

Nazi Germany

History 388-001
Spring 2022, T/R 10:30-11:45
Horizon Hall 3008

Prof. Samuel Huneke (he/him/his)
shuneke@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Virtual, by appointment



Course Description

Although Adolf Hitler governed Germany for only twelve years, the Nazi state remains one of the most intensively studied regimes in modern history. This course will cover the history of Nazi Germany, examining the rise of National Socialism in the Weimar Republic, elements of Nazi rule, World War II, the Holocaust, and the aftereffects of Nazism in postwar Europe and the United States. Over the course of the semester, we will consider a number of core questions about the Nazi era, including what role the persecution of racial and social outsiders played in Nazi Germany, how one should classify the Nazi state in comparison to other dictatorships, and what the Nazi era can tell us about our world today.

Course Goals + Expectations

Each session will be a blend of lecture and discussion of primary and secondary sources. Through these discussions and your written assignments each week, this course aims not only to introduce you to the history of Nazi Germany, but also to hone your analytical skills, your writing abilities, and your rhetorical faculties.

The reading load each week is substantial, but manageable. We will read dense, significant, but usually shorter texts to stimulate discussion. In addition to participating

in in-class discussion, you will post on the Blackboard discussion board each week, responding to discussion questions and to your classmate's posts.

Required Texts

These books can be purchased used on Amazon for around \$20. They will also be held on library reserve. All other readings are available online or through Blackboard.

1. Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis* (used from \$7.50)
2. Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men* (used from \$6.48)
3. Eli Wiesel, *Night* (used from \$3.92)

Schedule

Introduction to the History of Nazism

January 25 | Introduction: Syllabus and Course Expectations

January 27 | What was Nazism?

Read: Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship*, 17-39 [Blackboard]

World War I and the Weimar Republic

February 1 | The Social Catastrophe of World War I

Read: [Hunger, from Ernst Gläser, Born in 1902 \(1928\)](#) [GHDI]

[Soldiers Describe Combat II: Sophus Lange \(1914-15\)](#) [GHDI]

February 3 | The End of World War I

Read: [Adolf Hitler on the November Revolution \(Retrospective Account, 1925\)](#) [GHDI]

[Bernhard von Bülow, "Revolution in Berlin"](#) [GHDI]

February 8 | Germany's Experiment with Liberal Democracy

Read: Peter Gay, *Weimar Germany*, Chapter 1 [Blackboard]

February 10 | The Far Right in the Weimar Republic

Read: Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, 139-183

Building Nazi Germany

February 15 | The Origins of National Socialism

Read: [NSDAP Party Program \(1920\)](#) [GHDI]

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, 183-214

February 17 | Democratic Collapse

Read: Benjamin Carter Hett, *The Death of Democracy*, 185-207 [Blackboard]

Richard Evans, *The Hitler Conspiracies*, 85-120 [Blackboard]

February 22 | Governing Nazi Germany

Read: [Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service \(April 7, 1933\)](#)

[GDHI]

[Circular on the Action to "Coordinate" The Free Trade Unions \(April 21, 1933\)](#)

[GDHI]

February 24 | Everyday Life under Nazism

Read: [Guide to the "Degenerate Art" Exhibition \(1937\)](#) [GDHI]

["Strength through Joy" – Cruise to Madeira \(1938\)](#) [GDHI]

Outsiders in Nazi Germany

March 1 | Women in Nazi Society

Read: Vanda Joshi, ["The 'Private' became 'Public': Wives as Denouncers in the Third Reich,"](#) *Journal of Contemporary History* [JSTOR]

March 3 | "Asocials," Outsider Groups, and the Concentration Camps

Read: Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL: A History of Nazi Concentration Camps*, 140-150

Eve Rosenhaft, ["Blacks and Gypsies in Nazi Germany: The Limits of the 'Racial State',"](#) *History Workshops Journal* [JSTOR]

March 8 | LGBT Victims of Nazism

Read: Samuel Clowes Huneke, ["Heterogeneous Persecution: Lesbians and the Nazi State,"](#) *Central European History* [Fenwick Catalog]

March 10 | **NO CLASS**

**** Midterm Paper Due by 11:59 PM, March 11 ****

March 22 | **NO CLASS**

March 24 | Jews in 1930s Germany

Read: Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years*, 129-145 [Blackboard]

World War II and the Holocaust

March 29 | Lead up to War

Read: [Summary of Hitler's Meeting with the Heads of the Armed Services on Nov. 5, 1937](#) [GDHI]
[The Munich Agreement \(September 29, 1938\)](#) [GDHI]

March 31 | The Early War

Read: Ronald Rosbottom, *When Paris Went Dark*, 19-46 [Blackboard]

April 5 | Racial Hygiene and "Life Unworthy of Living"
Guest Lecture by Dr. Patricia Heberer-Rice

April 7 | War in the East and Generalplan Ost

Read: Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 1-77, 159-189

April 12 | Planning the Final Solution

Read: [Letter from Hermann Göring to Reinhard Heydrich \(July 31, 1931\)](#) [National Archives]

[The Wannsee Protocol \(January 20, 1942\)](#) [GDHI]

April 14 | The Death Camps

Read: Eli Wiesel, *Night*, 47-84

April 19 | Visit to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum

April 21 | Resistance

Read: Richard Evans, *The Third Reich at War*, 630-646 [Blackboard]

[The Fifth Broadsheet of the "White Rose" \(January 1943\)](#)

April 26 | The End of the War

Read: Eli Wiesel, *Night*, 85-103

A Woman in Berlin, 1-15 [Blackboard]

