

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Course Syllabus
Department of German
GERM 3450/POLI 3449/HIST 3059
Confronting Fascism
Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. John Cameron

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Lectures: Fridays 11:35-12:25 in the Henry Hicks Building, room 212

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 Riefenstahl 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 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 work 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 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 Political*

Brecht's *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*

Arendt's *The Hannah Arendt Reader*.

Course Reader.

Assessment:

Essay 1	15%
Essay 2	20%
Proposal for Essay 3	5%
Essay 3	25%
Exam	25%
Attendance and Participation	10%.

Reading Schedule:

Each assigned text should be read for the assigned day.

Jan. 10: Course outline. German historical and cultural context (1918)

Jan. 17: Fascism in Italy (1945) and Spain (1975)

Jan. 24: Fascism and Philosophy. Selections from Nietzsche's *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. 31: Fascism and Philosophy. Heidegger's "The Self 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). **Essay #1 is due.**

Feb. 7: Fascist Philosophy. Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political*

Feb. 14: Fascism and the Intellectuals. Gehlen's "Man, His Nature and Place in the World"; Junger's "Total Mobilization"; selections from Arque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (course reader).

Feb. 21: No class (Winter break)

Feb. 28: Essay #2 (class essay)

Mar. 6: Artists against Fascism. Mann's "Mario the Magician" (course reader)

Mar. 13: Fascist Aesthetics, Art, and Architecture. Hitler's "Speech at the Opening of the Great German Art Exhibition"; Ziegler's "Speech at the Opening of the Degenerate

Art Exhibition”; Sontag’s “Fascinating Fascism”; Schnapp’s “Fascinating Fascism” (course reader). We will also view selections from Reif’s *Enigmas of the Will* and *Olympia* along with selections from Jonathan Meades’ documentaries on Fascist architecture.

Mar. 20: Artists against Fascism. Brecht’s *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*

Mar. 27: Understanding Fascism. Arendt’s *The Portable Hannah Arendt* (pp. 75-164). **Research Proposal is due.**

Apr. 3: Understanding Fascism. Arendt’s *The Portable Hannah Arendt* (pp. 75-164).

Apr. 6: Confronting Fascism. Arendt’s *The Portable Hannah Arendt* (pp. 31-36). **Essay #3 is due.**

Participation:

Your participation mark will be affected by attendance and 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 at the 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. If talking among yourselves can be very disruptive. If you have something to say about the material, please raise your hand; if you want to discuss something unrelated to the material please wait until after class to do so.

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 resea 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 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 assignment in your name. It is also considered plagiarism to submit an assignment in one course that has been previously submitted in another. **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: January 31, 2020 March 9, 2020

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 relat

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, and where 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_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