

Post-Holocaust American Jews and Judaism, fall Quest 2020
T, Thurs 5:10-6:00pm,
REL3938/JST3930
Prof. Rachel Gordan, Dept. of Religion
e-mail: rgordan@ufl.edu
Office Hours: by appointment

Post-Holocaust American Jews
Fall 2020 Course Syllabus

Instructor Professor Rachel Gordan

Email rgordan@ufl.edu

Office Hours

By appointment

Teaching Assistant

Brady McCartney

Please feel free to be in touch with the professor and TA through the CANVAS email. Expect a response within 48 hours.

Syllabus content may change over the course of the semester, but the Professor will give students advance notice.

Course Information

This course on "Post-Holocaust American Jews" examines some of ways that the Holocaust affected American culture. In order to understand this change, we'll be spending some time in "before" moment, in the early 1940s. We'll spend a few weeks on the 1940s, in order to zoom in on the dramatic transformations that occurred in this decade. Not surprisingly, we'll see some pretty big changes in how Americans thought about Jews, antisemitism, and diversity, during this decade. The second section of our course will focus on the 1950s and 1960s, and the third will cover the last generation.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze primary sources from the mid-twentieth century
- Think comparatively about different eras in American Jewish history
- Use literary and popular culture sources to make a historical argument
- Think about Jews in relation to broader trends in American history and culture

Course Requirements

All readings will be available on CANVAS. Please be in touch with the professor if you're having trouble accessing them.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Minimum technology requirements

The University of Florida expects students entering an online program to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to his or her degree program. Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements. A student's computer configuration should include:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Broadband connection to the Internet and related equipment (Cable/DSL modem)
- Microsoft Office Suite installed (provided by the university)

Individual colleges may have additional requirements or recommendations, which students should review prior to the start of their program.

Minimum technical skills

To complete your tasks in this course, you will need a basic understanding of how to operate a computer, and how to use word processing software.

Materials/Supply Fees

There is no supply fee for this course.

Zoom

Zoom is an easy to use video conferencing service available to all UF students, faculty, and staff that allows for meetings of up to 100 participants.

You can find resources and help using Zoom at <https://ufl.zoom.us> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Course Policies

Requirements for make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/ ([Links to an external site.](#))

As this is an online class, you are responsible for observing all posted due dates, and are encouraged to be self-directed and take responsibility for your learning.

Course Policies

I will make every effort to have each assignment graded and posted within two weeks of the due date.

Course Grading Policy

Assignment	Points
Weekly section Three-part writing assignment	20 pts
Two 600 word essays (prompts will be provided)	30%
Final 800-word essay	20%
Section and Class Participation	20%
Pop quizzes	10%

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
94.0 – 100.0	A	4.00
90.0 – 93	A-	3.67
87.0 – 89	B+	3.33
84.0 – 86	B	3.00
80.0 – 83	B-	2.67
77.0 – 79	C+	2.33
74.0 – 76	C	2.00
70.0 – 73	C-	1.67
67.0 – 69	D+	1.33
64.0 – 66	D	1.00
60.0 – 63	D-	0.67
55 – 59	E	0.00

See the [current UF grading policies \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for more information.

UF Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

University Policy on Academic Conduct:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> (Links to an external site.)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Netiquette and Communication Courtesy:

All members of the class are expected to follow [rules of common courtesy](#) (Links to an external site.) in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats.

Please address emails to the professor with, *Professor Gordan*

Please make an effort to use your classmate's names when referring to their comments.

Getting Help

Technical Difficulties:

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu> (Links to an external site.)
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Health and Wellness

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#)) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Visit counseling.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#)) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#)).
- **University Police Department:** Visit police.ufl.edu ([Links to an external site.](#)) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care in Gainesville, call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Academic and Student Support

- **Career Connections Center:** 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services career.ufl.edu/ ([Links to an external site.](#)).
- **Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask ([Links to an external site.](#))
- **Teaching Center:** 352-392-2010 General study skills and tutoring: teachingcenter.ufl.edu/ ([Links to an external site.](#))
- **Writing Studio:** 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers: writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ ([Links to an external site.](#))

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/> ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Tips for Success

Taking a course online can be a lot of fun! Here are some tips that will help you get the most of this course while taking full advantage of the online format:

- Schedule "class times" for yourself. It is important to do the coursework on time each week. You will receive a reduction in points for work that is turned in late!

- Read ALL of the material contained on this site. There is a lot of helpful information that can save you time and help you meet the objectives of the course.
- Print out the Course Schedule located in the Course Syllabus and check things off as you go.
- Take full advantage of the online discussion boards. Ask for help or clarification of the material if you need it.
- Do not wait to ask questions! Waiting to ask a question might cause you to miss a due date.
- Do your work well before the due dates. Sometimes things happen. If your computer goes down when you are trying to submit an assignment, you'll need time to troubleshoot the problem.
- Whenever possible, try to read the readings. more than once. Our readings in this course are relatively short, so that you'll have time to read them more than once. You will get more out of them when you read them more than once.
- To be extra safe, back up your work to an external hard drive, thumb drive or through a cloud service.

