

Bergen Community College Department of History
History 146
Genocide and Holocaust

Date and Time:

Room:

Professor:

Office Hours:

Phone:

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the history of 20th and 21st century genocide and violent conflict. Areas of focus include the Armenian, Ukrainian, Cambodian, Rwandan, Bosnian, and Darfurian genocides with special attention given to the Holocaust (Shoah). The course approaches these genocides as products of distinct historical contexts and changing international responses while developing a generic model for recognizing genocide drawn from historiographical debates. Diversity Course. 3 hours lecture.

Student Learning Objectives

As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate, in both written and oral discussion, the ability to consider a diversity of viewpoints on the history of genocide, construct and defend an argument about topics in genocide studies, and revise their position effectively as new evidence demands.
2. Read and critique a variety of primary and secondary sources, evaluate their perspective and bias, and contextualize them with appropriate detail.
3. Identify, gather, evaluate, analyze, synthesize, interpret, and properly cite historical evidence in an independent research paper.
4. Evaluate different perspectives and multiple causation in historical events and reject inevitability.
5. Explain the important political, intellectual, social, and cultural forces that have shaped the genocides and wars of the 20th and 21st century.
6. Identify examples of historical change and continuity as they relate to genocide and violent conflict and evaluate their historical significance.
7. Temper moral judgment on questions of genocide and violence with an understanding of historical perspective and the significance of changing cultural context.

Means of Assessment

Mastery of these learning objectives will be assessed/measured through reflection papers, pop quizzes, class participation, analysis of primary sources, essay exams, and the final paper. \

Course Content

This course will allow you to explore one of the predominant, albeit disturbing, international themes of the twentieth and twenty-first century: genocide, armed conflict, and global efforts to respond to these eruptions of violence. Through this course, we will see that war has been a constant and yet ever evolving presence in global society and that genocide, as historians understand the concept today, did not begin or end with the Nazi Holocaust.

As we consider a comparative history of war and genocide across nations and time periods, we will discuss the evolution of our ideas about war and how we have defined genocide, our changing responses to persecution, atrocities, and genocide, origins and warning signs of the outbreak of conflict, and the plausibility of an end to the cycle of violence. When discussing genocide, particular focus will be on the Armenians, the Nazi Holocaust, Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Darfur, but other cases will also be considered including the massacre of native populations during European imperial expansion and the accusations of genocide in the Ukraine under Stalin. To understand these acts of genocide requires some historical context and so we will also consider briefly the history of global warfare placing emphasis on World Wars I and II, the wars of communist expansion and containment, and the wars of colonial independence during decolonization.

In addition to the requisite lectures, we will be reading, discussing, and analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources that can provide insight into the way that historians have approached the topic and also how those who lived through these periods relate their story. You will also be given the opportunity to explore a topic of interest to you in more depth when you construct your individual research paper.

Required Course Readings

**REQUIRED readings will be posted on Moodle

Rather than a single textbook, relevant chapters from various books and journal articles will be posted on Moodle. These are listed in your syllabus on the day they are due.

Grading

Midterm: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Research Paper: 20%

Each component of the research paper (topic, historiography, research, thesis, outline) 5% total

Reflection papers: 10%

Participation in class 10%

Leading discussion 5%

Quizzes 5%

Online Discussions 5%

Grade Scale

A = 90-100%

C = 70-75%

B+ = 86-89%

D = 65-69%

B = 80-85%

F = 64% or less

C+ = 76-79%

Course Policies

Attendance:

I approach each day of this course as more of a discussion or conversation about history than a formal lecture. As such, your attendance and participation are an important part of the course. Every two absences will affect your final grade by one letter.

Tardiness: While I understand that getting to class on time can be made difficult at times by traffic, childcare, jobs, and public transit, it is your responsibility to come to class on time. Tardiness of more than 15 minutes or consistent tardiness of a few minutes is unprofessional and disruptive to other students and will result in a lower grade for class participation.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Using any source, either as a direct quote or paraphrase, including information from the internet, without the appropriate source citation is considered plagiarism. Evidence of plagiarism in your work will result in a zero for the assignment, notification of academic dishonesty to the department and university, and recommendation for probation or expulsion. All work must be your own. Any indication that you have purchased a paper or copied the work of another student will result in a zero and notification of your academic dishonesty. All exams are to be taken without notes or other assistance. Any indication that you have made recourse to notes, e-files, or other sources during the exam will result in a zero for the exam and notification.

