

Dr. MITCHEL GERBER
COURSE SYLLABUS (PLEASE DO NOT CITE WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE
AUTHOR. COMMENTS ARE APPRECIATED)
UNIVERSITY STUDIES PROGRAM SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY and RELIGION

Title of Course: The Holocaust **2003**
Course No.: UI440

Title of Course: The Holocaust

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

A critical analysis and examination of some of the fundamental political philosophical questions, normative concepts and ethical problems of the Holocaust. (3 Credit Hours)

II. Interdisciplinary Nature of the Course:

The substantive content of this particular course on the Holocaust grounded in a political philosophical perspective (various political philosophical theories, vocabularies, arguments, problems, normative principles, and values, as they developed and took root in diverse particular historical contexts pertinent to the Holocaust) and the general approach and overall teaching strategy of intellectual and cultural historical analysis of political philosophical ideas are systematically interconnected to promote a highly sophisticated interdisciplinary course. An interdisciplinary approach to teaching the Holocaust necessitates the careful interfacing or intersecting of disparate modes of inquiry which do not naturally coalesce or converge into one *Weltanschauung* or world view. Due to the very nature of the Holocaust (i.e., the historical and political complexities; moral ambiguities and uncertainties; ideological, cultural and intellectual competing paradigms; the very testing of religious faiths; and the power and appeal of modern scientific reason and technology) an interdisciplinary approach is the most natural and beneficial in synthesizing discrete levels of understanding into a much more comprehensive whole. The most appropriate disciplinary perspectives that I have selected and integrated in my attempt to provide a holistic interpretation and representation of the Holocaust include political philosophy, political science, ethics, intellectual history, sociology, and religion. Through this critical mode of analysis, artificial distinctions between philosophical analysis, political studies, historiography, the history of philosophy, and sociological and economic analyses will disintegrate. In particular, political philosophy and intellectual history are the natural cornerstones that are relied upon to establish a conceptual framework of themes, ideas, issues, theories, and explanations consistently articulated throughout the course. An interdisciplinary approach to the Holocaust interconnects disparate perspectives, and paradigms of critical analysis that encourage students to be comfortable with the inherent ambiguities,

complexities, paradoxes, and skepticism associated with such a multifaceted problematic topic. For example, contextualizing the political ideology of Nazism and the rise of the modern bureaucratic military state in Germany in conjunction with the popularly perceived institutional and cultural weaknesses and ultimate collapse of Weimar democracy encourages the serious student to discover and articulate specific points of connection among disparate disciplines, and consequently illuminate areas of scholarly interest that were previously only partially understood or eclipsed. This particular course on the Holocaust will analyze issues from the interdisciplinary perspectives of politics and political philosophy (political systems), culture, religion, and social philosophy (social systems), and ethical theory (behavioral systems). This course is designed to demonstrate to students the linkage between diverse political philosophical systems of thought and various historical and social contexts. The substantive details of the interdisciplinary nature of this course is delineated below.

III. Prerequisites: Junior or senior standing and completion of University Studies Core Curriculum, or consent of instructor.

IV. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

Students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the use of the intellectual history of ideas approach to study the interconnections between social, economic, historical, political, and philosophical thought pertaining to the Holocaust. (Objectives 1, 2 and 6)
2. Identify and demonstrate through critical analysis the essential logical and ethical elements of the arguments expressed in a variety of political philosophical theories pertaining to the Holocaust (e.g., Nazism, Fascism, Totalitarianism, Collective Mass-Movements, “Intentionalism” v. “Functionalism”, Anti-Semitism, *Volksgemeinschaft*, Global Human Rights and International law). (Objectives 2, 6 and 7)
3. Evaluate analytically and rigorously the logical and moral status of political theoretical, philosophical, and intellectual historical arguments articulated by disparate thinkers that impacted upon the origins and evolution of Nazism and the Holocaust. (Objectives 2, 3 and 7)
4. Identify and articulate many of the fundamental social, political, economic, cultural, religious and ethical issues and problems expressed by various contemporary scholarly analysts and interpreters of the Holocaust and genocide. (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)
5. Evaluate analytically and rigorously the logical and moral status of the arguments and theories articulated by contemporary scholarly analysts and interpreters of the Holocaust and genocide. (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)
6. Identify and articulate prescriptive social, political, economic, theological and ethical resolutions recommended by contemporary Holocaust scholars

(particularly political theorists and moral philosophers) to avoid and resolve genocide. (Objectives 2, 3, 7 and 9)

7. Express the systematic interconnections and analytical links between the diverse social, racial, religious, cultural, ethical and political philosophical concepts and arguments expressed within particular political theories that impacted upon the origins and evolution of Nazism and the Holocaust. (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)

8. Express the systematic interconnections and analytical links between the distinct concepts and arguments expressed within the particular theories and interpretations of contemporary Holocaust scholars (particularly political theorists and moral philosophers). (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)

9. Discuss critical evaluations and comparisons of logical, ethical and empirical strengths and weak points between diverse contemporary political philosophical and ethical theories of the Holocaust and genocide. (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)

10. Articulate sophisticated responses, logical arguments and serious questions in regards to provocative questions and issues pertinent to the Holocaust and genocide. (Objectives 2, 3, 6 and 7)

V. Expectations of the Students:

1. To attend consistently all scheduled classes and to be prepared in all assigned work.

2. To participate and to engage actively in class discussion and dialogue with other students and the instructor.

3. To maintain diligently a systematic set of class notes and to finish all required reading assignments on time.

4. To take three major examinations (including a final exam), that will be composites of objective questions (multiple choice and/or identification) and analytical essay questions in which they clearly demonstrate comprehension of the critical thinking skills and substantive material of the course.

