**HST 392: History of the Holocaust**

Spring 2021

**Instructor:** Dr. Amy Simon (she/her) **Email:** simonamy@msu.edu

**Class meeting time:** Tuesday/Thursday 10:20- 11:40am\*\*

**Dr. Simon’s Office hours:** Wednesday 3:00pm-4:30pm

**My Zoom “room”:** To access this “room” where I will hold all meetings, sign in and search for my name in the James Madison College directory here: <https://jmc.msu.edu/zoom/>

\*\*Note: This asynchronous class provides learning materials and requirements for interaction with faculty and other students, including deadlines for completion of learning objectives and testing. Classes will be held as Asynchronous. There will be regular individual and small group check-in's on Tuesday/Thursday from 10:20-11:40am.

Final Paper Due Date/Time: Friday, April 30 2021, 9:45am

* This course deals with one of the most horrific examples of mass murder in human history, the Holocaust. This event was carried out by hundreds of thousands of people with multiple motivations, and resulted in the extermination of six million Jewish and five million non-Jewish people throughout the whole European continent. Examining these events will not be easy. You will be expected to see, hear, and read about the experiences of Holocaust victims throughout the class, as well as examine the motivations of their perpetrators. This will be both emotionally and intellectually challenging, but I hope that what you learn in this class will be worth the effort.
* This class seeks to *expand your knowledge* of the origins, character and impact of the Holocaust. Although this class will largely focus on the most systematic element of Nazi murder – the killing of European Jews – the course will also examine other facets of Nazi racial killings, notably the targeting of the mentally and physically handicapped, gypsies, homosexuals, political prisoners, and others deemed racially “subhuman” by the Nazis.
* This class will also encourage you to *engage in historical analysis*. In particular, you should gain an understanding of the domestic and international forces that helped generate the Holocaust, as well as the experience and responses of those targeted by Nazi policies. You will achieve this through a deep investigation of *primary and secondary* *sources* (documents, interviews etc.).
* This class will also enhance your *written communication skills*, through working to construct coherent, reasoned arguments in short writing assignments, your in-class exams, and your final essay/project.

# Graded Assignments

**All deadlines will be on Fridays before midnight. You may submit your work anytime during the week before the Friday night deadline.**

All written assignments must be typed and double-spaced in a standard font with 1-inch margins. Please make sure to review, revise and proof your work carefully.

## *Required Meetings:* **10 points** each.Each student must meet with me 5 times over the course of the semester during the scheduled class time. I will circulate a sign-up sheet at the start of the semester. We will meet in small groups depending on each student’s schedule. I will pose questions around which to structure our meetings and post them online throughout the semester.

## *Reading Reaction*: **24 points** each.You will turn in **three** of these writing assignments over the course of the semester. They should be 600-1000 words in length (2-3 pages, typed, double-spaced). They are intended to gauge your reading comprehension as well as your personal reactions to the assigned texts. Guidelines and a rubric for these assignments will be posted on D2L.

## *Online Discussion:* **6 points each (60 points total).** Each week, before Friday night, you will post one reading question and at least two responses to other students’ reading questions on a discussion forum. This will be submitted and graded through PackBack (on D2L). You will receive credit for open-ended, content-driven, high quality reading questions and responses. I will engage with the discussion once a week, responding to the board from the previous week on Mondays. You must complete **10** over the course of the semester to receive full credit.

## Packback Questions

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you canbe fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

### Packback Requirements:

Your participation on Packback will count toward 15% of your overall course grade.

There will be a Weekly Friday at 11:59PM ESTdeadline for submissions. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

* 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50, each worth 2pts of each assignment grade
* 2 Responses per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50, each worth 2pts of each assignment grade
* Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

**How to Register on Packback:**

An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don’t receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to https://questions.packback.co and clicking “Sign up for an Account”  
   Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
2. Then enter our class community’s lookup key into the “Looking to join a community you don't see here?” section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.

Community Lookup Key: **7fa91699-85b6-4d3c-9fb0-eead58eb119b**

1. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

Packback may require a paid subscription. Refer to [www.packback.co/product/pricing](http://www.packback.co/product/pricing) for more information.