Grading (how your progress will be assessed in this course):

- 1) Section 3-part comments. 20% Due by Thursday 10 pm: 1) One key take-away from the week
- 2) Favorite quotation or point from the week's reading/class discussion 3) Question from the week's readings
- 2) Two 600 word papers 30% Essay prompts will come from both class and readings, podcasts
- 3) Final 800 word essay 20%
- 4) Pop quizzes 20%
- 5) Section and Class participation 10Oct 29 &No

Grading Scale: Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A 93-100	C+ 77-79
A- 90-92	C 73-76
B+ 87-89	C-70-72
B 83-86	D 60-69
B- 80-82	E 0-59

For UF policies on grading, please see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Introduction

The Holocaust and Our Current Moment: Jews, Antisemitism, and Race

Tues. Sept 1 The Holocaust and American National Reckonings: Race, Blacks, and Jews

Thurs. Sept 3 Racism and Antisemitism with the backdrop of the Holocaust

Reading for today: Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste: the Origins of Our Discontents* (2020), chapter 3

Part I: The 1940s as a Transformational Decade

Tues. Sept 8 **1941:** Charles Lindbergh and the Jews

Watch The Plot Against America in Class

For today, please read Lindbergh’s Des Moines speech:

<http://www.charleslindebergh.com/americanfirst/speech.asp>

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Extra Credit Event: Plot Against America Zoom Event 7 pm

Thurs. Sept 10 **1941:** The Jewish Problem in America

For today: read “The Jewish Problem in America,” *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1941

Tues. Sept 15 **Wartime:** Making the connection between Nazism and American racism

For today, please read: Wilkerson, *Caste*, chapter 8 on CANVAS

Thurs. Sept 17 **1944:** An American Dilemma

For today: read *An American Dilemma* excerpt on CANVAS

Tues. Sept 22 **1945:** Frank Sinatra, *The House That I Live In*

For today, please watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gfm2l3GcVXw>

Thurs. Sept 24 **1946:** Jo Sinclair, *Wasteland*

For today: please read *Wasteland*, p 1-18 on CANVAS

Tues. Sept 29 **1947:** *Gentleman’s Agreement*

For today: please read, *GA*, chapter 1 on CANVAS

Thurs. Oct 1 **1947:** Laura Z. Hobson, *Gentleman’s Agreement*

For today: please read, *GA*, chapter 2 on CANVAS

- Tues. Oct. 6 **1947-1948:** *Anti-antisemitism Literature of the 1940s*
- For today: Please read “A Plaster on A Wound?” by Henry Seidel Canby and “Americans Without Distinction” by Diana Trilling on CANVAS
- Thurs. Oct 8 **1949:** W.E.B. Du Bois on European Jews
- For today: Please read “The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto,” on CANVAS
- Tues. Oct 13 Tying the 1940s threads together
- ****Monday October 19th: 750 words essay due by 12 pm (noon)*
- Part II 1950s and 1960s: Americans Confronting (and Not Confronting) the Holocaust**
- Tues. Oct 15 **1950:** John Hersey, *The Wall*
- For today, please read: “John Hersey and Noach Levinson” on CANVAS
- Thurs. Oct. 17 **1952:** Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*
- For today, please read: *The Diary of a Young Girl*, p. 1-12 on CANVAS
- Tues. Oct. 20 **1955:** Anne Frank, the Broadway Play
- For today, please read the following three short articles: “Germans Silent at ‘Anne Frank,’”
 “Inspired Theater”
 “A New ‘Anne Frank’: Still Stuck in the 1950s”
- Thurs. Oct. 22 **1959:** Introducing Judaism to Americans
- For today, please read, *This is My God*, by Herman Wouk, on CANVAS, p. 17-30.
- Tues. Oct. 27 **1961:** Eichmann Trial
- For today: please read Eichmann excerpt on CANVAS
- Thurs. Oct. 29 1963: Jews, Civil Rights Movements, the Holocaust, and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

For today, Please read: <https://momentmag.com/susannah-heschel-on-the-legacy-of-her-father-rabbi-abraham-joshua-heschel-and-the-civil-rights-movement/>

Tues. Nov. 3 **1967:** James Baldwin, “Negroes are Anti-Semitic Because They’re Anti-White,” *NYT*

For today, please read:
<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-antisem.html?mcubz=3>

Thurs. Nov. 5 Tying together the 1950s and 1960s threads

****Wednesday November 11th: 750 words essay due by 12 pm (noon)*

Part III The Holocaust for the Past Generation of Americans

Tues. Nov. 10 **1993:** the Year of the Holocaust

Thurs. Nov. 12 **1997:** Turn of the Century Anne Frank
For today, please read: “An Uncommon Heroine,” by Cynthia Ozick (1997), read pages: 76-84

Tues. Nov 17 Turn of the Century Anne Frank
For today, please read: “An Uncommon Heroine,” by Cynthia Ozick (1997), read pages: 84-87

Thurs. Nov. 19 Josh Lambert, Yiddish in America
Adventures in Yiddishland, Introduction on CANVAS

Tues. Nov. 24 The Contemporary Moment and our own Reckoning with Race and its echoes from an earlier, Holocaust Era

For today, please watch this brief August 2020 even with *Caste* author, Isabel Wilkerson:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExpouTYfJKY&t=347s>

Thurs. Nov 26. Thanksgiving

Tues. Dec 1 Tahneer Oksman Holocaust and Graphic novels
For today: Please read Nora Krug readings on CANVAS

Thurs Dec. 3rd Holocaust and Graphic Novels, continue

****Final Essay Due: December 7th, 12 pm*

Tues. Dec 8th Concluding remarks