

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Course Syllabus
Department of German
GERM 3450/POLI 3449/HIST 3059
Confronting Fascism
Winter 2019

Instructor: Dr. John Cameron

Email: jhcamero@dal.ca or John.Cameron@smu.ca

Office Location: Marion McCain Building, room 3199 (German Resource Room)

Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-12 and 1-5 (or by request)

Office Phone: 902-494-3494

Lectures: Wednesdays 2:35-5:25 in Sir James Dunn Building, room 101

Course Description:

This interdisciplinary course focuses on German writers, artists, filmmakers, and intellectuals whose work responded to the rise of fascism in the 20th century.

Some of these writers anticipated fascism while others supported it, and some tried to dissect it after the horrors of the Second World War. Primarily, they confronted fascism and critiqued it, hence the title of the course. The nature of this confrontation will be first and foremost in our discussions as we proceed.

Beginning in the period prior to 1933, when the National Socialists came to power, we will study both the history of fascism in Germany and the thinkers who influenced its emergence. Many of these writers critiqued modern liberalism and sought to unite the political masses against a common enemy. As we move through this material, we will see how these ideas took political form and were used to instill a political regime that maintained its power through authoritarian controls, violence, and murder.

As we will see with filmmakers such as Leni Reifenstahl and propagandists such as Joseph Goebbels, this period of history also saw the rise of new media, such as photography and film, which were utilized for the purposes of propaganda by the National Socialists. However, photography and film were also utilized as a means of confronting and exposing the horrors of fascism, as we shall also see. The focus of the course will be on German writers, artists, and thinkers, but it will also consider some of the many emigres who fled Nazi Germany but continued to

critique it abroad. Bertolt Brecht will serve as a key example of such a dissident voice, but others will also be discussed as well.

After considering the ambiguous and often problematic role of German philosophy in the lead-up to and aftermath of the Second World War and the Holocaust, our course will finish by looking at post-war reflections on totalitarianism, particularly those by Hannah Arendt. Arendt was a former student of Martin Heidegger (a philosopher who joined the National Socialists in 1933, who we will also be reading), and her work attempted to explain and confront the ideas behind fascism and the political and social structures that enabled the Holocaust.

On a more personal note, I would like to dedicate this class to the memory of Philip Riteman (1922-2018). A survivor of Auschwitz, Mr. Riteman dedicated the latter years of his life to teaching the young about the horrors of the Holocaust and of Nazism; he also taught many about his determination and will to survive. The impact that he had on so many as a result of sharing his story can never be fully described. I will never forget our conversations; it is no understatement to say that they changed my life. May his words continue to reach and teach us all.

Required Texts:

Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political*.
Brecht's *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*.
Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism*.
Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.
Course Reader.

Assessment:

Essay 1:	15%
Essay 2 (which may be an in-class essay)	15%
Proposal for Essay 3	5%
Essay 3	20%
Exam	25%
Attendance and Participation	20%.

Reading Schedule:

Each assigned text should be read for the assigned day.

Jan. 9: Course outline. Historical and cultural context (1933-1945).

Jan. 16: Selections from Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *The Gay Science*, and *The Will to Power*; Bataille's "Nietzsche and National Socialism"; Strong's "Nietzsche's Political Misappropriation" (course reader).

Jan. 23: Heidegger's "The Self-Assertion of the German University," "Only a God can save Us," and "The Question concerning Technology"; Levinas's "As if Consenting to Horror" and "Useless Suffering"; Sluga's "The Aftermath" (course reader).

Jan. 30: Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political*.

Feb. 6: Junger's "Total Mobilization," selections from Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and Mann's "Mario the Magician" (course reader). **Essay #1 is due.**

Feb. 13: Hitler's "Speech at the Opening of the Great German Art Exhibition"; Ziegler's "Speech at the Opening of the Degenerate Art Exhibition"; Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"; selections from Reifentahl's *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia* (course reader).

Feb. 20: No class.

Feb. 27: Sontag's "Fascinating Fascism"; Schnapp's "Fascinating Fascism"; and selections from Doherty's *Hollywood and Hitler* (course reader).

