

## READINGS ON THE HOLOCAUST: SYLLABUS

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for students who have a substantial prior knowledge of Holocaust or German history. Thus all participants should have taken a course in the UCSB Hist 133 series, or the equivalent in another department or at another school. In the latter case, permission of the instructor is required.

We will read and discuss important works about the Holocaust in order to examine some of the historical, moral, and historiographical issues it raises. We will also learn and practice some of the skills used in writing history: interpreting primary sources, assessing secondary works, and reporting orally and in writing about our findings. This is an intensive reading course: We will read about one book per week. Each week 2 or 3 students will present their background research on that week's book to the class, while all other students will write short essays or prepare a page of questions. Each student will write a research paper on one of the weekly topics.

### REQUIREMENTS

1. Regular, active **participation** in class discussion, which counts for 32% (!) of the final grade. Grading for each meeting is on a 4 point scale, with 1 point for being present and alert, but not contributing. I will drop the lowest participation grade of the 9 weeks when calculating this.
2. There are nine discussion meetings during the quarter. Each student will be part of at least one group that conducts additional background research. During seven of the other eight sessions, students will either submit a short paper (three times), or a set of questions (four times).
  - a) The **three short papers**, about 500 words (2 double-spaced, typed pages) in length, on the weekly questions about the readings (see reverse side), or about a topic you choose. Please note that I will be looking more for a coherent and thoughtful engagement with the book than a paper that addresses all aspects of the question(s). You should be sure to *argue a thesis* using *specific examples* as evidence to back up your argument. These papers are due on **Tuesdays, by 2:30pm**, in the envelope outside my office. Each is worth 8% of your final grade for a total of 24%.
  - b) Submission of **four sets of 5-10 questions** each, about the weekly readings. Some questions may address specific points that you don't understand; others should aim at broader issues raised by the material. These are also due on **Tuesdays, by 2:30pm**, in the envelope outside my office. Each question set is worth 4% of the final grade (16% altogether).
  - c) **Research presentation**. This will usually be done by teams of two or three students. It can be in the form of bullet points about interesting aspects or open questions. Each week's team should meet with the professor on the Monday or Tuesday before class to review their presentation. (8% of final grade)
3. A **6-8 page paper** (plus annotated biblio-/linkography) discussing the topic of your book in a more formal way. A draft is due two weeks after the book is discussed (except for the final book). Papers receiving an "A" or "B" grade may be published on the course web site. (20% of final grade)
  - There will be no midterm examination; the final paper counts as the final examination.

### COMPONENTS OF GRADE:

discussion:  $8 \times 4\% = 32\%$ ; short papers:  $3 \times 8\% = 24\%$ ; questions:  $4 \times 4\% = 16\%$ ; presentation: 8%; final paper: 20%.

### REQUIRED BOOKS (in the order we will read them; additional purchase details on the course web site)

1. Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness : A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941* (Modern Library, 1999)
2. Mark Roseman, *A Past in Hiding: Memory and Survival in Nazi Germany* (Picador, 2002)
3. Judith Magyar Isaacson, *Seed of Sarah: Memoirs of a Survivor* (Illinois, 1990)
4. Filip Müller, *Eyewitness Auschwitz: Three Years in the Gas Chambers* (Ivan Dee, 1999)
5. Mark Roseman, *The Wannsee Conference and the Final Solution: A Reconsideration* (Picador, 2003)
6. Rudolf Höss, *Death Dealer: The Memoirs of the SS Kommandant at Auschwitz* (DaCapo, 1996)
7. John Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (Vintage, 1998)
8. Jan Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Penguin, 2002)

## HIST 133Q, WINTER 2006

### SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Jan. 11	<b>Introduction.</b> Course theme: <i>Testimony and Memory</i>	<b>Research team:</b>
II Jan. 18	<b>Jews in Germany, I:</b> Klemperer, <i>I Will Bear Witness</i> , vii-xxii, 1-243, 457-82. What does a diary tell us about history that other sources may not?	_____ _____
III Jan 25	<b>Jews in Germany, II:</b> Klemperer, <i>Witness</i> , 247-456, 482-98. Use examples to discuss how Klemperer experiences major historical events.	_____ _____
IV Feb. 1	<b>Jews in Germany, III:</b> Roseman, <i>Past in Hiding</i> , 1-421 (entire) Discuss an exceptional aspect of Marianne's story. What explains the discrepancies between the versions of her story?	_____ _____
V Feb. 8	<b>Women in Auschwitz:</b> Isaacson, <i>Seed of Sarah</i> , entire (187 pages) How did women experience the Holocaust differently than men? What characteristics and circumstances enabled Isaacson to survive? Did she do anything to incur guilt?	_____ _____ _____
VI Feb. 15	<b>Sonderkommando in Auschwitz:</b> Müller, <i>Eyewitness Auschwitz</i> Is Müller telling the whole, "unvarnished" truth? In what cases might his memory be changing what actually happened? Why?	_____ _____ _____
VII Feb. 22	<b>Perpetrators I:</b> Roseman: <i>Wannsee Conference</i> , 172 pages. What sources enabled Roseman to figure out the "real" reason that the so-called Wannsee conference was convened? Why was its purpose misunderstood for so long?	_____ _____ _____
VIII Mar. 1	<b>Perpetrators II:</b> Höss, <i>Death Dealer</i> , entire (350 pages) What parts of Höss's autobiographical narrative might be influenced by his situation on death row?	_____ _____
IX Mar. 8	<b>Perpetrators III:</b> Lukacs, <i>Hitler of History</i> , entire (268 pages) Can you find common themes in the ways that historians from different groups (older & younger Germans, older and younger Jews) have portrayed Hitler? Where does Lukacs himself fit in?	_____ _____ _____
X Mar. 15	<b>Perpetrators IV:</b> Gross, <i>Neighbors</i> , entire (247 pages) How have different groups of Poles (Catholics, Communists, Jews) portrayed the massacre in Jedwabne?	_____ _____
Mar. 20	<b>Final paper due date:</b> Monday, 4pm in my office	

**Plagiarism**—presenting someone else's work as your own, or deliberately failing to credit or attribute the work of others on whom you draw (including materials found on the web)—is a serious academic offense, punishable by dismissal from the university. It hurts the one who commits it most of all, by cheating them out of an education. Offenses will be reported to the appropriate university authorities for disciplinary action.