**How to Get Help from the Packback Team:**

If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at [help.packback.co](http://help.packback.co/). If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: [vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions](https://vimeo.com/163888277)

## *Thinking Question Paper:* **50 points.** In this paper, I would like for you to choose three of the “thinking questions” I posed in the weekly mini-lectures to answer, one each from three separate weeks. Please clearly indicate the week number of the mini-lectures, and list the exact questions you will answer. This paper should be 1000-1200 words in length (approximately 3-4 pages, typed, double-spaced). You should find a way to link the three questions and their answers in the paper. You will find guidelines and a rubric on D2L.

## *Final project*: **150 points.** This is a creative project that will be due at the time of the scheduled final exam. Partof your grade will come from your proposal and annotated bibliography. The majority of your grade will come from the paper/project itself. You will have the choice to write a multi-book, secondary source research paper on a topic of your choosing or complete a creative project that highlights your personal strengths. You will receive more information about this assignment in the coming weeks.

## *\*\*Extra Credit:* 5 points added to the Thinking Question Paper grade. You will need to attend one of these virtual Jewish Studies events and write a **500 word personal** reaction to the event to be turned in on D2L by April 30.

Finifter Panel on *The Holocaust in Greece*, Tuesday, March 23, 12:30-2:30pm

Panel and Book Discussion of *Wandering Jews: Global Jewish Migration*, Tuesday, March 30, 4:30-6:30pm

Rabin/Brill Holocaust Lecture, Dr. Diana Dumitru: “Neighbors in Difficult Times: Jews and Gentiles in the Borderlands of the Soviet Union and Romania during the Holocaust,” Thursday, April 8, 12:30-2:00pm

*The total number of points you can earn over the course of the semester is 382 (plus 5 extra credit points). You can calculate your percentage to get your grade:*

# Grades (You will receive a rubric for each particular assignment)

4.0 (90-100) Exceptional Work

3.5 (85-89) Excellent Work

3.0 (80-84) Good Work

2.5 (75-79) Novice Work

2.0 (70-74) Developing Work

1.0 (below 65) Insufficient Work

Work which is of such poor quality that it cannot be awarded a passing grade. It will demonstrate complete inability to understand or to engage with the assignment, an absence of critical treatment, and poor presentation. Or, work which does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment (ie. page length).

# Due Dates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Week ending February 5 | Fascism Reading Reaction |
| Week ending February 26 | Thinking Question Paper |
| Week ending March 19 | Sierakowiak Reading Reaction |
| Week ending March 26 | Final Paper/Project proposal and bibliography |
| Week ending April 9 | Levi Reading Reaction |
| April 30 | Final project/paper |

# Academic Integrity

From the MSU handbook:

“The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

* claim or submit the academic work of another as one’s own.
* procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
* complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
* allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
* alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
* fabricate or falsify data or results.”

Plagiarism means knowingly, or by carelessness or negligence, representing as one's own in any academic exercise the words, ideas, works of art or computer-generated information and images of someone else. For example:

* Turning in as your own, work done in whole or in part by someone else, or
* Paraphrasing or copying material from a written source, including the Internet, without footnoting or referencing it in a paper, or
* Copying material from a written source, including the Internet, without using quotation marks to indicate wording that is not yours, or
* Turning in a paper obtained at least in part from a term paper “mill” or website, or
* Turning in a paper copied at least in part from another student’s paper, whether or not that student is currently taking the same course.

The MSU policy on plagiarism and additional information about academic honesty is also available through the MSU Office of the Ombudsman: <https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html#integrity> If you have any questions about academic honesty after reviewing this information, please consult with me.

If I find that you have committed an act of academic misconduct, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment and will be reported to MSU. If you are not sure if you have plagiarized something in your work, **please ask me** for help before you turn in the assignment.

# Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities are provided academic accommodations through the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities in 120 Bessey Hall, 353-9642, [rcpd@msu.edu](mailto:rcpd@msu.edu). If you need academic accommodations, please let me know your specific needs by the second week of classes so that I can work with you effectively. If you are unclear as to what constitutes a disability or what help you may be entitled to, please talk with me or someone at the Resource Center.

# Resources

## Office Hours

My regular office hours are listed above. They will all take place over Zoom and will be open to everyone—just pop in using my Zoom “room.” I will use the waiting room to allow in students on a first-come, first-served basis. If you need to meet with me outside of those times, please schedule via Calendly using this link: <https://calendly.com/simonamy>

## MSU Writing Center

You can schedule an appointment with the MSU Writing Center whose consultants can help you with any part of your writing process. Please visit <https://writing.msu.edu/> for more information or to schedule an appointment.