5. To prepare and orally respond to a series of analytical questions posed at the end of each prior session.

6. To prepare an oral presentation on a Holocaust political philosophical issue or normative concept.

7. To prepare an interdisciplinary (15-20 page) written research paper.

8. To comprehend the diverse conceptual frames of reference by which various theories and interpretations of the Holocaust are designed and articulated.

9. To be able to evaluate critically scholarly research in the study of the Holocaust.

VI. Course Content or Outline:	<u>Weeks</u>
A. Methodological Context (Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9)	2
1. The Language and Purpose of Political Philosophy and Political Theory in Conceptualizing the Holocaust.	
2. The Languages and Techniques of the Social Sciences in Studying the Holocaust.	
B. Cultural, Intellectual, and Historical Context (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	2
1. The Deep Western Roots of anti-Semitism.	
2. Jewish Emancipation, Acculturation, and Assimilation.	
3. German Anti-Semitism: Hitler's and the Nazis' <i>Weltanschauung</i> (Worldview).	
C. The Political Philosophical Context (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	2
1. The Problematic Issue of the "Unique Nature" of the Holocaust.	
2. The Political Ideology of Nazism.	
3. The Problematic Issue of the Origins of the Holocaust: "Intentionalism" v. "Functionalism."	
D. The Role of Perpetrators: The Issue of Power and Powerlessness (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	2
E. The Role of Bystanders: The Issue of Power and Powerlessness (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	2
1. The Role of Individual Bystanders.	
2. The Role of Nation-State Bystanders.	
F. The Role of Victims: The Issue of Power and Powerlessness (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	2
1. The Moral and Political Philosophical Dilemmas Encountered by the <i>Judenrat</i> (Jewish Council).	
2. The Complexities of Concentration Camp and Ghetto Life.	
3. The Actions and Roles of Resisters.	
G. The Role of Rescuers (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7)	1

- H. Is Closure Conceivable? (Objectives 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7) 2
1. Remaining Religious, Ethical, and Political Philosophical Implications and Questions.
 2. A Comparative Analysis of Contemporary Genocide.
 3. The Holocaust as the Paradigm of Twentieth Century Genocide and the Prescriptive Religious, Ethical, and Political Philosophical Lessons to Avoid Future Genocide on a Global Scale.

VII. Textbooks

Ida Fink, *A Scrap of Time and Other Stories*. Northwestern University Press, (1995).

Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Holmes and Meier Publishers, (1985).

Donald L. Niewyk, ed., *The Holocaust: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*. Houghton Mifflin, (1997).

John K. Roth and Michael Berenbaum, eds., *Holocaust: Religious and Philosophical Implications*. Paragon House, (1989).

(All of the above cited books are required for the course. The first three required books are relatively inexpensive paperbacks to be purchased from the Southeast Bookstore. Roth and Berenbaum's *Holocaust: Religious and Philosophical Implications* is the most expensive required book for this course, and this textbook will be borrowed from Textbook Rentals.)

VIII. Basis of Student Evaluation:

1st Major Examination: 20%
 2nd Major Examination: 20%
 Oral Presentation: 10%
 Research Paper: 25%
 Final Examination: 25%
 Total: 100%

IX. Justification for Inclusion in University Studies Program: The Justification for inclusion is presented by objective.

1. Demonstrate the ability to locate and gather information.

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: Identification of Library research sources of information pertinent to the Holocaust will be emphasized and incorporated throughout the substantive content of the course. A great variety of indexes, abstracts, reference research sources and journals pertinent to the fields of political theory, philosophy, history, sociology, and religion in particular, and the Holocaust in general will be articulated. These diverse sources of information will enable students to historically trace the dynamic intellectual development of major themes and concepts in various Holocaust contexts. Informational sources will be derived from disparate disciplinary documents (i.e., political philosophical or ideological essays, art, literature, film, music, records on the demographic movements of Jews during the Holocaust, specifically in reference to population shifts of Jews migrating from Germany or occupied Europe to other countries, towns or rural locations to urban densely populated areas; transportation to concentration camps, forced labor camps, death marches; and the movement of the *Einsatzgruppen*-- much of these developments are documented by Martin Gilbert's *Atlas of the Holocaust*). These informative sources of scholarly research probe and illuminate the complexities of diverse historical and social contexts of the Holocaust (so that students raise such questions as e.g., what was the impact of various demographic factors upon the development of the Holocaust and the evolution of the "Final Solution" and a determination of the *Judenfrage* ("Jewish Question or Problem"). Some brief discussion of general research methods and research designs useful to the study of the Holocaust will occur early in the semester.

Teaching Strategies: Students will be given instruction for researching political, social and behavioral materials as they relate to critical issues of the Holocaust. Lectures and discussions will focus on available library holdings and other materials that provide essential information required for the completion of a variety of student assignments. In particular, lectures and discussions will be used to identify resources from which pertinent substantive material for the research paper, oral presentation and other student assignments can be collected.

