this course.

Texts:

Required Books:

- Richard L. Rubenstein and John K. Roth, *Approaches to Auschwitz: The Holocaust and Its Legacy*, revised ed. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003). ISBN 9780664223533. **Make sure you purchase this edition only!**
- Steve Hochstadt, ed., *Sources of the Holocaust* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). ISBN 9780333963456.
- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf (NY: Touchstone Books, 1996). ISBN 9780684826806
- Elie Wiesel, *Night*, rev. ed. (NY: Hill and Wang; 2006). ISBN 9780374500016. **This is the required edition.**

Required Reserves and Handouts:

- Franklin H. Littell, *The Crucifixion of the Jews: The Failure of Christians to Understand the Jewish Experience* (NY: Harper and Row, 1975; reprint Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), excerpts. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- New Testament Gospel excerpts. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- Steven Katz, typology of religious responses to the Holocaust. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- Dan Magilow, "Counting to Six Million: Collecting Projects and Holocaust Memorialization," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* n.s. 14, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 23–39. **PDF posted on Blackboard.**
- Steven Heller, *Iron Fists: Branding the 20th Century Totalitarian State* (London and NY: Phaidon, 2008), Chapter 1: "The Nazis," pp. 12-75. **PDF posted on Blackboard; book on 2-hr. GL reserve.**
- Selection of online readings/links. **DOC posted on Blackboard.**

Assignments and grading: All students will complete the following according to the timetable below:

1. **Seven** quizzes (through FIU Online/Blackboard): each is designed to apply to the unit indicated; *all quizzes within each module are open for the duration of the module. There will be no extensions on the quizzes.* You may attempt each quiz up to three times, but the questions will vary with each attempt. It is recommended you attempt the quiz for the first time immediately after completing the relevant material; if you are not satisfied with your grade, review the material and take the quiz again. The two lowest quiz grades will be discarded, leaving 5 remaining; each of these five quizzes is worth 4% of your final grade, totaling **20% of your final grade. Respondus Lockdown Browser required.**
2. **Two** essays, to be submitted to turnitin.com via Blackboard (no separate turnitin registration required) of about 850-1000 words per essay; each is worth **20% of your final grade.** *Essays may be turned in up to the last day of class with no penalty, but it is recommended they be submitted at the conclusion of each relevant module.*

3. **An Online Final Examination** consisting of 10 paragraph-long term identifications selected from a larger list assigned randomly by Blackboard from a master list. **The Final Exam is worth 20% of your final grade. Respondus Lockdown Browser required. There will be no extensions on the Final Exam.**
4. **Discussion Board Posts and Replies:** Each of the three course modules includes a special lecture dealing with Visual Culture: students are required to view these lectures early enough within each module to allow time both to post about specific items within those lectures as noted in the assignment and read and reply to colleagues' posts by the closing date of each Discussion Board Forum.: **20% of your final grade. There will be no extensions on the Discussion Board Posting deadlines.**

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	
90-92	A-	
88-89	B+	"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.
83-87	B	
80-82	B-	
78-79	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.
73-77	C	
70-72	C-	
68-69	D+	"Ds" are awarded for barely passing to below average work, usually riddled with errors and seriously deficient in fulfilling the assignment.
63-67	D	
60-62	D-	
< 60	F	"Fs" are awarded for unacceptable work.

Course Regulations and Expectations:

- READINGS must be completed prior to viewing the Online Lectures. Careful preparation of readings is essential for comprehension, participation, and overall performance!
- DUE DATES:
 - **Quizzes** and the **Final Exam** all have firm deadlines and will not be re-opened except in cases of documented emergency.
 - **Discussion Board** postings have firm deadlines and will not be re-opened for any reason.
 - The **Two Essays** have recommended due dates but will be accepted until 11:59pm on Sunday, December 6 with no penalty.
- 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>.

- 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: You may write a 500-1000 word essay on either Unit 14: Commemoration, or you may choose to attend and write about a special community lecture sponsored by the Holocaust Studies Initiative (information will be sent early in the semester). You will receive up to 3 points added to your final grade depending on the quality of the essay. *Due no later than 12/6*. No exceptions to this deadline will be permitted.

COURSE TIMETABLE:

MODULE I	Course Introduction & Before the Nazi Era
(8/24-9/21)	
Unit 1 (8/24-8/30; approx. 3 hours of work)	Orientation; What is the Holocaust? What's in a name? Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the syllabus • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. ix-22 • Hochstadt, pp. 1-6. View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 1: What is the Holocaust?</i> • <i>Video: "The Cross and the Star: Jews, Christians, and the Holocaust,"</i> a film by John J. Michalezyk (NY: First Run Features, 1992). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Available on <i>Netflix</i> or at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call # BM645.H6 C76 1992 or NVS 567) <i>NOTE: This is the 2nd of two features—make sure to watch the correct film!</i> Activity: Online quiz #S1: The Cross and the Star
Unit 2 (8/31-9/6; ~2 hrs.)	Judaism and Early Christianity Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 25-47 • Hochstadt, pp. 7-21 • Gospel excerpts (.pdf). View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 2: The Jew as Outsider</i> Activity: Online quiz #S2: Introductory Readings (R&R, pp. ix-47; H., pp. 1-21)
Unit 3 (9/7-9/13; ~3 hrs.)	Antisemitism Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 49-70 • Littell, pp. 24-43 (.pdf) • Hochstadt, pp. 22-35 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 3: Christian Antisemitism from the Gospels to the Enlightenment</i> • <i>Visual Culture Lecture #1: Antisemitism in Europe, Francis. X. Luca, Senior Librarian, Wolfsonian-FIU</i>

