

# REPRESENTING THE HOLOCAUST SPRING 2016

Prof. Rachel Baum

## ➔ Your Teacher



Name: Dr. Rachel Baum

Wants to be called: Rachel, Prof. Baum, or Dr. Baum

Office: Center for Jewish Studies 120  
(Greene Museum, next to Sabin)

Phone: 414-229-5156

email: rbaum@uwm.edu

Office Hours: Thurs 11 - 12:15 and by appointment (can also do skype, chat, etc)

Favorite book: *The Little Prince*

## ➔ Accommodations

I'm here to help and will do whatever I can to support your success -- whether you are a returning student, a struggling writer, or the future President of the United States.

Students with a Visa from the Student Accessibility Center should give me their Visa within the first 2 weeks of the class.

Students will be called by whatever name and gender they desire. Please let me know if I should call you something different than is on the roster.



Photo Credit: Flickr, "Surreal Name Given" by Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Holocaust remains one of the most horrific events in modern history. It is nearly impossible to comprehend the torture and murder of human beings on such a massive scale. Indeed, some people have said that the complexity and horror of the Holocaust cannot be represented. Yet there are many books, films, photographs, poems, paintings, and other representations of the event. Can such words & images help us to confront the Holocaust? To understand it? What are the ethical issues involved in trying to represent the murder of millions of human beings? This class provides a general background to the Holocaust, while also looking at the responsibility of representation, so important in the image-rich, social-media connected age.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

Instructor Info, p 1	How your grade is tallied, p 4
If you need an accommodation, p 1	Where to get help, p 4
Requirements & Books, p 2	Policies, p 4
Extra Credit, p 3	Learning Matters, p 5
	Calendar, p 6 - 8

# THE COURSE

WHAT TO DO>

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance./Participation** (100 points). You can miss 2 classes and still get full points (100).

Here's how it breaks down:

1 - 2 absences: 100 points

3 absences: 80 points

4 absences: 60 points

5 absences: 35 points

6 absences: 10 points

7 -8 absences: 0 points.

If you miss more than 8 classes, you will fail the course.

Participating in class will earn students extra points here.

2. **Quizzes** (15 quizzes, 16.66 points each, 250 points total)

There are frequent quizzes in this course to make sure that everyone is doing and understanding the reading. Most are only a few questions long; the quizzes on history are more substantial. The quizzes are generally due before class on the day that the reading is due. You will take the quizzes on D2L, and they are mostly multiple choice.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

## WHAT TO BUY

- Ginkgotree. Ginkgotree (GT) is an online platform where you will receive most of your course readings. To sign up, click on the Ginkgotree page in the upper right-hand corner of our D2L page. \$10
- Gerda Weissman Klein, All But my Life. (ISBN: 9780679729778) This is available through UWM or another bookseller. \$10.
- Art Spiegelman, Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began (ISBN: 9780809015801) \$12.
- Ruth Klüger, Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered (ISBN: 1558614362), \$14.

TOTAL COST .....\$46.

3. **Journal** (400 points; 10 entries, 40 points each)

Most of the writing in this class will be done through journal entries, which allow you to regularly engage with the issues of the course. You will hand the journal into a D2L folder. I will give you a question every week, or you can choose your own. Please plan on typing your work into a word processing program and then pasting it into D2L (you may have to use keyboard controls to do this). Please do not attach a file.

Your journal entries must be a minimum of 250 words. Sometimes I'll break this and let you be more creative. Generally, I like creativity so if you feel driven to do something different, feel free to give it a go.

Fourteen journal entries are on the syllabus, but you need to only hand in TEN. If you do more, they can count towards your Flexible Learning Opportunities (Extra Credit).

4. **Midterm:** "The most important thing" essay/poster/project: 100 points

5. **Final Exam:** Doing Good assignment & presentation: 150 points. You will be working on this throughout the semester, and handing it in at the end. During the final exam, you will be presenting it to a small group of your classmates. Full assignment on D2L.

6. **Quiz on syllabus:** 10 points (Extra Credit!)

FINAL EXAM WILL BE HELD May 12, 2016 12:30 - 2:30, in this room.

## Flexible Learning Opportunities (Extra Credit)

### Up to 100 points total

I see extra credit as a way for students to take charge of their learning. Bomb a quiz? Forgot to do a journal? Do one or more of the below and get back on track.

1. Watch a Holocaust film from our class list (on D2L) and write a 1-2 page single-spaced paper about it. (up to 25 points each). Other films must be approved by me. .

2. Attend Holocaust-related events/lectures and write a 1 page, single spaced paper about them (up to 50 points). Please approve the activity with me first.

3. Comment on Ginkgotree to questions I post, or just on your own (5 points per comment).

5. Participate in a Twitter conversation that I'll host (up to 20 points for each). I've never actually done this before, but I took a class in the Fall called "Teaching with Twitter" and think we should try it.