Late Papers: Papers will be collected at the beginning of the class on the due date. All papers received after this time, even on the same day, will be penalized 25% every 24 hours (not each class meeting) that they are late. If I am not on campus the day that you turn in a late paper, you may email the paper to me to avoid additional point deductions but must provide a hard copy at the next class meeting.

Missed Exams: Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a certified emergency. You must contact me and provide this certification as soon as possible. You will have one week from the date of the missed exam to complete the makeup.

Assignments

Reading

Reading and Discussion: Much as you may enjoy lectures, real learning comes from active involvement in the material. For historians, this means immersing yourself in the sources we have on our past. You will be expected to read documents, both primary and secondary sources, for every class meeting and be prepared to discuss extensively the larger questions raised by these pieces. Many of these pieces may be confusing when you first read them, but through continued discussion of the pieces with your peers you will learn how to dissect them. I expect a commitment to learning which means a commitment not only to reading but actually thinking about the pieces and being prepared to share your ideas. I highly recommend that you print out the documents and bring them to class with important passages highlighted and notes taken. This will help you be prepared to contribute to class discussion and to do well on the possible pop quizzes.

All readings can be found on Moodle with titles that correspond to the lecture on the date that they are listed in the syllabus. There will be two types of documents in this course. Most days we will be dealing with a shorter primary source document and will spend about 15-20 minutes discussing the piece as a class. However at other times throughout the semester you will be reading a historiographical essay, which is a secondary source. For these longer and more complicated pieces, we will be doing a larger class discussion about 45 minutes to 1 hour long with student discussion leaders.

Participation

You need to read all of the pieces that are listed for the class meeting and bring the readings with any notes you take to class prepared to discuss them. Participating in class each day talking about the documents and engaging in the class will be 10% of your class participation grade. The other 5% will come from leading class discussion one of these days. On the day you lead discussion, you will be responsible (with me) for posing some questions about the document to the class, promoting discussion among the class, and making connections between the reading and the lectures. A list of suggestions for leading discussion will be posted on Moodle along with the sign up sheet that lists all members of each group of discussion leaders. All students are responsible for reading each of the pieces and participating in all of these discussions.

Quizzes

In order to ensure that you do this reading, I will be giving 6 pop quizzes on the assigned (not discussion day) documents available on Moodle throughout the semester. The lowest quiz will be dropped. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. You will be allowed to reference your documents and any notes you took during the quiz so be sure to bring your reading and notes to class.

Exams

There will be two exams in this course, a midterm and a final. The exam format will combine short essay and a choice of longer essay topics. Possible essay questions will be provided two weeks before the exam. The documents for class discussion will be a large part of the material covered in each exam.

Papers

Reflection papers: *(Due on the day of the discussion—these papers are intended to help you prepare for class discussion and also to show me that you read and reflected even if you do not express yourself as cogently as you would like in the discussion)* You may email me a reflection paper if you must miss discussion—this will not replace your participation for the day but it will be taken into consideration.

For 5 of the 10 discussion day readings, you will write a short (1-2page) reflection on the documents. In this reflection, you should discuss what you believe to be the main argument or thesis of the author/authors. What evidence or supporting arguments/claims do they make to uphold this thesis? You can also discuss any of the following that seem relevant: what sources does the author use and how does this influence his work? If there is more than one piece for the discussion, which do you find more convincing and why? How does this piece support or conflict with primary sources we have read for the time period? Does this piece give you insight into the period in a different way than lecture/textbook readings?

Short Research Paper: There will also be one 5-7 page paper for the course DUE:

If you have any concerns about how to write this paper PLEASE come talk with me during office hours or over email.

