

## **HIST 494: The Holocaust in Historical Context (3 credits)**

### **Syllabus**

**Department of History**

**Towson University**

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#### **Course Description:**

We all - Jew and Gentile alike - live in the shadow of the Holocaust. It raises fundamental questions about the nature of our civilization. How was it that a policy of genocide could be initiated and carried out in the most advanced and sophisticated countries of Europe, which had produced many of the greatest thinkers and artists the world has seen? The goal of the class is to answer this question by placing the Holocaust in historical context. Study abroad program in Poland aims at providing students with both knowledge and experience important for understanding the modern history of Europe.

#### **Course Requirements:**

##### Reading Load

Average reading load will be 250 pages per course. Student will find some additional texts online.

##### Written Assignments

There will be two written assignments: shorter (5 pages) due to the last day of Minimester and longer (9-12 pages) due to April 1<sup>st</sup>.

##### Class attendance:

Class attendance is required either in person or via internet. One unjustified absence is allowed.

Normally, student must provide documentation justifying their absence i.e. medical statement from their doctor.

##### Extra-Credit

Students may earn extra credit for preparing 15 – 25 minutes presentation on their own or in groups.

#### **Components of final grade:**

Quizzes and attendance 20%

First paper 30%

Final paper 50%

## **Required Reading:**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust* (New York, 1982).

A.Prazmowska, *A History of Poland* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2004) – excerpts will be posted online.

Additional readings will be posted online. Movie: **Image Before My Eyes - A History of Jewish Life in Poland Before the Holocaust (1981)**

## **On-campus:**

### **Monday, January 11, CLASS 1 - Introduction to the History of Poland and Polish Jews**

A.Prazmowska, *A History of Poland* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2004), chapters 8-10;

A. Hertz, *Jews in Polish Culture* (Evanston, IL, 1988).

### **Wednesday, January 13. CLASS 2 - The Origins of Anti-Semitism and Nazi Policy towards the Jews 1933-39**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust*, chapters 1-6

### **Friday, January 15, CLASS 3 - The 'Final Solution': Mass Murder**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust*, chapters 7-10.

### **Monday, January 18, CLASS 4 - Jewish Resistance**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust*, chapter 11.

### **Wednesday, January 20, CLASS 5 - Rescue of the Jews**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust*, chapter 12.

### **Friday, January 22, CLASS 6 - Last Years of the Holocaust (1943-45)**

Yehuda Bauer *A History of the Holocaust*, chapter 13.