Student Assignments: Students are required to write a research paper consisting of a detailed substantive analysis and commentary on many fundamental political philosophical, normative and ethical political principles or concepts: 1) civil, political, human and natural rights of victims; 2) political ideology of Nazism; 3) memory and representation of the Holocaust; 4) unique nature of the Holocaust; 5) Holocaust commensurability and comparative genocide; 6) political obligations/duties; 7) medical experimentation and torture; 8) moral obligations of "ordinary Germans"; 9) moral obligations of bystanders (individuals and nations); 10) the moral and political decision-making of Holocaust rescuers; 11) the role of international law and war crimes; 12) moral and political dilemmas, options and decision-making of the *Judenrate* (Jewish Councils); "intentionalism" v. "functionalism"; 14) Jewish resistance; and 15) the multiple theological and religious implications of the Holocaust particularly for Judaism and Christianity. In addition, each student will randomly select an "Identification Card" (provided

through the courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). Students will locate, collect, read, and research a variety of scholarly sources (e.g., journal articles, magazine articles, newspaper articles, scholarly essays and books, Web sites etc.) that offer information and critical analysis to help them recreate, as much as intellectually possible, the “identity” of the person depicted by your card. An annotated “Webography” will be distributed to students with helpful Holocaust Web sites. Students are required to write a very detailed commentary and analysis of the context or background of the individual, not of the individual her or himself. They are instructed to focus on the particular groups or category the person is identified with. For example, what were the experiences of a Jewish female living in a ghetto in Kaluszyn, (a small rural community), Poland?

Student Evaluation: Students will be evaluated based upon the criteria of correctly identifying a variety of appropriate sources of information, collecting pertinent information and synthesizing systematically such diverse interdisciplinary material. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this course, students will be required to demonstrate competence in identifying and using a variety of scholarly sources from several disciplines, as they complete particular requirements of each assignment.

2. Demonstrate capabilities for critical thinking, reasoning and analyzing.

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: Critical thought, analysis and evaluation of the complex interconnections between particular historical forces and intellectual systems in the context of the Holocaust are emphasized by the content of the course. The substantive content of the course focuses on an analysis of such issues as: the historical tensions and dialectic between the vanishing traditional conservative and orthodox nature of Western European Jewry, particularly in Germany largely due to the *Haskala* (Jewish Enlightenment) and the continued pervasive anti-Semitism and exclusion by Christian Western European society; the continuity and discontinuity in the evolutionary stages of Jewish isolation, emancipation, assimilation, and acculturation in European society; and the continuity and discontinuity between earlier medieval European anti-Judaism (which is religiously focused) and modern 19th and 20th century European anti-Semitism (which is racially focused). It is the nature of a Holocaust course with an emphasis in political philosophy to encourage students to engage in rigorous conceptual analysis and critical evaluation of the significance of disparate normative political philosophical concepts, principles, arguments and issues directly pertinent to the study of the Holocaust. As such, the substantive content of this course will be examined directly and explicitly through the skills of critical thinking, reasoning and analyzing expressed by this particular objective.

Teaching Strategies: The most effective teaching strategy to be used in a Holocaust course with a political philosophy focus is the Socratic dialogue. This particular method facilitates the critical thinking, reasoning, analyzing and evaluating skills exercised by students, as their presuppositions, positions, arguments and theories are questioned critically and directly by the instructor and other students. Another highly significant method to be used to develop this objective are the assigned oral presentations focusing on critical normative and ethical concepts and fundamental principles of politics (i.e., political ideology of Nazism) pertinent to the study of the Holocaust. In addition, analytical thought provoking questions raised at the end of each session will require students to orally respond to such questions in the following sessions. This particular teaching strategy is critical to a Holocaust course with a political philosophy focus. The conceptual framework of the course is primarily designed by active student learning and thoughtful substantive responses to disparate critical political philosophical provocative questions on the Holocaust: Was it “ordinary men” representing the potentiality of the universality of human evil (represented by Christopher Browning’s *Ordinary Men* or Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*) that shaped the ideological and operative nature of the “Final Solution” or was the resolution of the *Judenfrage* dependent upon the uniqueness of evil not in men qua men, but the uniqueness of evil particular to the German people in that specific historical context--a kind of national cultural or character trait, or *Weltanschauung* of deep-rooted anti-Semitism (represented by Daniel Goldhagen’s provocative work *Hitler’s Willing Executioners?* How, why and when did the Nazis determine a policy of total annihilation of the Jews of Europe? These questions will be critically examined in conjunction with the students’ analysis of the legitimacy of the arguments articulated by both the “functionalist” and “intentionalist” perspectives. How should we critically evaluate the ethical behavior and political responsibility of several disparate groups: ordinary Germans, the citizens of defeated and occupied nations, Germany’s allies, the various churches throughout Europe, the Anti-Nazi Allies, in particular Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union, neutral governments, such as Sweden, Spain, Eire, and Switzerland (the issue of bystanders), and of the Jews themselves? Why did a higher percentage of Jews survive in Fascist Italy and nations allied to Germany, such as Romania and Hungary than in Anti-Nazi Holland with its democratic tradition and long history of toleration towards Jews? Why were so many Jews murdered in Poland? Does an explanation of this reside in the religious anti-Judaism of the native population? Why do the Jews appear to have provided very little resistance? Is this even an appropriate question to ask? How do we critically assess the degree of moral responsibility of the Jewish leaders (particularly Jewish elders in the *Judenrate*) and the specially created Jewish police force in the ghettos of Poland? How should we critically evaluate the role of the Reich railway officials who drew up rail schedules? How was it possible for a highly cultured, civilized society, Germany, which had provided the world with such outstanding intellectual figures as Beethoven, Brahms, Hegel, Kant, Marx, and Goethe sink to such a moral abyss, to such depravity, horrific barbarism, which was