Research Paper assignment and deadlines

You are getting ready to begin the process that all professional historians must go through in their own work. First they find a topic of interest, they read as many primary sources from the period as possible while also reading other historians' interpretations and ideas on the topic in order to discover where their own ideas and research findings fit—do they agree or disagree with previous historians? do they have a new approach or a new source that provides a different perspective? Then they write their own interpretation, drawn from their own research in primary sources, while also explaining how their work supports/critiques/augments the existing historical narrative.

1. **TOPIC:** Select a time period or event of interest to you and begin reading background information on this period in order to narrow down your interest to a topic of appropriate size for a semester assignment. Write a few sentences explaining what general topic you are interested in researching. **(Due:)**
2. **HISTORIOGRAPHY;** With my assistance, select and read 2 articles on this topic from scholarly journals (or chapters in books—with my approval). Your emphasis in selecting the articles should be finding pieces by historians that support and/or contradict one another's interpretation of the topic. Write a few sentences summarizing each article emphasizing the thesis of the author, how they approach the topic, how they differentiate their approach from those that have been used before by other historians, what they consider significant, what sources they use, the broader significance they see in this topic and their interpretation of it, and why they feel their approach/interpretation is worthy of study.**(Due:)**
3. **RESEARCH;** Find and read one or two applicable primary sources to give you your own insight into the topic and continue to read background narratives—as you find individuals, documents, etc mentioned in these narratives, add them to your list of sources to look into. Write a few sentences summarizing what you found in each piece and where it could be useful in your paper. Consider as you are reading these sources whether they seem to support or call into question any of the journal articles' approaches. **(Due:)**
4. **THESIS, INTRO, AND OUTLINE;** Craft a thesis statement, introduction, and detailed outline for your paper. The thesis should explain the topic and how you have interpreted it based on your primary source readings with reference to existing scholarly studies. The outline can vary but the body of the paper needs to include a discussion (analyze, compare, contrast) of the arguments in the scholarly articles and explanation of which you found convincing. The body of the paper should also include explanation of your own research—what sources did you consider important and what insight did they provide. How did they lead you to your own ideas about the topic and cause you to agree or disagree with previous historians' interpretations? Your outline should be as specific as possible noting each argument you will make and even providing an example of a quotation that you might use in

the paper for support. The more thorough your outline and introduction, the more feedback you will have to improve your final paper! **(Due:)**

5. *I will return these to you as quickly as possible so that you can have my feedback to write the final version of your paper.*
6. **FINAL PAPER DUE;** The paper should be about 5-7 pages in length. Reminder that you must use proper citations for this paper—be sure that as you do your research, you keep track of all page numbers for your quotations and paraphrased information. See me or a BCC reference librarian for help with Chicago style or MLA. **(Due:)**

Online Discussions

We will be participating in two online discussion forums (Oct 14 and Nov 13) with a Composition 201 class in Paramus. Their course deals with questions of “othering” and themes of racism and class conflict in literature. Both classes will be reading the same documents for these discussion forums so that you can have a true exchange of ideas about the pieces. Take note of how you as students of history approach the documents and the topic- does your approach seem different than those in the literature class? Does your understanding of the historical context and the history of genocide give you a different perspective on the question? are there similarities in the way history and literature approach the topic? Can melding a literary perspective and a historical perspective provide new insight into questions about genocide? Why?

To get credit for Participation in Discussion:

1. You must be actively involved in the online discussion—that means you must post at least 3 substantial and informed comments. These 3 comments should be about at least 2 of the different documents you read (ie don’t make all 3 comments about 1 document—I need to see you read more than one of the pieces I assigned for the day).
2. At least one of your comments should be ORIGINAL which means you are saying something about the documents that no one else has said yet. The second and third comments can be a response to someone else’s point. However if you are responding to someone else’s comment, you **cannot** simply say “I agree with Joe.” You **can** say “I agree with Joe because it says “blah blah” on page 5.” In other words, if you are commenting on another post, you must add something specific from the document that contributes to the discussion. Be sure you are not repeating someone else’s contribution.
3. Read the assigned pieces and take notes on what you think are the most important points. You will want to be able to provide supporting quotes and details from the document when you make your comments. Providing specific details and quotes is the way you prove your points and it prepares you to write an effective history paper—remember papers require supporting quotes and details as evidence. Whenever possible you should provide the page number for the specific information you are using in the discussion. For example “I think the author is right to suggest racial bias or genocide here because it says ‘xxxxx’ on page 2.”
4. **All posts must be made by midnight on the day of the Discussion. Posts after midnight will not be accepted for a grade.**

Course Schedule

1

Introduction to the Course : Why Study History? Why study Genocide?