Mar. 6: Brecht's *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*. **Essay #2 is due.**

Mar. 13: Confronting Fascism on Film.

Mar. 20: Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* (Preface to Pt. 3, chs. 9-10).
Research Proposal is due.

Mar. 27: Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* (chs. 11-13).

Apr. 3: Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (chs. 3, 6, 8, 15, Epilogue, and Postscript). **Essay #3 is due.**

Participation:

Your participation mark will be affected by attendance and by participation in class, which includes reading the work for the assigned day and being prepared to discuss it. Please note that lectures may not be recorded and phones must be turned off during class. An academic integrity quiz is also to be taken via the Dal Writing Centre (it can be done online) as part of this mark. When it comes to behaviour in class, please note that arriving late and leaving early, particularly when done disruptively, will result in the significant loss of participation points. If you do have to leave during class, please discuss it with me at the beginning of class. Cell phones are not to be used (i.e. no texting) in class, and laptops should be used for taking notes and for participating in class, not for other purposes. Finally, talking among yourselves, can be very disruptive. If you have something to say about the material, please raise your hand; if what you want to discuss does not to do with the class, please wait until after class to discuss it.

Late papers:

My policy about late papers is as follows: every day (not every class, but every day) that a paper is late will result in the loss of 1/3 of a letter grade. For example, if your A- paper is a day late you will receive a B+. If it is two days late you will receive a B and so on. If you have a medical or personal reason for lateness, please try to let me know about it as soon as you can and I will try to a new due date.

When it comes to late assignments or extended absences, please email me at the earliest possible opportunity so that I can be aware of your situation and possibly make concessions for it. Students coming at the end of term with a variety of excuses about repeated missed assignments or extended absences will be much less likely to receive such concessions, so bear that in mind.

This course observes zero tolerance on plagiarism:

Intellectual integrity and respect for ownership of ideas are basic ethical principles that apply in both academic and business contexts. However, the world of Google research we all now live in makes even unintentional plagiarism easy. Therefore it is important to take great care in citing all sources: those in text, from interviews, and from the web. Careers have been ruined and students have been expelled for failing to do this. Be sure to never give your reader the impression that the work of someone else is your own. Some misrepresentation could be the result of copying another student, copying published work without giving proper credit, or having someone else complete an assignment in your name. It is also considered self-plagiarism to submit an assignment in one course that has been previously submitted in another course. **If you do submit work that has been plagiarized, you will receive a zero on the assignment and the Academic Integrity Officer will be notified.** If you ever have any questions about plagiarism, please feel free to contact me.

For more information on how to avoid plagiarism go to:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/plagiarism-cheating.html

Academic Dates:

Please go to the following link for important dates for the Winter 2019 term:

https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

Last Day to Drop without “W”

Last Day to Drop with “W”

Winter Term: February 4, 2019

March 11, 2019

Dalhousie Common Grade Scale for conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades:

A+ (90-100) **B+** (77-79) **C+** (65-69) **D** (50-54)
A (85-89) **B** (73-76) **C** (60-64) **F** (0-49)
A- (80-84) **B-** (70-72) **C-** (55-59)

University Policies, Statements, Guidelines, and Resources for Support

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [University Calendar](#) and the Senate.

University Statements

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

Accessibility

The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFLD).

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students

don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the McCain Building (room 3037) or contact the programs at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803 (leave a message).

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates) http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
- University Grading Practices: Statement of Principles and Procedures https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html
- Scent-Free Program: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

Learning and Support Resources

- General Academic Support - Academic Advising:

- https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html
- Copyright and Fair Dealing: <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fair-dealing/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>
 - Libraries: <http://libraries.dal.ca>
 - Student Health Services: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/health-services.html
 - Counselling and Psychological Services: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/counselling.html
 - Black Student Advising: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html
 - Aboriginal Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/native.html
 - ELearning Website: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>
 - Student Advocacy Services: <https://www.dsu.ca/services/community-student-services/student-advocacy-service>
 - Dalhousie Ombudsperson: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html
 - Writing Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html
 - Studying for Success program and tutoring: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html