implemented in such a cold, dispassionate, efficient methodical way? What was the specific connection between Nazi anti-Semitic ideology and racial theories and earlier historical expressions of anti-Judaism in European Christian history? To what degree was the intensity of the Nazi policies of genocide connected to the particular political, social, economic, and psychological conditions dominant in Germany in the immediate years following Germany's humiliating defeat in World War I and the implementation of the strict conditions of the Treaty of Versailles? Can it be argued that Germany's descent to savage barbarism, a policy of genocide be linked to a fear of Bolshevism? Is it historically accurate that intense, fully committed Nazi racist anti-Semitism was only minimally appealing to "ordinary Germans," including even those who voted for Hitler and the Nazi party? To what extent was the potential human capacity for indifference to horrific suffering of others helpful in explaining the mass murder of six million Jews and millions of others? How was it conceivable for particular individuals, whose vital roles were critical and necessary for implementing the "Final Solution" of the *Judenfrage* to be persuaded or conditioned to believe that killing Jews was morally no more harmful than killing lice or rodents, vermin and to be thought of as morally justifiable? How does one reconcile the methodical murder of 1.5 million Jewish children with the roles of God in human affairs? What were the comparative distinctions between the Jewish experiences of Nazism and that of 5.5 million other civilians, including gypsies, handicapped, Poles, Russians, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, socialists, communists, pacifists, and many others who were also murdered coldly? A major theme of contemporary Holocaust literature: Is the horrific destruction of European Jewry incomparably unique as a historical phenomenon or is it one particular case among others within the broad category of genocide? In general, class discussion will generate questions for students to respond to by clear and consistent argumentation.

Student Assignments: A variety of other student assignments will be used including oral presentations, research paper and analytical essay questions that directly focus on this objective. Critical thinking, reasoning, and analyzing skills will be exercised in each of these assignments. In all of the exercises, students will be required to analyze political philosophical problems, justify political philosophical positions, arguments and theories and critically evaluate a variety of political philosophical positions, arguments and theories critical a comprehension of the Holocaust.

Students Evaluation: Student participation in the various assignments will be evaluated upon the basis of the qualitative level of critical thinking, reasoning and analyzing of a variety of ethical and political philosophical arguments, problems and theories pertinent to our understanding and analysis of the Holocaust. In particular, the criteria used for the evaluation of student projects consists of the degree of logical internal consistency, clarity, precise thought and developed argumentation and justification.

3. Demonstrate effective communication skills.

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: A central element of the course content requires students to identify and articulate the various modes of argumentation, persuasion, rhetoric, and debate used by perpetrators, bystanders, victims, and contemporary Holocaust scholars and Holocaust deniers in their primary source writings (e.g., diaries, correspondence, autobiographical fiction, ideological and propaganda essays, anti-Semitic tracts, and scholarly ethical and political philosophical essays, tracts, and treatises) and articulated in their particular historical contexts. For example, students will identify the modes of argumentation and rhetoric used in disparate Nazi political ideological and propaganda essays, such as Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Julius Streicher's *Der Strumer*, and documented statements of numerous members of the *Einsatzgruppen* ("Emergency Squads," or mobile killing units of the SS) as recorded in the book, *Good Old Days*. In addition, the eloquent and dramatic prose of Holocaust survivors (e.g., Ida Fink, Primo Levi, and Elie Wiesel) will be interpreted and analyzed according to several literary and logical criteria in conjunction with critical problematic issues central to scholarly studies of the Holocaust (e.g., individual and collective "memory"). The course content examines the linkage between particular modes of literary style and rhetoric inherent in various Holocaust works (especially scholarly political philosophical works that critique the ideological conceptual foundation of Nazism) of perpetrators, bystanders, victims, and contemporary scholars and particular social, economic, political, cultural contexts and historical developments (e.g., the mode of argumentation expressed in Heinrich von Treitschke's anti-Semitic works in conjunction with the early years of Jewish emancipation and assimilation in late 19th century Germany; and the mode of argumentation expressed in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in conjunction with the severe economic and political crises of the Weimar Republic in the 1920s and Germany's compliance with the Versailles Treaty of 1919). In addition, students are required to communicate effectively their positions and arguments through a variety of oral and written assignments. A major goal and critical element of particular course on the Holocaust is to encourage students to develop lucid arguments, logical argumentation skills and the ability to present positions and arguments through a variety of communicative formats.

