**The Holocaust and Memory**

**FYSM-147**

**M/W: 1:30 – 2:45 Prof. Jason Doerre Location: TBA Office: Seabury 009 jason.doerre@trincoll.edu Office Hours: M/W 3-4; by appointment**

**Peer Mentor: Emma Wellins**

**emma.wellins@trincoll.edu**

**Course Description**

This course will explore the origins of anti-Semitism in Central Europe, the Holocaust, and the memorialization of genocide in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Beginning with the rise of anti-Semitism, this course will cover what led to the Holocaust and examine the trajectory of this human tragedy. Some topics will include daily life in ghettos and concentration camps, the lead up to the Final Solution, resistance, and the memory of the Holocaust in museums, monuments, and culture. The course materials will include non-fictional texts, literature, films, art and more.

**Course Goals**

**Required Texts (available at the Trinity Bookstore)**

Most of the readings and films will be available via Moodle for free, but there are two required books for purchase:

* Peter Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2017. ISBN: 9780393355468.
* Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York: Simon and Schuster. ISBN: 9780684826806.

**Course Requirements**

**Readings (approx. 5 - 7 hours per week)**

For each class you are expected to have read the posted selections carefully and in their entirety **prior** to the beginning of class. (The readings are listed next to the day to which they correspond. Most readings will be available on Moodle as PDFs)

**Class Discussion/Participation/Daily Assignments**

As a seminar, this course is completely dependent on participation from all of you. This means honest and open engagement. There are no single right answers, and by hearing from each other we stand to get a more well-rounded and informed knowledge of the subject at hand. A full 35% of your course grade will depend on your willingness to speak in class and share your ideas. Don’t be afraid to speak up or to pose a question to the class! (If you are shy or have difficulty doing so, please see me and we can discuss strategies for making participation more comfortable for you.) The participation will also include short writing exercises, question preparation, Moodle posts and more that will be graded only on a “complete” or “incomplete” basis.

**Attendance/Absence**

Intellectual engagement requires you to be present. Therefore, more than one unexcused absence will affect your grade. As it goes, things happen, people get sick, other emergencies might arise. Regardless, let me know in advance if something comes up so that your absence can be excused. Whether or not your absence is excused, I require that you write a one-page reaction to the readings or viewings that you could not discuss that day that show me you read/watched the material and put some thought into it. Failure to do so will be penalized. I expect these to be submitted by Friday of that week.

In other words—*don’t miss class*. **Note: this is an in-person class, and remote attendance will not be allowed.**

Note on COVID: This class is conducted in-class only, unless the College requires us all to go on line. The course will not be taped and there is no hybrid option. If COVID or other major illness requires an absence of more than one class, please work with me to make up the material when you return.

**Short Essays (2)**

These short essays will be spread out and will be thoughtful responses to questions. These should not be any less than 3 but not more than 5 pages to five pages, double-spaced. Grades based on both content and writing. You will be given a chance to revise one of these for a grade boost. You are strongly encouraged to visit the Writing Center.

**Final Research Paper**

Topics to be approved by Prof. Doerre. The topic should be about something related to the Holocaust but , or you may investigate more thoroughly another aspect of the trials we have already covered. You will submit a first draft of at least 5 pages and I will provide feedback during the last weeks of class. The end product will be 7 to 10 pages, double-spaced, with a bibliography of at least 3 scholarly sources.

**Final Paper Presentations**

In the last weeks of class everyone will present their final paper topics to the class. You should have some kind of a visual aid (i.e., PowerPoint etc.) and introduce your topic, why you are interested in it, what have you found, as well as your primary argument. Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes including time for group questions and answers at the end.

**Discussion Lead**

Each student will take part in a group-led discussion for one class. These groups will consist of three students and will work together to facilitate a class discussion about the readings. The leaders will formulate questions in advance, and hand them in to both Emma and me for feedback in advance of that class. During class, the leaders will use these questions, and follow-up questions, to help direct discussion and dig deeper into the issue. Our goal is not to arrive at a single view but to develop a fuller understanding of the issue in question, and ways people of different political perspectives might approach it. Emma and I will always be there to help guide the discussion – you are not alone!

The themes this course examines are difficult and sensitive; the discussions should address these complexities and sensitivities based on the readings and any other knowledge you might bring to the table. Remember, you are part of an intellectual collective, and you should press for clarification or explanation; there is usually more to say than the first response to a question. We will back you up!

This portion of our discussion should last at least half an hour, but it may go longer or shorter depending on your classmates’ participation. *So, everyone, remember you too will be a discussion leader, and help your colleagues out when it is their turn! Your participation is also being evaluated.*

The quality and thought behind your questions, and your effort, will determine your grade, which will count for 15 percent of your overall course grade.

**Grades**

Participation: 35%

Essay 1: 10%

Essay 2: 10%

Final Research Paper: 20%

Final Paper Presentation: 10%

Discussion Lead: 15%

**Technology**

You may use a laptop or tablet to access the readings, but all other devices are **strictly prohibited** in the classroom. No cell phones! You should only use your device to type notes and access the readings. If I see that you are using your device for other purposes, you will have to print out all the readings. Only after careful deliberation do I allow any electronic device to be used considering their potential to distract you from your studies.

**Academic Integrity**

All work you submit is expected to be of your own creation. If it becomes clear to me that this is not the case, you will fail the course.

