

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**REL 3194: The Holocaust**

Spring 2020 Certified Hybrid course (1/2 online, 1/2 in-person)

**Face-to-face class meetings on Mondays, 1:00pm-2:15pm in PC 214**

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### ***Welcome to REL 3194!***

***Course Description:*** The Holocaust, the systematic destruction of Jews and Jewish life by the Nazi regime prior to and during World War II, was a watershed event in human history that irrevocably impacted our thinking about humanity, including but not limited to how we reflect on religion, war, society, ethics, morality, culture, and more. The Holocaust was an assault on Jews, Judaism, and Jewish identity, but it was more than that as well; learning about the Holocaust, its causes and its legacies, teaches us much about the world in which we live today. In light of recent increases in antisemitism, hate speech, and racially motivated violence, understanding the past and its impact on the present has become even more essential.

This hybrid, “flipped-classroom” course aims to answer many questions people have about the Holocaust—not only what it was, but what led to it and how the world dealt with its aftermath. A specific focus of the course is on relations between Jews and Christians before, during, and after the Nazi era, across time and space in regions such as the Middle East, Europe, and the US. 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 class is also infused with material from The Wolfsonian-FIU collection, which provides critical visual and material cultural background to and context for the rise of Nazism: a clear understanding of the power of images and visual branding is critical for comprehending Nazi ideology.

The subject of the course is engaging, disturbing, and taxing: sensitivity and thoughtfulness are essential throughout! Since this is a hybrid format course, much of the coursework is done outside of the classroom at the student’s own pace on a week-to-week basis (the week runs Monday-Sunday): we meet once a week on Mondays for class discussions and active learning exercises that put each week’s materials in context and provide forums for questions, comments, review and engagement.

*This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts toward your FIU Global Learning graduation requirement.*

**Course Goals:**

By the end of this course,

- Students will feel they have an impact on increasing tolerance in the world.
- Students will learn about the Holocaust and also learn that the factors that led to it continue to this day.
- Students will become more empathetic.
- Students will learn to think visually as well as verbally.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Understand the Holocaust in greater historical, religious, and cultural context
- Recognize prejudice, intolerance, and hate and formulate a concrete action plan in response.
- Describe long-standing causes and lingering effects of the Holocaust and antisemitism and relate them to today's world.
- Examine their own biases, learn to overcome them, take time to become more self-aware, and demonstrate that self-awareness.
- Decipher textual, verbal, and visual examples of Holocaust propaganda, correlate them to contemporary examples, and be ready to combat them.

**Global Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Identify the complex interconnections among historical, religious, social, political, and cultural factors that led to the Holocaust (Global Awareness).
- Analyze from several perspectives the experiences of people involved in the Holocaust (Global Perspective).
- Reflect on and respond to the legacies of the Holocaust and its global impact in the present and their own lives (Global Engagement).

**Organization:** *The course is divided into **five** modules.*

- *Welcome, Orientation, and Introduction:* We discuss the general background of the Holocaust as well as key questions and theories central to the course (week 1).
- *Before the Nazi Era:* We discuss the historical and religious issues and events that led up to the Holocaust (weeks 2-4).
- *Nazism and the "Final Solution:"* We discuss life under the Nazi regime and in the ghettos and camps (weeks 5-8).
- *The End of WWII: Ethics and Experience:* We discuss Jewish and Christian responses to the Holocaust and issues relating to ethics, resistance, and survival (weeks 9-11).
- *After the Nazi Era: Reflecting on the Holocaust:* 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 (weeks 12-14).

**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.**

**Additional Required Readings:**

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

**Assignments and grading:** All students will complete the following:

1. **Seven** quizzes (through FIU Online/Canvas): the material covered in each quiz is indicated in the course schedule; each quiz is meant to be taken at the end of the week in which it appears; quizzes close on *Sundays at 11:59 pm* to allow sufficient time to learn the material and for multiple attempts. (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 soon after completing the week's readings and videos; if you are not satisfied with your grade, review the material and take it again over the weekend. You may attempt each quiz up to three times, but the questions will vary with each attempt. The *lowest quiz grade* will be discarded, and the six remaining quizzes will apply to the final course grade; each remaining quiz is worth 3 points out of your final grade; totaling **18 points of your final course grade.** **Respondus Lockdown Browser is required for the quizzes.**
2. **A take-home essay exam** on the "Jewish Question" of about 1000 words, to be submitted to turnitin.com via Canvas (no separate turnitin registration required), concludes Module 1 of the course and is due by 11:59pm on Feb. 2. It is worth **10 points out of your final course grade and will be graded according to the Essay Rubric (Global Awareness assessment).** Additional instructions will be provided.
3. **A comparative essay assignment** on human relationships during the Holocaust of about 1500 words, to be submitted to turnitin.com via Canvas (no separate turnitin registration required), concludes Module 3 of the course and is due by 11:59pm on Mar. 29. The entire assignment is worth **18 points out of your final course grade; the essay portion (15 points) will be graded according to the Essay Rubric (Global Perspective assessment).** **A hybrid class dialogue/discussion precedes the essay deadline and is worth 3 points.** Additional instructions will be provided.