## MSU Counseling and Psychiatric Services

MSU has a growing number of counseling services to help you cope with any issues that you may be dealing with throughout your time here. Please use these services and know that the faculty and staff at MSU are here to help you in any way that we can.

\*\*\*CAPS is providing remote crisis services 24/7/365. Students can call 517-355-8270 and press “1” at the prompt to speak with a crisis counselor. Other prompt options are available for those not in crisis.

For all counseling services, go to:

<https://caps.msu.edu/>

## Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

• Visit the MSU Help site at <http://help.msu.edu>

• Visit the Desire2Learn (D2L) Help Site at <http://help.d2l.msu.edu>

• Call the MSU IT Service Desk at (517)432-6200, (844)678-6200, or e-mail at ithelp@msu.edu

# Religious Observance Policy

It is the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith.  
  
The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors. For any religious observance adjustments you need during the semester, please just let me know and we will work it out.

# University Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Assault

All staff and faculty at MSU must report incidents they learn about regarding relationship violence and sexual assault. This is in order to help victims get the assistance they need, and to help bring perpetrators to justice. Here is the University’s statement on mandatory reporting: “All University employees…are expected to promptly report relationship violence, stalking, and sexual misconduct that they observe or learn about and that involves a member of the University community (faculty, staff, or student) or which occurred at a University-sponsored event or on University property.”

To get help in the case of sexual assault, contact the MSU Sexual Assault Program:

* Call to set up an appointment 517-355-3551, 8:00am-5:00pm
* 24 hour crisis line: 517-372-6666
* <https://centerforsurvivors.msu.edu/>

# Classroom Policies:

## *Email:* Any time you send me an email, please put the course number in the subject line. This is an enormous help to me in sorting emails and responding to you in a timely manner. I will respond to your email within 24 hours during the week.

## *Late Work:* This applies to the writing assignments for this class. All assignments will be due by midnight on Friday the week they are assigned. If you need an extension for any reason, please email me. **All extensions will be approved,** but I need notice so that I can plan my grading to give everyone appropriate feedback.

## *Civility:* Especially because of the difficult nature of the topic we will be discussing, students must address each other and the professor with civility at all times, both in person and over email. This means addressing each other with respect, even in the process of engaging in academic debate, and never resorting to aggressive, offensive, or hostile language or behavior. Anyone who does not adhere to this expectation can expect to lose credit.

## *Q&A Board*: For general, logistical questions, please use the Q&A forum on D2L.  This will be a clearinghouse for all questions so that everyone in the class will benefit from the answers.  You can access it on D2L under Communication, Discussions, Q&A.

# Readings:

All required books are available for purchase from the Spartan Bookstore, many can be found for reduced prices on Amazon or Abebooks, and most are available online through the MSU the library and are also physically available there. Primary source readings and shorter articles will be posted on D2L. If you have circumstances that make it difficult to purchase the books or access them at university reserves, please let me know as I should be able to loan you some of these books.

## *Textbook:* Bergen, Doris. *War and Genocide.* New York and London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016. Third Edition (**You MUST use this edition of the book**)

ISBN: 9781442242289

You can find this book online through the MSU library at (limit of 3 simultaneous users): <http://catalog.lib.msu.edu/record=b13314460~S39a>

## Primary Sources:

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

ISBN: 9780684826806

You can find this book online through the MSU library at:

<http://catalog.lib.msu.edu/record=b13809761~S39a>

Sierakowiak, Dawid. *The Diary of Dawid Sierakowiak*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1996.

ISBN: 9780195122855

You can find this book online through the MSU library at (limit of 3 simultaneous users):

<http://catalog.lib.msu.edu/record=b10413710~S39a>

# Calendar of Classes and Reading Assignments:

\*\*NOTE: I will post weekly materials to D2L under Content. Each week will have its own module. For all instructions, readings, videos, and links for the week, go to the correct date. All materials will be posted by Tuesday morning at 10:20am.