## On the importance of enjoying life

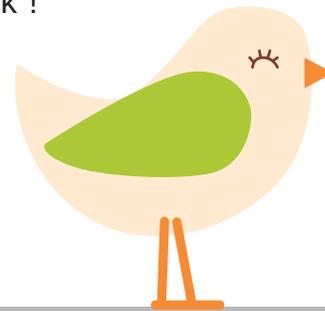
As the weeks go on, I will often give you the extra "homework" to "Do something life-affirming." It is intended as serious advice - even a requirement for succeeding in this class.

In this class, you will be looking directly at human evil, at how cowardice, group mentality, rationalization, political power, and other human traits lead to mass murder. This is hard work -- especially hard on the heart and spirit. Sometimes you will put down the work for this class feeling depressed, sad, or angry.

These are appropriate feelings to have about mass murder, and it is right to feel them. But we also have to find ways to counter them.

You will find that I am generally a happy person. I study a time of atrocity, and it gets to me, but the hidden gift of studying this time is that it has made me deeply appreciative of the many blessings in my own life -- a loving family, great friends, safety, and security.

So when I say, "Do something life affirming," I mean, do something that reminds you that life is really the best gift. That might mean hanging out with friends, calling your mom (!), climbing a mountain, working out, or rolling on the floor with your puppy. Whatever makes you happy to be alive will fulfill this "homework"!



### Grades

The grading for this course is based on 1000 points. Your final grade will be computed like this. You can keep track of your grade points on D2L.

950-1000 points = A

900-949 = A-

860 - 899 = B+

821 - 859 = B

800 - 820 = B-

760 - 799 = C+

721 - 759 = C

700 - 720 = C-

650 - 699 = D+

600 - 649 = D

Below 600 points = F

## Plagiarism & Cheating (Don't be a cheater)

Plagiarism is claiming someone else's work as your own. The internet has made it easier to plagiarize, and sometimes people don't even realize that they are doing it. For example, if you look up a review of a film that we are studying and someone says something smart, and you take that idea and put it in your paper, you need to credit the source -- even if you are putting it in your own words. It's fine to learn from online sources -- just give those sources credit. If you use their exact words, those words need to be in quotation marks, with the source clearly noted. If you are unclear about how to do this, I'm happy to help.

I expect you to complete quizzes on your own and not to share questions or answers with anyone else in the course.

I have a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism and cheating in large part because they take up a lot of time, depress me, and chip away at the crazy optimism required to be a teacher. Also, cheating is just wrong. I will report the case to the dean of students and you will fail the class.

.....

## Absences

If you are absent, please look on the syllabus to see what we covered that day. If you missed a film, please see me to determine if it is possible to still see it (Library films are on reserve at UWM).

I don't do "excused" vs "un-excused" absences because people can be sick without a doctor's note. If you have a special circumstance, do see me. I'm a person, not a robot. :)

## Religious Holidays

If you miss class because of a religious observance, you will be allowed to make up the work without penalty.

University Policy about these issues and others (e.g., students called to active military duty, discriminatory conduct, incompletes, etc) can be found at: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

## Help & Resources

If you're having challenges, don't go it alone -- there's help available!

1. If you're having technical issues, contact [help@uwm.edu](mailto:help@uwm.edu) or call 414-229-4040.

2. Make an appointment with me. You are welcome to email me, drop by office hours, or set up an appointment for a Skype session or phone call. I'm here to help!

3. Use the Writing Center. The Writing Center is a free resource for any stage of the writing process, from getting started to revising drafts to polishing a final essay. It's located in Curtin 127, x4339, and online tutoring is available as well!

4. Check out the resources of the Student Success Center. The Student Success Center is in BOL 120 and they offer a variety of help, from tutoring in certain subjects, to mentoring, to short courses on a variety of subjects. Stop by or spend time on their website to see all they do!

5. Go to Norris Health Center (x4716) for concerns about your physical or mental health.

UWM has offices with resources for Veterans, LGBT students, returning adult students, and more! Whatever your situation, don't hesitate to take advantage of all the help available -- that's what it's there for!

# LEARNING MATTERS

---

## What you'll learn in this class

A student successfully completing the class will be able to

- Identify the major events of the Holocaust and describe the historical progression of the Nazi murder of the Jews of Europe
- Describe the major ethical, aesthetic, and representational concerns around representations of the Holocaust
- Recognize, evaluate, and analyze the complex moral context of the Holocaust, with particular attention to the roles of victim, perpetrator, and bystander
- Analyze a Holocaust text (literature or film) with particular attention to the ethical, aesthetic, and representational issues raised by the text.

