

**Kingsborough Community College
of the City University of New York**

SYLLABUS

History 44: The Nazi Holocaust

INTRODUCTION:

This course examines the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe from the inception of the "Jewish Problem" at the end of the nineteenth century, through planning in the 1930s and implementation during World War II. The gruesome denouement of Nazi genocide will be placed into historical and political context by studying such issues as the Rise of the Nazi Party and the establishment of the legislative and bureaucratic machinery of mass murder. Moreover, through text and visual image, the effect of extermination on the Jewish victims will be examined in detail. Finally, the responses of bystanders within and without the Nazi sphere of influence will be addressed.

An additional goal of the course is to facilitate development of students' research and writing skills. In particular, the course emphasizes clear and concise writing, purposeful reading, and the development of a critical ability to assess the value of varied documents from a wide range of sources. To this end, the course requires two exams and a research paper dealing with any specific topic in the domain of the syllabus.

SPECIFIC LEARNING GOALS:

- To sensitize students to issues relating to human rights in our world by examining the clearest example available of gross violations of civilized norms.
- To familiarize students with the history of European Jewry: before, during, and after the catastrophe.
- To understanding the origins and impact of antisemitism as a form of mass hatred and stereotyping and the implications racism and totalitarianism in all their forms.

- To familiarize students with Jewish resistance to Nazi persecution.
- To sensitize students to the historical importance of the State of Israel as a guardian of Jewish security world-wide.
- To remind students – as free citizens of a democratic country – that eternal vigilance is needed to protect human rights throughout the world.
- To develop students' ability to analyze and communicate historical information effectively.
- To enable students to recognize differing historical perspectives.
- To aid students in obtaining deeper insight into the current global situation as it pertains to them individually and to all Americans collectively.
- To expose students to current events happening in the larger world in which we live.
- To develop students' confidence in handling issues they previously considered alien.
- To develop students' ability to communicate both orally and in writing.
- To introduce the students' to the wealth of information available in books, journals, and on the internet.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By taking this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the impact of antisemitism on nineteenth century politics and society after the emergence of the "Jewish Question."
- Understand the impact of World War I on the rise of Fascism, Nazism, and totalitarianism.
- Understand the stages and methods in the Nazi persecution of European Jewry.
- Understand the response of Jews and bystanders to persecution.
- Improve their analytical and critical thinking and writing skills.
- Overcome media-induced platitudes and politically motivated misuse of historical terminology seeking essentially propagandistic goals.

ASSESSMENT:

Assessment strategies for this course include:

- Classroom discussion of major issues presented in reading assignments
- Critical analysis of primary and secondary sources in class
- Debates over conflicting interpretation of historical issues

- A research paper and related projects
- An oral presentation relating to the topics of students' research
- Written examination and quizzes

EVALUATION:

Assessment activities being completed, a student shows success through

- Completion of the research project, showing analytical and organizational skills
- Participation in class discussion of historical or current topics
- Passing scores on examinations and quizzes

CLASS HOURS/CREDITS:

Three (3) weekly class hours / Three (3) credits

METHOD OF TEACHING:

A variety of methods are used, including (but not limited to): lecture, discussion, audio-visual presentations, oral report by students.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments from basic and advanced texts and primary source reader(s). A class presentation on the selected research topic and writing of a research paper. The specific combination of assignments is left to the discretion of the instructor and the size of the class.

TEXTBOOKS:

Saul S. Friedman. *A History of the Holocaust* (Valentine Mitchell, 2004)

Yitzhak Arad, et al (eds.). *Documents on the Holocaust* (University of Nebraska reprint, 2003)

Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (eds.). *The Holocaust and History* (Indiana University Press, 1998)

TOPICAL OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

I. Introduction

Berenbaum and Peck, Part I

II. Antisemitism

Friedman, Ch. 1-2

Arad, Docs. 1, 2

III. The Rise of the Nazis

Friedman, Ch. 3-5

Arad, Docs. 3-6

IV. The Persecution of German Jewry, 1933-1939

Friedman, Ch. 6-7

Arad, Docs. 7-58

V. From Persecution to Global War, 1939-1941

Friedman, Ch. 8

Arad, Docs. 59-65, 73-99

VI. Persecution in Ghettos and Camps

Friedman, Ch. 13, 30

Arad, Docs. 100-105, 107-110, 114-115

Berenbaum and Peck, Part 7

VII. Extermination, 1941-1945

Friedman, Ch. 15-16

Arad, Docs. 106, 169-195, 116-124

Berenbaum and Peck, Parts 4-6

VIII. The Geography of the Holocaust

Friedman, Ch. 9-11, 17, 19-21

Arad, Docs. 66-71, 127-133, 158-168, 205-213

IX. Resistance

Friedman, Ch. 18
 Arad, Docs. 125-126, 196-197, 134-57
 Berenbaum and Peck, Part 9

X. Jewish-Gentile Relations *In Exterminis*

Friedman, Ch. 22-23
 Berenbaum and Peck, Part 10

XI. Rescue

Friedman, Ch. 12, 24, 27-29
 Berenbaum and Peck, Part 8

XII. Aftermath and Recovery

Friedman, Ch. 31-32
 Berenbaum and Peck, Part 11

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY:**I. General and Reference**

- Bauer, Yehuda. *Rethinking the Holocaust*
 Ben-Sasson, Haim H. (ed.). *A History of the Jewish People*
 Edelheit, Abraham J. and Hershel Edelheit. *History of the Holocaust: A Handbook and Dictionary*
 Edelheit, Hershel and Abraham J. Edelheit (eds.). *A World in Turmoil: An Integrated Chronology of the Holocaust and World War II*
 Friedman, Philip. *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust*
 Gilbert, Martin. *Atlas of the Holocaust*
 —. *Atlas of Jewish History*
 Goldstein, Joseph. *Jewish History in Modern Times*
 Gutman, Israel (editor in chief). *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*
 Hilberg, Raul. *The Destruction of the European Jews*, revised edition. 3 volumes
 Kriwaczek, Paul.. *Yiddish Civilization: The Rise and Fall of a Forgotten Nation*
 Marrus, Michael R. *The Holocaust in History*