

Genocide Prevention (MAHG 5034)

Spring 2015, Thursdays, 6 – 9 PM

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Hours Thurs, 10 AM – 5 PM
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Course Description

In the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, the United Nations passed the UN Genocide Convention, which was intended to help “liberate [hu]mankind from [the] odious scourge” of genocide. But, this scourge has not been eliminated, as is obvious if considers the 20th and 21st centuries: see further, Cambodia, Iraq, Bosnia, Rwanda, Srebrenica, and Kosovo, not to mention Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, and elsewhere.

MAHG 5034, *Genocide Prevention* will examine, critique, and discuss, among other topics, the 1948 UN Genocide Convention, the warning signs and stages of genocide, various forms of intervention and prevention to halt, or, at least, ameliorate genocide, some of the obstacles to intervention and prevention, as well as various UN and US documents on the topic of genocide prevention.

MAHG 5034, *Genocide Prevention* will be both theoretical and practical, with students reading widely in the area of genocide and genocide prevention, critically responding in writing and orally to what they read, engaging in discussion with each other and with scholars, and meeting the challenge of developing a *Profile in Prevention*, that is, an AV project about someone who is working in the area of genocide prevention.

Some Questions We Will Consider

- Why does genocide still happen? (Keep in mind: the overwhelming majority of nations in the world have ratified the *UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide*.)
- Are we just “whistling in the wind,” deceiving ourselves that we can do anything at all to stem the tide of genocide in our world?
- If genocide can be prevented, how can it be prevented? If it can’t be prevented, why can’t it be prevented?
- What motivates and sustains people who work in the area of genocide prevention?

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete MAHG 5034 should

- Understand and explain some of the ideas of Raphael Lemkin and other contemporary theoreticians of genocide;
- Identify and understand the criteria in the *UN Convention on Prevention and Punishment of Genocide* used to define genocide and be able to explain the strengths and weakness of that definition;
- Understand the differences between genocide and other mass atrocity crimes;
- Be able to identify early warning signs of genocide;
- Be knowledgeable about the discourse around genocide prevention;

- Understand and what is meant by “risk assessment”;
- Understand and differentiate between various types of intervention to prevent genocide;
- Identify and analyze obstacles to genocide prevention as well as factors enabling genocide prevention;
- Understand and explain what is meant by “The Responsibility to Protect”;
- Raise questions, including ethical questions, identify issues, and communicate ideas in written and oral forms about genocide prevention;
- Understand the complex interaction of actors, politics, and memory in genocide prevention; and
- Articulate personal views about the on-going struggle to develop a world if not free from genocide, at least less genocidal.

Required Books / Texts

Albright, Madeline K., and William s. Cohen. 2008. *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers*. Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (http://media.usip.org/reports/genocide_taskforce_report.pdf)

Bleeker, Mo, and Andrea Bartoli, eds., *Politorbis (2009 Genocide Prevention)* 47(2):9-156. [Special Issue; on-line; pdf]

Chalk, Frank, Romeo Dallaire, Kyle Matthews, Carla Barqueiro, and Simone Doyle. 2010. *Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Leadership to Prevent Mass Atrocities*. McGill-Queen’s University Press.

GPA Net 2012: Genocide Prevention Advisory Network
(http://www.gpanet.org/webfm_send/134)

ICISS, 2001. *The Responsibility to Protect: Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*. Ottawa, Canada.

Power, Samantha. 2013 edition. *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. New York: Basic Books.

Slim, Hugo, 2008. *Killing Civilians: Method, Madness, and Morality in War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

United Nations. 2014. *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A Tool for Prevention*. New York: UN Publications.

Class Structure

MAHG 5034, *Genocide Prevention* is a graduate seminar. You will get out of the seminar what you put into it. “*Good Will*” is not enough. You will need to keep up with the reading, produce intelligent and correctly written papers that demonstrate your thinking and serve as a preparation for your participation in discussion.

The seminar format makes all of us teachers and learners, because it requires from every one of us careful preparation as well as courtesy and civility in discussion. It requires honest dialogue, weekly attendance (the social basis for a continuing dialogue), and “truthfulness,” that is, no plagiarism.

I shall provide background and perspective as needed, *but the course depends on you and your participation*, which means you need to come to class each week prepared to take an active part in the discussion, to ask questions, to make comments, and to offer your best insights.