4. **Visual Culture Discussions:** The course includes two required special recorded lectures addressing Visual Culture and the Holocaust (plus a third optional recorded lecture): students will view these lectures and post to the Visual Culture Discussions (VCD) over the course of the semester, as indicated in the course calendar. There are three sequential parts of the VCD; each part lasts three weeks, and students are expected to post and reply multiple times in each part. The entire Visual Culture Discussions assignment is worth **20 points out of your final course grade (6 points each for VCD parts 1 and 2 and 8 points for VCD part 3) and will be graded according to the Discussion Rubric (*Global Engagement assessment*)**. There will be no extensions on the Visual Culture Discussions final deadline, and failure to post by the interim deadlines will result in reduced scores on the rubric.
5. **A Final Examination** during the scheduled Final Exam time block consisting of a series of paragraph-long term identifications, based on a pre-distributed study guide. **The Final Exam is worth 20 points out of your final course grade.** Additional instructions will be provided.
6. **Class participation and attendance: 15 points out of your final course grade.** Class meets 13 times over the course of the semester; most of the class meetings include at least one active learning exercise, and student participation in these class meetings and exercises is critical for attaining the learning objectives. Students will receive *1 point* for on-time attendance and active participation in classroom activities for each class meeting, up to a maximum of 12 points (allowing for one absence with no grade reduction); students will receive a  $\frac{1}{2}$  point per instance for tardy arrival (5 minutes late or more) or early departure or otherwise disruptive behavior. The balance of the points in this category will be assessed at the discretion of the professor based on the quality of student classroom engagement.
7. **Evidence of attendance in at least one outside Holocaust-related lecture, film, or event:** a schedule of FIU's 4<sup>th</sup> annual Holocaust & Genocide Awareness Week and other available events will be provided: the evidence of attendance is due by 11:59pm April 19; **2 points out of your final course grade (*GL co-curricular activity*)**; additionally, there will be opportunities to add up to 3 more extra credit points—see below.

**Total points available: 103**, but the final grade will be assessed based on a score out of 100.

### **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.

93-100 A 90-92 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.
88-89 B+ 83-87 B 80-82 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.
77-79 C+ 70-76 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.
60-69 D	"Ds" are awarded for barely passing to below average work, usually riddled with errors and seriously deficient in fulfilling the assignment.
< 60 F	"Fs" are awarded for unacceptable work.

**Course Regulations and Expectations:**

- READINGS must be completed and ONLINE LECTURES viewed during the week they are assigned. Careful preparation of readings and attention to lectures are essential for comprehension, participation, and overall performance!
- POLICIES ON DUE DATES:
  - *Online quizzes* are designed to be attempted after class and after completing the assigned readings and videos each week as indicated in the class schedule; they remain open through the weekend to allow students to catch up on the material; all quizzes close at 11:59 pm on Sundays unless otherwise noted and **will not be re-opened** for any reason; quizzes can always be attempted early if the student will not have Internet access over the weekend the quiz is due. Students not completing quizzes by closing time will receive a zero for that quiz. *Reminder:* The lowest quiz score out of the seven required quizzes will be dropped from the final grade calculation.
  - *The Visual Culture Discussions* constitute a cumulative assignment in three parts: failure to meet the interim VCD deadlines will result in lower rubric scores, and the final closing date will not be extended for any reason.
  - The *Take-Home Essay Exam* and the *Comparative Essay Assignment* will remain open past the due date but will be penalized **one half letter grade** (five points) for each *day* late, or part thereof, up to a *maximum* 25-point deduction. Students failing to submit either assignment by the last class meeting on April 13 will receive a grade of 0 for that assignment.
- 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>.
- NOTE concerning cellphone and other device use: it is expected that electronic devices will be used in the classroom for class-related purposes only; it is disrespectful to the professor and your colleagues to use them for other purposes during class. Students found using such devices during class will receive a warning; repeated inappropriate use will result in confiscation of the device for the remainder of the class period.
- FIU's CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN WRITING offers free services. Take advantage of them! See <http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>
- EXTRA CREDIT (beyond what is already built into the course) is always available for the diligent student. You may either write a 2-3 page essay about the outside event you attended to meet the co-curricular requirement outlined above, or you may attend and write about a different event; either must be pre-approved. Further guidelines will be provided. *Extra credit essays are due no later than April 19.* No exceptions to this deadline will be permitted.