**Special Accommodations**

Trinity College is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have approval for academic accommodations, please provide notification electronically using SARC Online during the first two weeks of the semester or a minimum of 10 days prior to utilizing your accommodations. Following notification, students are required to meet with faculty to further discuss implementation of accommodations. If you do not have approved accommodations, but have a disability requiring accommodations, or have questions about applying, please contact Joel Copperthite, Coordinator of Accessibility Resources, [joel.copperthite@trincoll.edu](mailto:joel.copperthite@trincoll.edu), 860-297-4025 or refer to the Student Accessibility Resources (SARC) website: <https://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/StudentAccessibilityResources/students>.

**The Writing Center**

You are encouraged to use the Writing Center, staffed by specially trained Writing Associates, to improve your writing—no matter your skill level. I suggest taking your writing projects to the Writing Center several times during the process of composing. To reserve an appointment via the online scheduling system use: https://trincoll.mywconline.com/ The main Writing Center is in room 109 of the English House at 115 Vernon Street. For more information about hours and Writing Associates, please visit: http://writingcenter.trincoll.edu. Drop-ins are welcome.

**Itinerary (subject to change, always refer to Moodle):**

**Introduction**

Friday, September 2:

* Personal Introductions
* Advising Sessions

**Why the Holocaust?**

Wednesday, September 7:

* Syllabus Overview
* What was the Holocaust? – reflection exercise
* *Night and Fog.* Dir. Alain Resnais, 1955. – In-class screening

Monday, September 12:

*\*\*Reminder that on Tuesday Sept. 13 Add/Drop Period for Classes Ends\*\**

* Peter Hayes, Ch.1 “Targets: Why the Jews?” in *Why*?, pgs. 1–35.

**The Rise of Nazism**

Wednesday, September 14:

* Peter Hayes, Ch.2 “Attackers: Why the Germans,” in *Why*?, pgs. 36–55.

**Antisemitism**

Monday, September 19:

[*Warning, this film is the most infamous ‘hate film’ produced by the Nazis. We will be watching it as evidence on how anti-Semitic propaganda was used*]

* Film: *Jud Süß.* Dir. Veit Harlan, 1940.

Wednesday, September 21:

* Visit to the Writing Center

**Fascism**

Monday, September 26:

* *Triumph of the Will*. Dir. Leni Riefenstahl, 1935.

**How Could Something Like the Holocaust Happen?**

Wednesday, September 28:

*\*\*\*First Papers Due\*\*\**

* Peter Hayes, Ch.3 “Escalation: Why Murder,” in *Why?*, pgs. 73–113
* Discussion Lead:

Monday, October 3:

* Library – Meet with Research Librarian

Wednesday, October 5:

* Peter Hayes, Ch.4 “Annihilation: Why this Swift and Sweeping,” in *Why?*, pgs. 114–160.
* Discussion Lead:

Monday, October 10:

*\*\*\*No Classes Trinity Days\*\*\**

**The Orchestration of Genocide**

Wednesday, October 12:

* Jasch and Kreutzmüller, *The Participants: The Men of the Wannsee Conference* (short excerpt)
* Film: *Conspiracy.* Dir. Frank Pierson, 2001.

**Who? The Victims and their Voices**

Monday, October 17:

* Peter Hayes, Ch.5 “Victims: Why Didn’t More Jews Fight Back More Often?”, in *Why?*, pgs. 176–217.
* Discussion Lead:

Wednesday, October 19:

* Film: *Stars.* Dir. Konrad Wolf, 1959.

Monday, October 24:

*\*\*\*Second Papers Due\*\*\**

* Peter Hayes, Ch.6 “Homelands: Why Did Survival Rates Diverge?”, in *Why?,* pgs. 218–258.
* Discussion Lead:

Wednesday, October 26:

*\*\*\*October 27, Common Hour Majors and Minors Fair\*\*\**

* Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

Monday, October 31:

*\*\*\*Advising Week – Schedule a Meeting\*\*\**

* Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

**The Holocaust Today**

*\*\*\*Meet to Discuss Final Paper Topics\*\*\**

Wednesday, November 2:

* Peter Hayes, Ch.8 “Aftermath: What Legacies, What Lessons?”, in *Why?*, pgs. 300–343.
* Discussion Lead:

**The Holocaust and the United States**

Monday, November 7:

*\*\*\*Registration Period Begins Nov. 7 – 15\*\*\**

* Ken Burns,  *The United States and the Holocaust.* 2 Episodes.

**The Dangers of Denial**

Wednesday, November 9:

* Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (excerpts)

**Memorializing the Holocaust**

Monday, November 14:

* James Young, *The Textures of Memory: The Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (excerpts)

**Germany and the Holocaust**

Wednesday, November 16:

* Susan Neiman, *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil* (excerpts)

**Trivializing Tragedy?**

Monday, November 21:

* Film: *Jojo Rabbit.* Dir. Taika Waititi, 2019.

Wednesday, November 23:

*\*\*\*First Draft of Final Papers Due\*\*\**

*Thanksgiving Break – No Classes*

Monday, November 28:

* Final Thoughts

Wednesday, November 30:

* Presentations

Monday, December 5:

* Presentations

Wednesday, December 7:

* Presentations

Monday, December 12:

\*\*\**Last Day of Classes\*\*\**

* Presentations