2

What is Genocide? Definitions and Discussion

Discussion 1 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Reading Due: David Moshman, "Conceptions of Genocide and Perceptions of History,"

Historiography of Genocide, ed. Dan Stone, pp. 71-92

And

The UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948

3

Why are Definitions Important?: Contested Genocide and Genocide Denial

Moodle Reading Due: "Origins of Genocide" excerpt p 29-50 from Adam Jones' *Genocide a Comprehensive Introduction*.

AND

Discussion 2(possible reflection paper)

Ann Curthoys and John Docker's "Defining Genocide" *Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone pp9-41.

4

Does Genocide occur before the modern day?: Ancient and Medieval genocides

Moodle Reading Due: Hans Van Wees' "Genocide in the Ancient World" *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* p239-257

AND

"The Battle for Antioch" (1097-98) according to Peter Tudebode

5

Imperialism and Genocide: Nationalism, Expansionism, and The Other

Discussion 3 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Reading Due: Nicholas Robins' "Colonial Latin America" in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* p304-320.

AND

Primary Source Documents on Latin American and North American Genocide

6

**TOPIC DUE

The Origins, Experience, and Atrocities of the Great War: From Belgium to Armenia

Moodle Reading: Excerpts from the Battle of Verdun, Voices from the Somme (read just a few to get a sense), Official Report by U.S. Ambassador to Belgium to the U.S. Secretary of State
AND

“The Ottoman Destruction of Christian Minorities” Adam Jones’ *Genocide a Comprehensive Introduction* p149-172.

7

Understanding Armenian Genocide

Discussion 4 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Reading: Vahakn N. Dadrian, The Armenian Question and the Wartime Fate of the Armenians as Documented by the Officials of the Ottoman Empire's World War I Allies: Germany and Austria-Hungary p59-77.

and

Congressional Initiative to Deem Killings of Armenians as Genocide Stalls in House *The American Journal of International Law* p. 186-187

8

The Interwar Years: Anti-Semitism, Depression, and the rise of Fascism

Discussion 5 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Readings: Selection from Mein Kampf and Christopher Browning’s “The Nazi Empire” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* p407-424.

9

Hitler’s Germany and the New World Order: 1933-1939

Moodle Reading: Goebbels Propaganda, Law for the protection of Hereditary Health and Law for the protection of German Blood, Kristallnacht documents

And

“The Jewish Holocaust” Adam Jones’ *Genocide a Comprehensive Introduction* p233-254

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NO CLASS--- FACULTY CONFERENCE DAY

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM 1: Genocide in Literature

Participate in an online discussion forum with Comp 201 class discussing selections from the novel *Zeitoun* and news articles on the question of genocide during Hurricane Katrina

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****HISTORIOGRAPHY DUE**

Origins of the Holocaust: The Functionalist and Intentionalist Debate

Discussion 6 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Readings Due: Christopher Browning’s “Beyond Intentionalism and Functionalism: The Origins of the Holocaust Reconsidered”

12

The Holocaust from 1939-1942

Moodle Readings:

Buchenwald Report, Memories of the Holocaust, Account of Holocaust Mass shooting; Warsaw ghetto uprising

Footage—Einsatzgruppen, Night and Fog

13

MIDTERM

14

The Holocaust from 1942-1945: Why did “Ordinary Men” Allow the Holocaust?