All written assignments must be prepared in standard academic form: that is, written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and error-free, by which I mean, your paper must be free of misspellings and grammatical errors. *Your papers do not have to be “brilliant” but they do have to be correct.*

Academic Honesty

You are bound by Stockton College’s official policies. Check plagiarism policy on the college’s website: <http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=14&pageID=62>. I take plagiarism seriously and will not hesitate to take action against dishonest students.

Students with Learning Disabilities

Students who may have learning disabilities and request special accommodations must be registered with the Learning Access Program (LAP), have provided appropriate documentation to the LAP program director, and is responsible for being sure that the LAP provides Professor Rittner with written documentation so she is aware of the special accommodations a student may require to be successful in MAHG 5034.

Personal Phones, Tablets, iPads, Laptops

As this is a graduate seminar, you are required to confine your personal texts, tweets, email messages, etc. to before class, at the break, and after class, **not** during class. Thank you for your cooperation.

Seminar Requirements (see below)

- **Attendance & Participation**
 - **Weekly Conversation Starters**
 - **Final Project: *A Profile in Prevention***
1. **Attendance and Participation:** Attendance and participation are very important components of your academic performance. Thus, you must be present and prepared to engage in meaningful discussion. If you miss a seminar session, you must do an equivalent “make-up” assignment. Because this is a graduate seminar, I do not intend to “chase after” you for you to complete the make-up assignment. It is your responsibility to complete the make-up work by the next class period.
 2. **Two (2) in-class Written Tests:** Do you know “the facts and figures” about genocide prevention? Tests will include some IDs, definitions, dates, etc. (The

UN definition of genocide is a definitely a *must know* item, so please be prepared).

3. **Conversation Starters:** Each week you prepare a “Conversation Starter” based on that week’s reading. Each “Conversation Starter” is to be at least one (1) **BUT not more than** two (2) single-spaced pages long – NOT shorter and NOT longer. Each “Conversation Starter” must include:
 - a. **One [1] paragraph answering this question:** *What did I learn from this reading that I did not know before I did the reading?* This means, you need to write a good paragraph identifying what insights, ideas, or concepts you gleaned from this reading that you may not have had before doing the reading – in other words, the sort of thing *a graduate student* studying for a *graduate* degree in Holocaust & Genocide Studies should be attuned to in everything s/he reads. **If you “got nothing” out of the reading, you must say why you got nothing out of the reading.**
 - b. **Two (2) or three (3) Key Sentences that “caught your eye,” or made you think, or shocked you, or made you question something you thought you already knew.** When you come to class, be prepared to defend, discuss, and/or elaborate on your selection(s).
 - c. **Three (3) to Five (5) Questions**, based on your reading, that you would like to raise for discussion in the seminar. Be prepared to defend **WHY** your question/questions are important to the study of *Genocide* Prevention.

Each week by Tuesday Midnight (12 AM), you will e-mail me your “Conversation Starter” (Carol.Rittner@Stockton.Edu) so I can read it, comment on it, get a sense of where your thinking is headed, and return it to you by Thursday, noon so you have it for class.

4. **Final Project: *A Profile in Prevention*:** This project will be a challenge. It will require you to identify and make contact (via email) with a practitioner in the field of genocide prevention. The practitioner could be
 - Someone who works for a NGO (non-governmental organizations), or
 - Someone who works at the United Nations Office of Genocide Prevention, or
 - Someone who works at the US Holocaust Memorial Council’s Center for Genocide Prevention, or
 - Someone in the military whose specific work is in the area of genocide prevention, or it could be a
 - Scholar whose work focuses on genocide prevention.

I shall make a number of suggestions about people you could contact, although I am open to your suggestions as well. You have to decide who interests you, look the person up, then make contact with her/him (via email, for example, or Facebook). (Sorry, only one person per student – No duplicates!) This is not something you can put off doing. You will have to get started on this project immediately.

Here is how I suggest you proceed:

- Select a person to interview from those suggested by Professor Rittner, or one of your own choosing;
- Contact the person via email or Facebook (you will have to find her/his email, etc.) and ask the person if she/he would be willing to be interviewed (via email). Be sure to mention that your project must be completed by April 20, 2015;
- Write one (1) single-spaced page identifying your person, his/her position, and why, in your view, s/he is your candidate for a *Profile in Prevention* (and be sure to say if the person is willing to be part of the project);
- Get Approval from Professor Rittner for your selection; then
- **Get started immediately.** Before you actually ask the questions, research the person and what s/he actually does.
- Contact the person and send her/him these questions **as well as two [2] or three [3] more of your own** (ask Professor Rittner, if you wish, if she thinks the questions are good ones):
 - Who are you, for whom do you work, what do you do?
 - How did you get involved in the work of “genocide prevention?”
 - How **do you** define/describe/explain what is meant by “genocide prevention?”;
 - What does a day or week look like for you as you work on genocide prevention?
 - What are the frustrations involved in your work? How do you deal with these frustrations?
 - What actions and policies do you think are most effective in the long-term prevention of genocide or other mass atrocity crimes?
 - Who or what inspires or motivates you to continue doing the work you do?
 - What advice do you have to give someone who may want to work in the area of genocide prevention?