Teaching Strategies: Students are expected to make a brief (10 minutes) oral presentation based upon the deep insights they have gained through their scrutiny of several political philosophical, ethical, or normative concepts addressed in their required research papers. Class presentations will emphasize the necessity of clarity and logical organization in the articulation of a dialogue focused on the Holocaust. Explicit instruction will be provided by the instructor to the class on the rigorous criteria and methods of effective communication for both written and oral presentations. In addition, either format of class lecture or discussion will encourage active student learning and participation. In particular, through a

Socratic dialogue students will be required to articulate serious lucid and logical arguments and responses.

Student Assignments: Each of the student assignments listed above focus specifically on this particular objective. A variety of oral and written assignments will emphasize and develop the use of effective communicative skills.

Student Evaluation: A variety of oral and written assignments will be critically evaluated by the criteria of clarity in expression of critical thought, cogent demonstration of an understanding of diverse arguments and theories pertaining to the Holocaust and precision in the interpretation and justification of various arguments and theories pertinent to the Holocaust. The general ability to effectively communicate on all assignments will also be measured by the formal technical elements (proper syntax, correct spelling, etc.) of presentations.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of human experiences and the ability to relate them to the present.

Emphasis: Considerable.

Course Content: A central substantive aspect of the course will encourage students to critically examine the historical, sociological, economic, cultural, intellectual, and political ideological contexts or roots of anti-Semitism, intolerance, and persecution in France, Germany, Spain, Austria, England, Poland, and Russia. The substantive course material will focus on and analytically trace the dynamic historical development primarily of ethical, ideological, and political philosophical concepts, arguments, principles and theories pertinent to the Holocaust in a variety of contexts. Secondly, students will focus on Holocaust testimonies and autobiographical accounts and narratives (i.e., Eli Wiesel, Charlotte Delbo, Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi.) so as to reveal the human personal lives and tragedies behind the statistics. Thirdly, the question of “ordinary men” v. inherent cultural traits of Germans will be discussed in conjunction with the issue of demonizing the perpetrators. And finally, students will be encouraged to articulate their own reference points--contemporary acts of genocide (i.e., Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia) for purposes of comparison to the Holocaust. This particular course will demonstrate the dynamic and complex interconnections between the intellectual and ideological forces of content and the social and economic forces of historical context. Under this particular objective, course content will critically examine the history of political philosophical ideas (i.e., nationalism, totalitarianism, Nazism, collectivism, authoritarianism, propaganda, anti-Judaism, anti-Semitism etc.) pertinent to the study of the Holocaust.

Teaching Strategies: The primary teaching strategy to be utilized is the substantive lecture on the history of ideas. This method is supplemented by class

discussion, Socratic dialogue and a research project emphasizing historical contextual analysis. These diverse teaching strategies are designed to assist students in comprehending and analyzing how contemporary concrete problematic political and ethical issues (e.g., genocide, human rights violations) are connected to the historical development of a variety of normative political concepts, principles, arguments and theories.

Student Assignments: The research paper will require students to analytically trace the development of political philosophical concepts, arguments, issues and normative principles in various historical contexts. For example, students will examine the collapse of the German Empire at the close of World War I, the rise of the Weimar Republic, and the critical problems, origins and evolution of the National Socialist Party and its leadership. Students will be expected to develop and express an understanding of the dynamic interaction between the intellectual and ideological forces of content and the social and economic forces of context. The research paper will also consider operative historical forces that to some extent gave shape and led to the development of particular philosophical arguments, partisan beliefs or political ideologies (e.g., the political agenda of the National Socialist Party).

Student Evaluation: Classroom discussion, oral presentation, research paper and exams will measure the level of the students' understanding of the history of political ideas and the interconnections of context and content.

5. Demonstrate an understanding of various cultures and their interrelationships.

Emphasis: Considerable.

Course Content: Although the course content will focus primarily on Modern Western and Central European cultural and political systems, comparative analyses of diverse European political cultures, intellectual, economic, religious and social belief systems (e.g., European Jewish and Christian belief systems; German and Austrian Jewry and *Ostjuden* or Eastern European Jewry; assimilated European Jews and unassimilated European Jews; Italian Fascism, German Nazism and various right wing populist movements in the United States and England in the 1920s and 1930s) in particular historical moments will be expressed. As such, the course content is designed to promote comparative historical analyses of distinct historical and social contexts. For example, comparative analyses and critical assessments of various manifestations of genocide will be explored (e.g., the Holocaust, Rwanda, Cambodia, Bosnia etc.) The course will use a longitudinal analysis to focus specifically on the intellectual development, transformation and continuity of anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic political philosophical and cultural ideas in nineteenth century and early twentieth century Germany, in addition to focusing on the evolution of German Nazism.

The complex, ambivalent and sometimes contradictory forces and anxieties of emancipation, assimilation or integration *and* religious and cultural cohesion of Jewish identity will be explored. For example, students will develop a critical understanding of the significant similarities and contrasts between German Nazism and Italian Fascism; medieval anti-Judaism and modern anti-Semitism; and various forms and theories of nationalism and racism. This breadth and scope of this course is indicative of its attempt to ground the Holocaust within a wide range of genocide studies and the analyses of collective or mass violence, racism, and ethnic bigotry, particularly as they are linked to and sponsored by the powerful instruments of the modern nation-state.