**Course Calendar** (subject to change):

**Module 0: Welcome, Orientation & Introduction**

*Key Concepts: What is the Holocaust? What kinds of evidence do we have access to concerning the Holocaust?*

*Key Skills: How to ask questions. How to access course materials. How to develop your own awareness. What are primary and secondary sources?*

**Week 1 (Jan. 6-12): Welcome, Orientation & Introduction**

**In Class Jan. 6:**

- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to Canvas and the hybrid modality
- *Class activity:* Icebreaker

**Out of Class (complete by Jan. 12):**

**Read:**

- Browse the textbooks
- Review the syllabus
- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. ix-22
- Hochstadt, pp. 1-6.

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 1:* What is the Holocaust?
- *Video:* "The Cross and the Star: Jews, Christians, and the Holocaust," a film by John J. Michalezyk (NY: First Run Features, 1992).
  - Also available at GL 5<sup>th</sup> floor reserve desk (call # BM645.H6 C76 1992 or NVS 567) **NOTE: 2<sup>nd</sup> of two features—make sure to watch the correct film!**

**Assessments:**

- Complete entrance questionnaire: Who, what, when, where, why, and how of the Holocaust (class handout).
- **Online quiz #1 on "The Cross and the Star" (remains open until end of week 2)**

**Module 1: Before the Nazi Era**

*Key Concepts: What is classical antisemitism? What is the "Jewish Question?"*

*Key Skills: How to recognize antisemitism in religious texts and material/visual culture. How to categorize the factors that led to the rise of Nazism.*

**Week 2 (Jan. 13-19): Judaism and Early Christianity**

**In Class Jan. 13:**

- Recap: brief orientation review; collect entrance questionnaires
- New student introductions
- *Class activity:* examining the Gospels

**Out of Class (complete by Jan. 19):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 25-47
- Hochstadt, pp. 7-21
- Gospel excerpts (.pdf).

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 2: The Jew as Outsider*

**Assessment:**

- **Online quiz #2 on Introductory Readings** (R&R, ix-47; Hochstadt, 1-21)

**Week 3 (Jan. 21-27): Classic Antisemitism**

**NO Class Jan. 20 (MLK Day)**

**Out of Class (complete by Jan. 26):**

**Read:**

- 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*
- *Visual Culture Lecture #1* (first 24 slides): Antisemitism in Europe, Dr. Francis. X. Luca, Senior Librarian, Wolfsonian-FIU

**Assessments:**

- **Online quiz #3 on Littell .pdf and Hochstadt, pp. 22-35**
- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 1** (initial post)

**Week 4 (Jan. 27-Feb. 2): The Failure of Emancipation and the Rise of Nazism**

**NOTE: FIU's Holocaust & Genocide Awareness Week is Jan 27-31**

**In Class Jan. 27:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity*: examining the history and different components of religious antisemitism
- *Special Event*: 2-4pm in GC 355: FIU's Annual Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony

**Out of Class (complete by Feb. 2):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 71-117

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 4: The Jewish Question*

**Assessment:**

- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 1** (replies to initial posts)
- **Take-Home Essay Exam due by Feb. 2**

**Module 2: Nazism and the "Final Solution"**

*Key Concepts: What is racial antisemitism and how was it expressed? What was the "Final Solution?" Why did the global community fail to help European Jewry?*

*Key Skills: Historical and geopolitical awareness related to WWII; how to recognize antisemitism in Nazi culture.*

**Week 5 (Feb. 3-9): Towards the Final Solution**

**In Class Feb. 3:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity*: Nuremberg laws exercise

**Out of Class (complete by Feb. 9):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 121-142
- Hochstadt, pp. 36-84

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 5*: Towards the "Final Solution"
- *Online Lecture 6*: Kristallnacht & The St. Louis
- **OPTIONAL**: *Online Lecture*: The 75th Anniversary of the Voyage of the St. Louis, Panel Discussion at the JMOF-FIU

**Assessments:**

- **Online quiz #4 on Hochstadt, pp. 36-84**
- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 1** (*final posts and replies due by Feb. 9*)

**Week 6 (Feb. 10-16): Propaganda and Visual Culture**

**In Class Feb. 10:**

- VCD check-in
- *Class activity*: How to read a picture

**Out of Class (complete by Feb. 16):**

**Read:**

- *Review Visual Culture Lecture #1 PDF*
- *Online Exhibition*, "Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism"

**View:**

- *Visual Culture Lecture #1 (remainder of lecture)*: Antisemitism in Europe, Dr. Francis. X. Luca
- *Visual Culture Lecture #2*: Race and Visual Culture under National Socialism

