

HUMANITIES 5695

Fascism

Fall 2023

Mon. 1:30–4:20pm

Rm. 1026, LSK Bldg

INSTRUCTOR

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Office hours: Wed. 4:30–6:00pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to provide students with an introduction to the study of fascism. This semester we will focus on a variety of themes and questions that are central to the study of National Socialism, yet relevant for the comparative study of twentieth-century political societies around the world. The weekly readings and discussions revolve around classic and contemporary texts in the historiography of National Socialism. Attention will be paid to political leadership, social mobilization, political violence, and mass killing, with a central focus on popular opinion and issues of consent, coercion, and collaboration. Students will attain a general understanding of the historiographical and theoretical perspectives that have been applied to interpret National Socialism. The course does not presuppose any prior background in European history.

Each week we will read a book that addresses elements of the experience of National Socialism. Our aim in class discussion is to elucidate the book's argument, evaluate how it uses evidence to make its case, and debate what we can learn from it—both in comparison with other readings and the broader concerns of the course. The presentations and papers aim to put the skills learned in the seminar room into practice, by giving students the opportunity to frame and assess arguments, draw comparisons, and critically interrogate their sources.

ASSESSMENTS

1. Participation: 15%

- Students will be assessed on their willingness to participate and engage in group discussion. Participation can take the form of making a comment, asking a question, or responding to other students.
- Attendance is mandatory. Repeated absences will lead to sharp reduction in the participation score.

2. Two short in-class presentations on the weekly readings: 20%
 - Students are required to make two short presentations, possibly in a group setting. Each student's contribution should last around 10 minutes. You should assume that everyone has done the reading; detailed summary or recapitulation of facts is unnecessary. Instead, you should focus on providing an overview of the argument of the text in question, ideally comparing and contrasting it with other readings from the course. You are encouraged to raise open-ended questions that can help guide discussion. PowerPoint presentations are welcome but not required.
 - Presentations will be scheduled after the end of add/drop period.
3. Midterm paper (due Nov. 5): 30%
 - Papers should address the following question: "Is 'social atomism' an accurate description of life under National Socialism between 1933 and 1939?"
 - The paper must fill 7 double-spaced pages formatted in Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1 inch margins.
4. Final paper (due Dec. 7): 35%
 - Papers should address the following question: "What was the nature of antisemitism in German society between 1933 and 1945?"
 - The paper must fill 12 double-spaced pages formatted in Times New Roman 12 pt. font with 1 inch margins.

ASSIGNED TEXTS

All readings are available as PDFs on the course's Canvas website. You are strongly encouraged to bring hard copies—that is, photocopies or print outs, rather than purely digital versions—to class for discussion.

The course does not presuppose any special background in European history.

EXPECTATIONS

Once the paper topic is announced, class time will be devoted to discussion of proper practices for academic citation, quotation, and paraphrasing. Students are not expected to do any outside reading for the papers, which assess comprehension of the assigned readings and ability to interpret and synthesize them.

Students who are forced to miss an assessment due to illness or other emergency must provide a doctor's note or equivalent; otherwise, a make-up or extension cannot be arranged. Without a legitimate excuse, late assignments will be docked 5 points (out of a total 100) per day they are late. Incompletes will not be granted in this course.

The internet is a wonderful resource; it contains an endless amount of information. Some of it is accurate. Much of it is dubious. A lot is plain wrong. Most of it will be *irrelevant* for the

purposes of this class. Looking things up on the web can be at most a supplement to—but not a substitute for—attending the course meetings and doing the readings.

This course enforces a zero-tolerance policy on cheating and plagiarism. If a student is found to have cheated on an exam or committed plagiarism on a paper, the case will be immediately referred to the head of the Humanities Division for further investigation.

The use of ChatGPT or other AI-assisted tools is not permitted. Violations of this policy will be treated as incidents of cheating or plagiarism.

COURSE OUTLINE

Sept. 6 / Introduction

There are no assigned readings for the first class meeting. We will review the syllabus and answer questions about the course content and expectations.

Sept. 13 / Neighbors

William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1922–1934*, rev. ed. (New York: Watts, 1984), pp. xii–xix, 4–147.

Sept. 20 / Coordination

Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power*, pp. 152–303.

Sept. 27 / Biology

Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Ippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 1–4, 23–96, 113–97.

Oct. 4 / Dissent

Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria 1933–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 1–29, 66–110, 185–277, 331–57.

Oct. 11 / Collaboration

Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy 1933–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 1–75, 101–84.

Oct. 18 / Consumption

Shelley Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1–74, 118–98.

Oct. 25 / Charisma

Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 1–10, 48–104, 121–99.

Nov. 1 / Education

Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 1–16, 103–252.

Nov. 8 / Persecution

Marion A. Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 3–144.

Nov. 15 / Bystanders

David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution: Public Opinion under Nazism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 1–13, 67–88, 101–56.

Nov. 22 / Conformity

Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. xiii–xx, 1–189.

Nov. 29 / Voluntarism

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Knopf, 1996), pp. 181–280, 327–71.

Browning, *Ordinary Men*, pp. 191–223.