Teaching Strategies: The primary teaching strategy to be utilized to conform to this particular objective is the substantive lecture supplemented by class discussion. Students will be encouraged to investigate, expose and compare diverse sets of political theoretical and ideological frameworks. Lectures and discussions will demonstrate that diverse European political systems and systems of political thought (e.g., German Nazism, Italian Fascism, British Syndicalism) develop and articulate comparable political concepts, normative principles and political theories from a variety of perspectives.

Student Assignments: Students are expected to write (approx. 10 pages) detailed substantive analysis and commentary on two political philosophical, ethical, or normative political concepts (e.g., 1) civil, political, and natural rights of victims; 2) political ideology of Nazism; 3) memory and representation of the Holocaust; 4) unique nature of the Holocaust; 5) Holocaust commensurability and comparative genocide; 6) political obligations; 7) medical experimentation and torture; 8) moral obligations of “ordinary Germans;” 9) moral obligations of bystanders (individuals or nations); 10) the moral and political decision-making of Holocaust rescuers; 11) the role of international law and war crimes; 12) moral and political dilemmas, options and decision-making of the *Judenrate* (Jewish Councils); 13) “intentionalism” v. “functionalism”; 14) Jewish resistance; and 15) the multiple theological and religious implications of the Holocaust particularly for Judaism and Christianity). In addition, students are expected to make brief oral presentations based upon the deep insights they have gained through their scrutiny of one of the political philosophical, ethical, or normative concepts addressed in their research papers.

Student Evaluation: The extent to which students demonstrate an understanding and critical analysis of diverse interpretations of political ideologies, theories and problems by distinct schools of political thought (e.g., Nazism, Fascism, Syndicalism) political systems, and political cultures will be the primary means for evaluating student competency in this particular objective.

6. Demonstrate the ability to integrate the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: This particular objective is critical to the discipline of political Philosophy and is essential to interdisciplinary courses on the Holocaust. The issue of textual coherence and the explicit articulation of systematic interdisciplinary connections is particularly critical to a course as problematic, complex, and sensitive as the Holocaust. As such, this objective is pertinent to a variety of fundamental elements in this particular course. However, this objective is given special emphasis in Section I of the course outline. This particular section illustrates that a political philosophical approach to study the Holocaust is a systematically integrated perspective that incorporates a diversity of theories, presuppositions, critical interpretations, modes of critical analysis and strategies of inquiry. For example, students will study the “intentionalist” perspective, which claims that there was a clear objective, a premeditated “grand design,” a single uncompromising, predetermined consistent path to the gas chambers, an obvious intention and absolute ideological single-cause explanation of the Holocaust in conjunction with an analysis of the writings of Nazi ideology. In contrast, students will also study the “functionalist” school of thought, which claims that the “Final Solution” was an outcome of complex decision-making, unplanned evolution, incrementally unfolding not so much in response to ideological objectives or arguments, but rather emerging in a reactive instead of proactive way to different military and political conflicts and problems. Throughout the semester, and in conjunction with the methods employed to conform to the other objectives students will attempt to systematically integrate and connect diverse political theories and critical interpretations of anti-Judaism, anti-Semitism, and Nazism into a coherent understanding. In particular, students will critically examine the interconnections between diverse concepts, normative principles and arguments expressed in specific writings. For example, students will study Adolph Hitler's (and nineteenth century German and Austrian anti-Semitic thinkers) interpretations of the world and theories of racism, militarism, nationalism, global expansion, pseudo-science, and the *volksgemeinschaft* expressed in *Mein Kampf* and other works.

Teaching Strategies: The teaching strategies of lecture, discussion and Socratic dialogue will be utilized to expose a variety of critical interpretations, perspectives and disciplines pertinent to the study of the Holocaust. All of the teaching strategies will be designed to enable students to comprehend the connections between content and context. Students will be instructed that the purpose of the research paper will be to examine critically diverse theories and analytical frameworks of the Holocaust.

Student Assignments: All of the student assignments previously articulated for this particular course develop this objective. For example, successful completion

of a research paper involving rigorous conceptual analysis and a highly focused substantive investigation of some of the complex themes and issues of the Holocaust is required. A major component of this paper will require students to randomly select an “Identification” (provided through the courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). The cards provide a brief biography of a real person and victim of the Holocaust. The students are expected to write six to eight pages of very detailed commentary analysis of the context or background of the individual, focusing on the particular groups or category the person is identified with. For example, what were the experiences of a Jewish female living in a ghetto in Kaluszyn (a small rural community), Poland? In particular, students will focus on and analyze several of the following factors: (1) the historical context of the individual’s general life experiences; (2) the political and legal issues and problems confronting such individuals; (3) the economic context of the individual’s general life experiences; (4) the social and demographic factors that shaped such an individual’s life experiences; and (5) the most significant cultural factors that shaped such an individual’s life experiences. Finally, student oral presentations will articulate the analytical connections between diverse political philosophical and normative components within an interpretation or perspective of the Holocaust. Each particular exam will build on the prior exams and a comprehensive final exam will be administered.

Student Evaluation: All of the student assignments (research paper, oral presentation and exams) will be evaluated upon the central criterion to integrate systematically diverse political philosophical, intellectual historical and ethical elements of a particular theoretical interpretation or perspective of the Holocaust.