After Nazism

April 28 | Denazification and the Nuremberg Trials

Read: [On the Nuremberg Trials](#) [GDHI]

["Automatic Denazification"](#) [GDHI]

May 3 | Reckoning with Nazism in the Cold War

Guest Lecture by Dr. Jeffrey Richter

May 5 | Remembering the Holocaust Today

Read: Dirk Moses, ["The German Catechism,"](#) *New Fascism Syllabus*

****Final Paper Due by Noon, May 10****

Course Information

Grading

In-Class Participation—13%
Discussion Board Posts—22%
Midterm Exam—25%
Final Exam—40%

Attendance & Participation

Each session will consist of both lecture and discussion. Attendance and participation in in-class discussion will be worth 13% of your final grade. Attendance, which will be taken at the start of class, will account for 20% of your participation grade and performance in discussion will account for the remaining 80%. In other words, participation is a significant component of your course performance. More than two absences will severely affect your participation grade, and insufficient attendance will result in failure of the course. If you have a prolonged illness or a personal situation that might lead to more than two absences, please let me know as soon as possible.

It is critical that you actively engage in the discussion of readings. Come to class prepared to make comments, express opinions, and ask questions. Actions that will adversely affect your participation grade include absences from class, coming to class unprepared, and displaying a lack of respect for your classmates.

Please do not hesitate to check in with me throughout the semester to discuss your in-class participation should you have any questions or concerns.

Tests + Assignments

Discussion Board Posts

Each week you will participate in the Blackboard discussion board. Participation is worth 22% of your final grade. Each week, I will pose three or four questions related to the readings and the lecture. These questions will be broad and open ended, and will encourage you to think creatively and analytically about the material from the week. You must post at least once per week: either directly to one of the questions I pose or in response to one of your classmate's posts.

Your responses should be substantive (at least 150 words) and should draw on evidence from lecture and the readings. **You must quote from that week's readings at least once.** Your grade will not only take into account whether or not you participated, but also the quality of your response. You must have completed your responses by **11:59PM on Friday of each week.**

Midterm Paper: Primary Source Analysis

Halfway through the semester you will write a 1,000 word analysis of a primary source of your choosing. You will select a primary source from the [GHDI Database](#) that is not on the syllabus. Your analysis must first discuss the origins of the source: when, where, why, how, and by whom was it made? It will then offer a factual summary of the source: what information does it contain. Finally, your analysis will discuss how the source could be used to interpret Nazi history: how would a historian use the source to advance an argument about the Nazi period? You must use quotations from the source to support your analysis, and you must cite all factual information and quotations. Your analysis must be written in a clear, readable style free of grammatical and typographical errors.

Final Paper

Your final paper will be a 1,500-word essay responding to one of several prompts I give you. The essay must advance a clear argument and use evidence from primary sources to support that argument. It must cite all factual information and quotations and be written in a clear, readable style free of grammatical and typographical errors.

Writing Assessment

Your writing will be evaluated for its argumentation, style, and mechanical consistency. In each of your assignments you must advance and support clear interpretations of primary sources and demonstrate an understanding of how these interpretations relate to the arguments of secondary sources we read. You should endeavor to write in a clear, readable style. Your writing must be free of typographical and grammatical errors. One of the primary goals of this course is the development of each student's writing abilities.

Citation Style

Any time you make a factual claim or quote from a document, you must cite the source of this information. For your midterm and final papers, you must use Chicago style footnote citations (click [here](#) for a quick guide to Chicago citations). For discussion board posts, you may use either Chicago style footnote citations or simple parenthetical citations.

Office Hours

Please contact me to set up a virtual office hours appointment to discuss any concerns,

questions, or conundrums. I'm happy to discuss the course, writing, history, or academic work more generally.

Digital Communication

I will communicate with you using your Mason email address. Please check it regularly.

Writing Resources

George Mason's Writing Center is an excellent place to get help on your writing at all levels. I encourage all of you to make use of their writing tutors when working on written assignments throughout the semester.

Submissions and Extensions

Failure to complete any one graded assignment will result in a failing grade for the semester.

Late submissions will be penalized 1% per day. You may request short-term extensions on assignments before the due date, which I will evaluate on a case-by-case basis. If you think you may need an extension, please contact me ahead of time.

Electronic Devices

The use of laptop computers is not allowed in class. All phones and other electronic devices must be set on silent and put away.

COVID-19

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, Red, or Blue email response. Only students who receive a "green" notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

Students are required to follow Mason's current policy about facemask-wearing. As of August 11, 2021, all community members are required to wear a facemask in all indoor settings, including classrooms. An [appropriate facemask](#) must cover your nose

and mouth at all times in our classroom. If this policy changes, you will be informed; however, students who prefer to wear masks will always be welcome in the classroom.

Campus Closure or Emergency Class Cancellation

If the campus closes, or if a class meeting needs to be canceled or adjusted due to weather or other concern, students should check Blackboard and their George Mason emails for updates on how to continue learning and for information about any changes to events or assignments.

Special Needs

Students with disabilities or other special needs will receive all appropriate accommodations. Please email me or speak to me after class if you require any such accommodation.

Diversity + Inclusion

This course strives to promote a culture of inclusion and belonging where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected, consistent with [Mason's Diversity Statement](#).

I will use whatever name and pronoun/s by which you wish to be addressed. You should feel free to introduce yourself in this way in class or to speak to me in private if you would prefer.

Title IX

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Honor Code

All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the George Mason Honor Code. For details, see <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>