Give the person one (1) week to respond (and do not wait until the week before the project is due!). If you don’t get a response, let me know immediately so I can try to intervene and nudge the person a bit.

Then,

- Edit the interview (that is, make sure it is grammatically correct and you have all the information you need);
- Complete your project;
- Present your *Profile in Prevention* project in class on either April 23 or 30, 2015.

Your *Profile in Prevention* project can be in any one (1) of the following formats:

- As a Video that is between ten (10) and fifteen (15) minutes long (from start to finish) profiling your person, his/her organization, and includes responses to the interview questions; **or**
- As an oral presentation in class that includes a power point (with images and slides having no more than 25 words on each slide). Your presentation should be

ten (10) to fifteen (15) minutes long. You also must hand in an edited and typed transcript of your interview; **or**

- You may write a 14-15 page research paper, typed and double-spaced, profiling your person, what she/he does, and (appropriately) incorporating parts of your interview in the paper. A typed transcript of your entire interview also must be handed in with your research paper.

Final Grades

• Attendance and Participation in Seminar Discussion	25%
• Conversation Starters	25%
• Final Project	50%
TOTAL	100%

Grades for the Course will be: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F

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Schedule

January

- 22 Read** Power, *Problem from Hell* (Preface to end of Chapter 5); in addition, **also Read and bring a copy to class**, 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention & Punishment of Genocide; **also Read**, Bauer, “Can Mass Atrocities Be Prevented?”; **also Read**, Rittner, “Next Steps in Genocide Prevention”
 - *Professor Steven L. Jacobs (University of Alabama) - Skype*
- 29 Read** Power, *Problem from Hell* (Chapter 6 - 9: pp. 87 – 327)

February

- 5 Read** Power, *Problem from Hell* (Chapt 10 – Conclusion: pp. 329 – 516)
 - *Ambassador Mohammed Sacirbey (Monmouth University) – class*
- 10 Tuesday, 4:15 – 7 PM** Attendance at Lecture & Discussion with Dr. Tibi Galis, The Auschwitz Institute, NY, NY (HRC Classroom)
- 12 No Class (Feb 10 class substitutes)**
- 19 Read** Slim, *Killing Civilians: Methods, Madness & Morality in War*
 - *Dr. Gregory Stanton (George Mason University) - Skype*
- 26 Read** Hayward, “Religion and the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocity” in *Politorbis*, 2/2009, pp. 107 – 113; Hayward, *Averting Hell*

on Earth Bartov and Mack, “Introduction” in Bartov and Mack, eds., *In God’s Name*.

- *Dr. Andrea Bartoli* - Skype

March

5 Field Trip to the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention, NYC

READ United Nations, *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A Tool for Prevention*

12 Spring Break – No Class

19 No Class (Prof Rittner at Oxford University) – Work on Project

26 Read Bartoli, Ogata, Stanton, “Emerging Paradigms in Genocide Prevention,” pp. 15-24; Harf, “How to Use Global Risk Assessments to Anticipate and Prevent Genocide,” pp. 71-78; Deng, “Prevention of Genocide: De-mystifying an Awesome Mandate,” pp. 79 -84, **ALL in Politorbis, 2/2009**. “Countries at Risk of Genocide and Politicide in 2012,” pp. 5 – 12; Heldt, “Mass Atrocities Early Warning Systems: Data Gathering, Data Verification, and Other Challenges,” pp. 13 – 32; Bauer, “Holocaust Education and Genocide Prevention,” pp. 127 – 143; Stanton, “Why Do We Look the Other Way?” pp. 144 – 147 – **ALL in GPANet 2012**

April

2 Read Albright and Cohen, *A Blueprint for U. S. Policymakers* (entire)

9 Read ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect* (entire)

- *Dr. Richard O’Meara* - class

16 Read Chalk, et al, *Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Leadership to Prevent Mass Atrocities* (entire)

23 Student Presentations

30 Student Presentations