7. Demonstrate the ability to make informed, intelligent value decisions

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: The substantive core and content of this particular course on the Holocaust requires the study and the development of the critical thinking skill, active learning and the ability to make informed, intelligent value decisions. This course on the Holocaust encourages students to extend their serious analysis beyond subject or content mastery and to develop, refine and enhance critical thinking skills and moral reasoning skills, in addition to the enhancement of ethical dispositions needed to critically evaluate and resolve problematic moral issues pertinent to the Holocaust. Throughout the semester, students will be informed of and exposed to disparate ethical frameworks, including utilitarianism (e.g., act utilitarianism, rule utilitarianism, cost-benefit analysis, and situational ethics), deontological ethics (e.g., the moral theory of Immanuel Kant), ethical relativism, and ethical objectivism. For example, students will evaluate the ethical options available to various bystanders, victims, perpetrators and collaborators in the context of numerous historical case studies, which essentially involve moral problems and construct informed, intelligent value decisions in

each particular situation. In particular, students will critically scrutinize the ethical criteria different individuals utilized to justify decisions pertaining to such complex issues as medical experimentation, torture, the moral obligations of “ordinary Germans”, the moral obligations of bystanders, the role of Holocaust rescuers, the role of international law and war crimes, the actions of the *Judenrate* (Jewish Councils), and all expressions of resistance (Jewish and non-Jewish). The emphasis of the course content is to develop the critical thinking and normative process of sustained rigorous ethical justification and logical, formal argumentation. Ethical decision-making, justification and problem-solving are the essential critical analytical modes of inquiry of all political philosophy courses, including one with a focus on the Holocaust.

Teaching Strategies: The Socratic dialogue of sustained serious and critical questioning of students will be the primary teaching strategy to be utilized in fulfilling this particular objective. Through substantive lectures and focused discussions, students will be engaged in the philosophical and critical thinking processes of critical questioning (of values, premises, presuppositions and assumptions), argumentation and justification. Students will work seriously at the critical examination skill of identifying and articulating biases, assumptions, principles and values that underlie a variety of decisions made during the Holocaust and are at the core of disparate interpretations, perspectives and political theories offering distinct explanations of this horrific genocide. In particular, students will be instructed to consult and use disparate ethical frameworks (e.g., utilitarianism, deontological ethics, ethical relativism, and ethical objectivism) to construct and critically evaluate various moral claims pertaining to both individual and collective actions, political decisions, and public policies. In addition, students will be encouraged to develop competency working in the area of ethical justification by applying moral principles and logical arguments to normative problems and issues pertinent to the Holocaust. This process will allow students to design and defend rational, informed moral judgments and decisions to diverse problematic ethical issues of the Holocaust. Through lectures and discussions, students will be taught both basic formal and informal logical skills, techniques and methods of argumentation, justification and ethical decision-making (for example, deontological, utilitarian, etc.).

Student Assignments: All of the student assignments previously articulated for this particular course develop critical thinking skills pertaining to this objective to some extent. In all of the assignments students will be required to articulate the ethical principles linked to particular political or historical theories, arguments and problems and express logical value judgments. In addition, students will develop general critical evaluations of the arguments and value claims articulated by various Holocaust theorists in selected writings. In particular, students are expected to write ten pages of detailed substantive analysis and commentary on two of the following political philosophical, ethical, or normative political concepts: 1) civil, political, and natural rights of victims; 2) political ideology of Nazism; 3) memory and representation of the Holocaust; 4) the “unique” nature

of the Holocaust; 5) Holocaust commensurability and comparative genocide; 6) political obligations/duties; 7) medical experimentation and torture; 8) moral obligations of “ordinary Germans”; 9) moral obligations of bystanders (individuals and nations); 10) the moral and political decision-making of Holocaust rescuers; 11) the role of international law and war crimes; 12) moral and political dilemmas, options and decision-making of the *Judenrate* (Jewish Councils); 13) “intentionalism” v. “functionalism”; 14) Jewish resistance; and 15) the multiple theological and religious implications of the Holocaust particularly for Judaism and Christianity. In addition, students are expected to make an oral presentation based upon the deep insights they have gained through their scrutiny of one of the political philosophical, ethical, or normative concepts addressed in the research paper. Overall, students will develop competency in generating educated, rational ethical decisions regarding a variety of theoretical issues by utilizing pertinent normative principles and political philosophical values. In particular, oral presentations and essay exam questions will encourage students to articulate value judgments based upon systematic and logical thought.

Student Evaluation: The work that students complete (class discussion, examinations, oral presentations and research project) will be evaluated upon a variety of critical criteria. Such standards of competency include clarity and precision of thought, systematic coherence, internal consistency and logical soundness of argumentation and precision in the procedural logical steps of ethical problem-solving and moral decision-making.

8. Demonstrate the ability to make informed, sensitive aesthetic responses.

Emphasis: Some

Course Content: This particular objective is not a major focus of the substance of this course. However, the analytical critical thinking skills of constructing, justifying, evaluating and refuting arguments indirectly reflects the ability to make informed, sensitive aesthetic judgments. Students will be able to develop their abilities to make informed, sensitive aesthetic responses by acquiring an appreciation for the formal symbolic symmetry, precision and perfection demonstrated by a well designed systematic logical argument. In addition, students will enhance their skills to articulate informed, sensitive aesthetic responses through their reading, interpretation and critical analysis of various disparate literary works (e.g., fiction, autobiographical fiction, poetry) and art works expressive of Holocaust content and themes.