Activity:

- **Online quiz #S3: Littell .pdf and Hochstadt, pp. 22-35**
- **BEGIN Discussion Board Forum #1: select an item from Dr. Luca's lecture and post about it; concludes Mon. 9/21**

Unit 4 (9/14-9/21; ~5 hrs.)	The Failure of Emancipation and the Rise of Nazism Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 71-117 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 4: The Jewish Question</i> Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMPLETE Discussion Board Forum #1: select an item from Dr. Luca's lecture and post about it; closes Mon. 9/21 • Essay #1 due by Sun. 9/20 (recommended)
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MODULE II (9/21-11/8)	During the Nazi Era
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Unit 5 (9/21-9/27; ~5 hrs.)	Towards The Final Solution Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 121-142 • Hochstadt, pp. 36-84 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 5: Towards the "Final Solution"</i> • <i>Online Lecture 6: Kristallnacht & The St. Louis</i> • <i>Special Online Lecture: The 75th Anniversary of the Voyage of the St. Louis, Panel Discussion at the JMOF-FIU</i> Activity: Online quiz #S4: Hochstadt, pp. 36-84
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Unit 6 (9/28-10/4; ~3 hrs.)	The Final Solution Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 143-166 • Hochstadt, pp. 85-178 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 7: War and the "Final Solution" to the Jewish Question</i> Activity: Online quiz #S5: Hochstadt, pp. 85-178
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Unit 7 (10/5-10/11; ~2 hrs.)	Industrialized Murder Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 167-213 • Hochstadt, pp. 179-221 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 8: The Mechanics of Murder</i>
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Unit 8 (10/12-10/18; ~2 hrs.)	Propaganda View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visual Culture Lecture #2: Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism</i> • <i>Online Exhibition, "Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism"</i> Activity: BEGIN Discussion Board Post #2: select an item from Dr. Stier's lecture on "Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism or from the Online Exhibition and post about it; closes Sun., 11/1
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Unit 9 (10/19-10/25; ~2 hrs.)	The End of World War II Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 217-247 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 9: Victims, Resisters, Survivors</i>
Unit 10 (10/26-11/1; ~5 hrs.)	“Life” During the Holocaust Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiesel View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 10: The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part I)</i> • <i>Online Lecture 11: The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part II)</i> • Special Online Lecture: Dr. Alan Rosen, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem Activity: COMPLETE Discussion Board Post #2: select an item from Dr. Stier’s lecture on “Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism or from the Online Exhibition and post about it; closes Sun., 11/1
Unit 11 (11/2-11/8; ~4 hrs.)	“Survival” During the Holocaust Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levi View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 12: The Jewish Experience: Primo Levi</i> Activity: Essay #2, due by Sun. 11/8 (recommended)
<hr/> Module III After the Nazi Era (11/9-12/9)	
Unit 12 (11/9-11/15; ~3 hrs.)	Testimony Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hochstadt, pp. 222-54 View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>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)</i>
Activity: Online quiz #S6: “Witness” and Hochstadt, pp. 222-254.	
Unit 13 (11/16-11/22; ~4 hrs.)	Theology and Branding Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 249-290; 327-354 • Katz typology View: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Online Lecture 13: A Broken Covenant?</i> • <i>Online Lecture 14: God after Auschwitz</i> • <i>Visual Culture Lecture #3: Branding the Nazis, Steve Heller, School of Visual Arts</i>

Activity:

- **BEGIN Discussion Board Post #3: select an item from Mr. Heller's lecture and post about it; closes Sun., 12/6**
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Unit 14 Commemoration**(11/23-11/29; ~3 hrs.)****Read:**

- Magilow

View:

- **Video:** "Paper Clips," directed by Elliot Berlin and Joe Fab (NY: Hart Sharp Video, 2006) o Available on Netflix or at GL 5th floor reserve desk (call# D804.3 .P3747 2006)

Activity:

- **Extra Credit essay (if desired: due by 12/6)**
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Unit 15 Ethics after the Holocaust and Course Conclusions**(11/30-12/9; ~6 hrs.)****Read:**

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

View:

- *Online Lecture 15: Ending Auschwitz*

Activity:

- **Online quiz #S7: Online and Final Readings (R&R, pp. 249-90 and 327-77; H., pp. 255-99)**
 - **COMPLETE Discussion Board Post #3: select an item from Mr. Heller's lecture and post about it; closes Sun., 12/6**
 - **SUBMIT any remaining essays by 12/6**
 - **Term Identification Exam, available 11/30; due by 12/9**
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- THIS syllabus outlines everything you need to know for this course. Please make sure you have read it through carefully.