Discussion 7 (possible reflection paper)

Daniel Goldhagen “Hitler’s Willing Executioners”

Christopher Browning “Ordinary Men” and Afterword

**Primary RESEARCH DUE

15

No Class—

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM 2 of Ordinary Men and Willing Executioners

AND

Moodle Reading: Gavriel Rosenfeld, “The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the recent polemical turn in Holocaust and genocide scholarship,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 13/1 (1999), pp. 28-61. (We will discuss at a later date)

16

Christopher Browning Talk

17

Questions of International Culpability: Global Response to Holocaust

Discussion 8 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Reading: Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret*, and David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews*

18

Atrocities in the 1930s: Chinese Civil War, Japanese Imperialism, and Stalinism and the Question of Ukrainian Genocide

Moodle Reading: The Nanking Massacre, Oral Histories of the Comfort Women, Unit 731 and the Japanese Imperial Army's Biological Warfare Program, Famine in Ukraine and review of Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* by Peter Whitewood

19

****THESIS, INTRO, AND OUTLINE DUE**

Lessons from the Holocaust: Genocide in Cambodia and the Global Response

Discussion 9 (possible reflection paper)

Alex Hinton, "Why Did You Kill?: The Cambodian Genocide and the Dark Side of Face and Honor" *The Journal of Asian Studies*, p. 93-122

AND "Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge" Adam Jones' *Genocide a Comprehensive Introduction* p283-305.

Film clip: *S21: the Khmer Rouge Killing Machine*

20

Lessons from the Holocaust: Genocide in Rwanda and Darfur and the Global Response

Discussion 10 (possible reflection paper)

Moodle Reading: Scott Straus, "The Historiography of the Rwandan Genocide" in Dan Stone ed. *The Historiography of Genocide* p517-542.

21

Rwandan Genocide Survivor speaker

22

Lessons from the Holocaust: Genocide in Bosnia and the Global Response

Moodle Reading: "Bosnia and Kosovo" Adam Jones' *Genocide a Comprehensive Introduction* p317-336.

And

Eyewitness Report of the Tuzla Massacre

And watch all six video clips of eyewitness interviews (each is only 2 min long) on site

<http://www.ushmm.org/confront-genocide/cases/bosnia-herzegovina/bosnia-video-gallery>

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Crimes Against Humanity, International Responsibility, and the Prevention of Genocide

Moodle Reading: Excerpt from *Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* and Genocide Prevention Taskforce, *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers*

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Final Exam and Final Paper Due

Resources Available to Students

If you need additional help learning the material, reading the documents, studying for exams, or writing papers

The Tutoring Center on the 2nd Floor

Offers FREE tutoring Mon-Sat

Writing Center to help organize and revise papers

Also has applications for “Smarthinking”—online tutoring program

<http://www.bergen.edu/pages/2192.asp>

If you have a certified absence and need to take the make-up exam

And/or

If you have a disability documented by the Office of Specialized Services and need accommodations for the exam

Office of Testing Services on the 2nd Floor near the Library

You will need to provide a photo ID, my name, and come with enough time to take the exam before the center closes

Missed Exam:

You must notify me and provide documentation as soon as possible before or after missing the exam for an emergency. You will have one week from the date of the exam to complete the makeup.

Special Accommodation:

Students who need special accommodation for exams must present to me, in advance, the proper forms from Office of Specialized Services in order to have exams given in the Testing Center.

If you do not have a copy of the textbook

There is a copy of our textbook available on Reserve in the library under the course name. You may use it for 2hr periods in the library and can make copies.

Other Resources for Students

Office of Specialized Services

Bergen Community College’s Office of Specialized Services collaborates with and empowers students with disabilities to achieve their educational goals. The office provides academic support services and appropriate accommodations allowing students equal access to their college curriculum and other college programs.

<http://www.bergen.edu/pages/5175.asp>

Counseling

Individual counseling for international student concerns, transfer guidance, academic counseling, and personal counseling.

<http://www.bergen.edu/pages/6071.asp> (main counseling website)

<http://www.bergen.cc.nj.us/pages/5561.asp> (Center for Health, Wellness, and Personal Counseling)

Food Pantry at the Meadowlands

The Bergen Community College at the Meadowlands Food Pantry is available to meet the urgent needs of members of our campus community. The Food Pantry provides non-perishable food items, toiletries, and additional support services in an environment that emphasizes discretion and confidentiality. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to visit Room 116 and ask to speak with a Personal Counselor, Monday through Thursday from 9am-3:30pm and on Fridays from 9am-2pm. Donations will also be accepted. Please call the Director of Student Services at the Meadowlands at 201-689-7006 for more information.