Teaching Strategies: The major teaching strategies to be used in fulfilling this objective are lecture and discussion. Students will be encouraged to express informed, sensitive aesthetic responses in relation to political philosophical arguments, prescriptions, normative principles and a variety of theories pertaining to the Holocaust. Students will be exposed to a variety of literary works to facilitate the fulfillment of this objective.

Student Assignments: The students will be expected to incorporate some aesthetic responses into their oral presentations and research papers. In addition, essay examination questions offer students the opportunity to demonstrate an ability to make informed, sensitive aesthetic responses.

Student Evaluation: None.

9. Demonstrate the ability to function responsibly in one's natural, social and political environment.

Emphasis: Significant.

Course Content: A major objective of any course on the Holocaust, particularly one with a political philosophical focus will be to encourage students to critically and seriously engage in making responsible political decisions and to act in an ethically political responsible and thoughtful way. As such, the extensive substantive normative content of this course will critically examine in detail this particular objective. The core of this course will involve the articulation of ethically responsible political visions, or prescriptions for how a political system and society, and in particular political institutions ought to be designed to avoid and respond to acts of genocide. Throughout the content of the course, students will be exposed to a variety of ethically controversial and problematic social and political contexts articulated in diverse interpretative analyses of the Holocaust. Students will study alternative modes and options of ethical and unethical behavior available to citizens in diverse political and historical contexts that enable such individuals to fulfill their moral, social, political, and civil obligations. Students will be informed of disparate ethical frameworks (e.g., utilitarianism, deontological ethics, ethical relativism, and ethical objectivism) that either were applied or available for potential use by individuals during different events pertinent to the Holocaust. For example, students will focus on the moral, social, civic, and political responsibilities of an individual in a variety of historical contexts and situations pertaining to the Holocaust. In particular, students will study the distinct roles, potential decision options, risks, and responsibilities of members of the *Judenrat* (Jewish Council), perpetrators, particularly members of the *Einsatzgruppen* (special-duty troops of the SS's Security Service and Security Police or mobile killing units), bystanders, collaborators, victims, resisters (including the acts of "righteous gentiles" and dissenters within Nazi Germany, including the White Rose). In this regard, students will be informed of a variety of ethical and political behavioral options to respond to such contexts. Students will be required to examine critically such problematic social and political contexts, identify pertinent normative principles and select the most applicable responsible positions towards those situations. Upon adopting a particular set of normative principles and subscribing to a preferable political theory students will learn how to promote responsible social and political change. In sum, the essence of a Holocaust course with a political

philosophy focus requires an understanding of prescriptions. This is the concept of normative recommendations based upon ethical visions or moral purposes that encourage social and political changes, ways to maintain an ideal or just political system, and modes to avoid genocide.

Teaching Strategies: The major teaching strategy to be utilized in implementing this particular objective will be the Socratic dialogue of critical questioning of student positions and arguments. Typical instructor-student dialogue will raise questions concerning the most desirable and responsible social behavior and moral response, the most desirable public policy in a given situation, the most preferable political institutions in a given context, ideal political leadership and authority and the nature of legitimate political systems. Lectures and discussions will encourage students to focus on the linkage of content and context expressed in diverse intellectual historical interpretations and political theories of the Holocaust. Students will learn how the selection of particular normative principles, values and political philosophical biases underlie subsequent social and political behavior. Students will be instructed to apply various moral principles derived from distinct ethical frameworks (e.g., utilitarianism, deontological ethics, ethical relativism, and ethical objectivism) to various situations pertinent to the Holocaust, so as to identify and express ethically responsible social and political decisions. For example, through simulation exercises and role-playing students will be assigned active positions of leadership and political decision-making in the *Einsatzgruppen* (there are recorded testimonies, diaries and correspondence of these perpetrators), the roles of war criminals defending their acts at the Nuremberg Trials, the roles of Nazi bureaucrats implementing the Nuremberg Laws in Germany, and the roles of rescuers confronting various risks.

Student Assignments: All of the students assignments previously articulated for this particular course develop the skills pertaining to this objective to some extent. In particular, the oral presentation, essay examinations and the research paper will require competency in this objective. Students should be able to demonstrate their critical thinking abilities to engage actively and seriously in articulating ethically responsible social and political decisions.

Student Evaluation: The design of student assignments will allow for the critical evaluation of a student's demonstrated ability to reflect seriously upon the interconnections between diverse moral, social and political factors significant in a particular context. In addition, students will be evaluated in terms of their abilities to synthesize such complex interdisciplinary factors into their responsible decision-making processes.

X. Background:

This particular course allows for flexibility, as it can be taught either by an individual or a team. Teaching this particular course on the Holocaust requires a strong background and a high degree of professional expertise in the discipline of political philosophy.

XI. Class Size:

Based upon the rigorous and demanding nature of this course on the Holocaust, and the fact that it will encourage students' critical and analytical research and writing skills, the maximum class size should not exceed twenty-five students.