

TR 2:30-3:45 p.m.
Sycamore Hall 008

Professor Alvin H. Rosenfeld
Spring semester 2014

H234/J203 – Literature of the Holocaust

Among the most compelling literatures of our day is that which records and seeks to interpret the Nazi war of genocide against the Jews. This course will introduce students to this literature and encourage them to reflect upon many of the profound questions it raises. Some of these questions will focus on literature's role in the shaping of historical memory. How the past is represented and comes to acquire a future in collective memory will be a preoccupying concern. Other questions will focus on issues of the most serious cultural, intellectual, moral, ethical, and religious kind. For instance, if it is true, as Elie Wiesel claims, that at Auschwitz not only man died but also the idea of man, how do we now conceive of the human? What does a person become when nothing is any longer forbidden him? Why did law, art, intellect, and religion not defend against political barbarism? Is idealism of any kind still possible after Auschwitz? Is forgiveness possible? These and related questions will preoccupy us over the course of the semester.

The list of required readings includes the following:

Tadeusz Borowski, This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen

Jan Gross, Neighbors

Rolf Hochhuth, The Deputy

Primo Levi, Survival in Auschwitz

Primo Levi, The Drowned and the Saved

Bernard Schlink, The Reader

Elie Wiesel, Night

Simon Wiesenthal, The Sunflower

In addition to the above, there will be some handouts of essays and poetry, and two or three films will be shown. Also, students will be encouraged to attend some public lectures on themes related to the subject matter of this course by visiting scholars. The names of these scholars and the dates, times, and topics of their talks will be given to you at a later time.

Written work for the course will include two medium-length papers (approximately 10-12 pages each) and one in-class examination. These writing

assignments are mandatory for all students. The final examination will be optional.

Strong writing skills will be a decided asset for students taking this course, so strive to do your very best to make sure your written work measures up to university standards. Please see me if you have any questions about your writing, and I will do my best to help you.

Given the nature of the subject matter, this will be a demanding course. Students will be expected to do the assigned readings on time, attend all class meetings, and participate actively in class discussion. If you must miss a class session, please be sure to let me know in advance. Any more than 3 unexcused absences will lower your grade for the course.

Students are encouraged to see me during office hours, TR 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. (Goodbody Hall 306) to discuss any aspect of their work in the course. If these times are not convenient, please call me (855-2325) or contact me through e-mail (Rosenfel@indiana.edu) for a special appointment.

Citation

In your written work, you have to give credit where credit is due. If you quote from another writer, or if you paraphrase his or her ideas, points, or arguments, you must give a bibliographic citation or footnote in proper format. This is true even if you're using an online source or something that's included as part of a DVD package. Failure to do so is plagiarism. Any paper that is found to be plagiarized, in part or in whole, will receive an automatic F.

Plagiarism Policy

According to I.U.'s Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, "Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered 'common knowledge' may differ from course to course.

- a. A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.
- b. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:
 1. Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;

2. Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
3. Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinion, or theories, whether oral or written;
4. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
5. Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.”