**Pre-History and Context**

**Week 1** Jan. 11-15

*Topic:* Introduction to course: Syllabus

*Activities:* Complete online Holocaust knowledge survey, syllabus survey, and start of class questionnaire

\*\*NO ONLINE DISCUSSION THIS WEEK

**Week 2,** Jan. 18-22

*Topic 1:* Jewish History andHistorical antisemitism

*Watch Film: European Antisemitism from its origins to the Holocaust*

*Read:* Bergen, *War and Genocide*, Introduction and Chapter 1 through page 24

*Topic 2:* WWI, Treaty of Versailles, Weimar Republic

*Read:* Bergen, Ch. 1, bottom page 37-43 (end of chapter)

Excerpts from Sebastian Haffner, *Defying Hitler* (on D2L), pp. 76-93

**Week 3**, Jan. 25-29

*Topic*: Rise of Hitler and ideology (Fascism)

*Read*: Bergen, Ch. 2

*Read:* Robert Paxton, *The Anatomy of Facism*, Introduction(on D2L)

**Nazi Oppression, 1933-1939:**

**Week 4,** Feb. 1-5: Fascism Reading Reaction Due on Friday

*Topic:* Early persecutions of Jews, Nuremberg Laws

*Read:* Nuremberg Laws(on D2L)

*Read:* Bergen, Ch. 3

**Week 5,** Feb. 8-12

*Topic:* Early persecutions against non-Jewish groups—Homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, political prisoners, Roma and Sinti

*Read:* Bergen, pp. 25-37, 69-76, 114-117

*Read:* Excerpts from Lorant, *Showing our Colors*, and *Homosexual Persecution* (on D2L)

**Week 6,** Feb. 15-19

*Topic:* Kristallnacht and Kindertransports

*Read:* Bergen, pp. 107-114

*Read:* Martin Goldsmith, *The Inextinguishable Symphony,* pp. 139-171 (on D2L)

**Week 7,** Feb. 22-26 \*\*Thinking Question Paper Due by Friday this week

*Topic:* T4 Program

*Read:* Bergen, pp. 80-82, 159-165, 126-127

*Read:* Henry Friedlander, “Excluding the Handicapped,” and “Excluding Gypsies” (on D2L)

**World War II and Anti-Jewish Measures up to 1941**

**Week 8,** Mar. 1-5

*Topic:* Start of WWII and events in Poland—division of Poland into 3 parts; military advances,

early Persecutions

*Read:* Sierakowiak, Notebook 1

\*\*NO ONLINE DISCUSSION THIS WEEK

**Week 9,** Mar. 8-12

*Topic:* Introduction to Ghettos and Ghetto Diaries

*Read:* Sierakowiak, Notebook 2 and 3

*Watch Film: Fotoamator*

**Week 10,** Mar. 15-19 \*\*Sierakowiak Reading Reaction due by Friday this week

*Topic:* Ghetto life, the “Gray Zone,” and choiceless choices

*Read:* Sierakowiak, Notebook 4 and 5

**World War II and Anti-Jewish Measures 1941-1945**

**Week 11,** Mar. 22-26 \*\*Final Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due by Friday this week

*Topic:* Pivot toward killing (The Wannsee Conference and Operation Barbarossa)

*Read:* Mark Roseman, “Cognac and Genocide” (on D2L)

*Read:* Excerpts from Yitzhak Arad, *Ghetto in Flames* (on D2L)

*Video:* How to write an annotated bibliography/sources

*Watch Film: Conspiracy*

**Week 12,** Mar. 29-Apr. 2

*Topic:* Concentration Camps

*Read:* Levi, Chs. 1-5

**Week 13,** April 5-9 \*\* Levi Reading Reaction due by Friday this week

*Topic:* Concentration Camps

*Read:* Levi, Chs. 6-end

**Resistance and the end of World War II**

**Week 14,** Apr. 12-16

*Topic:* Resistance—Jewish, Polish, French, Heydrich assassination, Hitler assassination

Attempts

*Read:* Bergen, pp. 260-273

*Read:* Nechama Tec, “From Self-Preservation to Rescue” in *Voices and Views: A History of the Holocaust* (on D2L)

**Week 15,** Apr. 19-23

*Topic:* End of the war—death marches, liberation, DP camps

*Read:* Bergen Ch. 9 and Conclusion

\*\*NO ONLINE DISCUSSION THIS WEEK

# Final Project due by Friday, April 30 2021, 9:45am. Electronic projects will be submitted to D2L. For physical projects, I will arrange for drop-off.

**\*\*This syllabus is only a guideline and is subject to change over the course of the semester. I will be adding short primary source excerpts and short Holocaust survivor testimonies to most weeks.**