

JEWISH STUDIES (JST)

JST 524: Remapping the Holocaust

3 Credits

In most university courses, the Holocaust is taught chronologically, beginning with the rise of the Nazi Party and then following the German armies through Europe and into the Soviet Union. The retreat of those same forces beginning in 1943 parallels the concentration and professionalization of the killing process which then begins to break down as the war comes to an end. This narrative is not incorrect, and certainly makes sense for introductory courses. Yet it also mirrors the perpetrators' perspective. A graduate course allows us to explore different perspectives on the war and genocide and how these affect both the periodization and the geography of the Holocaust. In this course we will examine a number of divergent historiographic trends regarding the origins, enactment, end, and aftermath of the Holocaust. These will help students to think more broadly about the place of the Holocaust in world history and how new theories, methods and questions can be applied to other historical events.

Cross-listed with: GER 524

JST 530: Ancient Judaism: Special Topics

3 Credits/Maximum of 3

This course offers rotating topics in the study of ancient Judaism. The choice of primary topic in each iteration of the course is made by the instructor. The course features advanced study of Judaism in a range of historical settings, from its beginnings in biblical Israel to the development of Jewish texts, traditions, and communities in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. By adopting a critical approach, this course offers students an opportunity to conduct and examine research on ancient Judaism in a theoretically informed, cross-disciplinary manner. The course brings methods, material, and insights from Jewish studies to bear on ongoing work in many fields, including history, philosophy, political theory, religious studies, and comparative literature. Course topics may be thematic, revolving around specific themes like diaspora, Jewish identity, Jewish experiences of empire, or questions of gender. They may be organized around specific places or periods, for example: the history of Jerusalem, Jews in Hellenistic Egypt, first-century Palestine, Roman-era Alexandria, or late antique Babylon. They may also include the analysis of Jewish literature or textual traditions within their social, political, religious, and cultural contexts. The aim of the course is to provide students with critical exposure to aspects of ancient Judaism as well as a solid grounding in scholarly research methods.

Cross-listed with: CAMS 530, RLST 530

JST 532: Holocaust and Visual Culture

3 Credits

This course studies how art, literature, film, and other media can provide a perspective on one of the most horrific events in human history, the Holocaust: the genocidal murder of more than six million men, women, and children (mostly Jewish) under the Nazi regime during World War II. The course examines the theoretical questions involved in any attempt to capture what appears to be beyond comprehension in terms of moral outrage and the sheer scale, inhumanity, and bureaucratic efficiency of the violence perpetrated by the Nazis. This course examines formal approaches of depicting the Holocaust in literature and film, as well

as photography, museum installations, and memorials. Topics to be discussed include include memorialization (Holocaust museums and memorials), mass murder of the disabled, national guilt, survivor's guilt, stigmatization, and the ethics of historical representation. The course will analyze cinematic strategies for representing the unrepresentable, dark humor about the Holocaust, the persistence of the past, Nazi propaganda, Holocaust photography, trauma theories, graphic novels, the Nuremberg trials, survivor memoirs, representations of the Nuremberg Code and the International Bill of Norms, and possibilities for art after Auschwitz.

JST 535: Studies in Jewish American Literature

3 Credits

This course offers students a working analytical familiarity with the history of Jewish writing in the United States (in North American context) and with both the history and the current state of professional study of it. Attention will be paid both to dominant and alternative narratives of this literature. Major historical topics include the earliest, pre-19th century Jewish writers in America; 19th century Jewish American writers; writers of the great Ashkenazi immigration wave of 1881-1924; interwar proletarian and modernist writers; postwar writers of assimilation; the mainstreaming of Jewish American literature in the 1950s and 1960s; post-"breakthrough" Jewish American writers; and 21st-century Jewish American literature and the new immigration. The course analyzes the development of the professional field of Jewish American literary study, including its prehistory and origins in Wissenschaft-based historicism; the professionalization of the field in the Viet Nam era; the growing dominance of so-called New Jewish Cultural Studies of the '80s and '90s; and new theoretical approaches of the first decades of the 21st century. Finally, the course examines the key debates and faultlines in the field today, including the divide between historicist and critical approaches; differences between English Department-based and Jewish Studies-based Jewish American literary study; the situation of Jewish American literary study vis-à-vis Americanist literary study and English Department-based literary study more generally; Cultural Studies-based approaches to the field vs. Literary Studies-based approaches; Comparativist approaches vs. non-Comparativist approaches; the move toward interdisciplinarity; and the ongoing struggle to theorize the field.

JST 536: Global Cultures of Genocide

3 Credits

The history and memory of the Holocaust, the Armenian, Cambodian and other forms of genocide, are often taught separately in different disciplines. This course will examine them together through the various ways different societies dealt with, experienced, and understood these. Using the extensive literature on the history of genocide this course further suggests ways in which these tragic events affected and were entangled by each other's. Specific content will vary according to individual instructor, but topics may include victim cultures, ethnic cleansing, trauma, human rights, dark tourism, memorials, and architecture, as well as the general impact of these tragedies on global politics, or the way the memories of the tragedies were entangled with the civil rights and other struggles in American and global history.

JST 537: Photography, Race, Genocide

3 Credits

This course explores the role of photography in the context of the racialized politics of genocides and their aftermaths. The course aims to critically examine photographic evidence of genocidal violence,

revealing the long shadow of modern genocides from colonialism, to the Holocaust, the Armenian, Cambodian, Rwandan genocides, to the present. At the intersection of modern constructs of race as they culminate in genocidal violence, the course investigates the political and ethical potential of photography. Topics include: definitions of genocide; modern genocides; colonialism and the concept of race; the origins of photography; photography in literature and film; the civil contract of photography; the ethics of testimonies; atomic light; commemoration and the aftermath of genocides; race after technology.

Cross-listed with: GER 537, VSTUD 537

JST 596: Individual Studies

1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Creative projects, including nonthesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.