**Assessment:**

- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 2** (*initial post*)

**Week 7 (Feb. 17-23): The Final Solution**

**In Class Feb. 17:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity*: Eugenics exercise

**Out of Class (complete by Feb. 23):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 143-166
- Hochstadt, pp. 85-178

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 7*: War and the "Final Solution" to the Jewish Question

**Assessments:**

- **Online quiz #5 on Hochstadt, pp. 85-178**
- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 2** (initial replies and follow-up posts)

**Week 8 (Mar. 2-8): Industrialized Murder**

**In Class Mar. 2:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity:* Exploring Nazi euphemisms

**Out of Class (complete by Mar. 8):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 167-213
- Hochstadt, pp. 179-221

**View:**

- Online Lecture 8: The Mechanics of Murder

**Assessment:**

- **Visual Culture Discussion, Part 2** (final posts and replies due by Mar. 8)

**Module 3: The End of WWII: Ethics and Experience**

*Key Concepts: What do the terms "perpetrator, victim, bystander, resistor, and survivor" mean?*

*What were the different experiences of these subject groups?*

*Key Skills: Critical thinking on ethics during the Holocaust.*

**Week 9 (Mar. 9-15): The End of World War II**

**In Class Mar. 9:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity:* Defining complicity

**Out of class (complete by Mar. 15):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 217-247
- Wiesel, *Night*

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 9:* Victims, Resisters, Survivors
- *Online Lecture 10:* The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part I)

**Assessment:**

- **Online Dialogue for Comparative Essay Assignment** (at least one thoughtful post)

**Week 10 (Mar. 16-22): "Life" During the Holocaust**

**In Class Mar. 16:**

- Recap: questions on previous weeks' material?
- *Class activity:* Why is This *Night* Different?

**Out of class (complete by Mar. 22):**

**Read:**

- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 11: The Jewish Experience: Elie Wiesel (part II)*
- *Online Lecture 12: The Jewish Experience: Primo Levi*

**Assessment:**

- ***Online Dialogue for Comparative Essay Assignment*** (at least one reply and one follow-up post)

**Week 11 (Mar. 23-Mar. 29): Survival in Auschwitz**

**In Class Mar. 23:**

- Special Guest Lecture: Prof. Steven Katz, Boston University, "A Day in Auschwitz"

**Out of class (complete by Mar. 29):**

**Assessment:**

- ***Comparative Essay Assignment due by 11:59 pm, Sunday, 3/29***

**Module 4: After the Nazi Era: Reflecting on the Holocaust**

*Key Concepts: What is the range of religious and humanistic reflection on the Holocaust? What are the lingering and continuing effects of the Holocaust?*

*Key Skills: Recognizing racial propaganda today and relating it to historical examples of antisemitism.*

**Week 12 (Mar. 30-Apr. 5): Testimony**

**In Class Mar. 30:**

- Check-in
- *Class activity: What is testimony?*

**Out of class (complete by Apr. 5):**

**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)
  - Also available on *YouTube* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leqkGOqyWMI>) or at GL 5<sup>th</sup> floor reserve desk (call # RESAV 170.2)
- ***OPTIONAL: Visual Culture Lecture #3: Steven Heller, "Branding the Nazis"***

**Assessments:**

- ***Online quiz #6 on "Witness" and Hochstadt, pp. 222-254.***
- ***Visual Culture Discussion, Part 3 (initial post)***

**Week 13 (Apr. 6-12): Theology**

**In Class Apr. 6:**

- Check-in
- *Class activity:* God-talk after the Holocaust

**Out of class (complete by Apr. 12):**

**Read:**

- Rubenstein & Roth, pp. 249-290; 327-354
- Katz typology (.pdf)

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 13:* A Broken Covenant?
- *Online Lecture 14:* God after Auschwitz

**Assessments:**

- ***Visual Culture Discussion, Part 3:*** (initial replies and follow-up posts)

**Week 14 (Apr. 13-19): Ethics after the Holocaust**

**In Class Apr. 13:**

- *Class activity:* Final Exam Review
- **Submit any outstanding assignments by April 13**

**Out of class (complete by Apr. 19):**

**Read:**

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

**View:**

- *Online Lecture 15:* Ending Auschwitz

**Assessments:**

- **Online quiz #7 on Online (see above) and Final Readings (R&R, pp. 249-90 and 327-77; Hochstadt, pp. 255-99)**
- ***Visual Culture Discussion, Part 3:*** (final posts and replies due by Apr. 19)
- **Submit evidence of attendance at outside event** (and any Extra Credit essays) **by April 19**

**Week 15 (Apr. 20-25)**

***Final Exam: during assigned final exam time block (likely on 4/20, but check my.fiu)***

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