## Why it matters

We hear about Syrian refugees and we don't know what to do. Violence connected to racism and discrimination are in the news daily. Every day, we have to make decisions about images -- Do we share that graphic photo about war, or is that wrong to do to your Facebook friends? Is it always wrong to compare a political figure to Hitler, or is this comparison sometimes appropriate? While we won't be able to answer all these questions, learning about the Holocaust and considering the ethical issues of representation can help us to engage more complexly, thoughtfully, and ethically with these 21st-century issues.



### Credit Hour Policy

Federal Law requires that I tell you how many hours you will spend on this course. Here's how I think it will break down: In-class: 37.5 hrs, Reading: 60 hrs, Quizzes: 12 hrs, Writing: 30 hrs. But of course your mileage may vary. Saving the world may take extra time.

# Calendar

subject to change



Week	Date	Reading	Assignment Due
1	Introduction		
	Tues Jan 26	Syllabus.	Sign up for <a href="#">Ginkgotree</a> . Purchase books. Read syllabus & take quiz on it.
	<a href="#">Th Jan 28</a>		Journal #1 due by midnight on Jan 31
2	<a href="#">Holocaust History</a>		
	T Feb 2	Holocaust History I (first ½)	
	<a href="#">Th Feb 4</a>	Holocaust History I (second ½)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #1 on Holocaust History I due before Thurs class</li> <li>• Journal #2 due by midnight, Sun, 2/7</li> </ul>
3	What is the importance of one person's story?		
	T Feb 9	<a href="#">Gerda Weissman Klein</a> , <i>All But My Life</i>	
	<a href="#">Th Feb 11</a>	<i>All But My Life</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #2 due before class on 2/11</li> <li>• Journal #3 due 2/14</li> </ul>
4	How Do Images Tell a Story?		
	T Feb 16 (videos in class)	Holocaust History II	
	<a href="#">Th Feb 18</a> (videos in class)	Holocaust History III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #3 (on Holocaust History II) due before class 2/18</li> <li>• Quiz #4 (on Holocaust History III) due 2/21</li> <li>• Journal #4 due 2/21</li> </ul>
5	The " <a href="#">Choiceless Choices</a> " of the <a href="#">Victims</a>		
	T Feb 23	<a href="#">Tadeusz Borowski</a> , "This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen"	Quiz #5 due before class
	<a href="#">Th Feb 25</a>	<a href="#">Sara Nomberg-Przytyk</a> , "The Block of Death" and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz #6 before class</li> <li>• Journal #5 due</li> </ul>

6	Survivor Fiction: Ida Fink		
	T March 1	Ida Fink, "A Scrap of Time," "*****" and "The Key Game"	Quiz #7 before class
	Th March 3	Ida Fink, "A Spring Morning" and "Behind the Hedge"	Quiz #8 before class Journal #6 due 3/6
7	Shoah		
	T March 8	<u>Ginkgotree</u> reading	
	Th March 10		Journal #7 due 3/13
	SPRING BREAK MARCH 12 - MARCH 20		
8	Why Did the Murderers Become Murderers?		
	T March 22	Four excerpts from The Good Old Days	Quiz #9
	Th March 24	Christopher Browning, "One Day in <u>Jozefow</u> : Initiation to Mass Murder." Bernard <u>Gotfryd</u> , "Helmut Reiner."	Quiz #10 Journal # 8 due 3/27
9	Poetry		
	T March 29	Paul <u>Celan</u> , "Death Fugue"	
	Th March 31	Read the whole poetry bundle in <u>Ginkgotree</u>	Journal #9 due 4/3
10	<u>Maus II</u>		
	T April 5	<u>Maus II</u>	
	Th April 7	<u>Maus II</u>	Quiz #11 Journal #10 due 4/10
11	Second Generation Literature		
	T April 12	J. J. <u>Steinfeld</u> , "Ida Solomon's Play." Carl Friedman, "from <u>Nightfather</u> "	Quiz #12
	Th April 14	Thane Rosenbaum, "Cattle Car Complex", J.J. <u>Steinfeld</u> , "The Apostate's Tattoo."	Quiz #13 Journal #11 due 4/17
12	<u>Train of Life</u>		
	T April 19	DVD, in class	
	Th April 21	DVD, in class	Journal #12 due 4/24

13	Still Alive		
	T April 26	Still Alive, pp	Quiz #14
	<u>Th</u> April 28	Still Alive, pp	Journal #13 due 5/1 <b>(everyone must do this one)</b>
14	Holocaust Representation in Art, Music, and the <u>Digital</u>		
	T May 3 Art & Music		
	<u>Th</u> May 5 The Future		Journal #14 due 5/8
15	<u>Paper Clips</u>		
	T May 10	DVD, in class	
	Final: May 12, 12:30 - 2:30, in this room		