

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content and Content Analysis Skills

By the end of the semester, students should identify and state:

- the political, social, economic, and cultural factors that led to mass murder/genocide in the British Empire, German Empire, the United States, Nazi Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Rwanda.
- the specific elements of the genocidal process.

Historiographical Skills

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- explain basic theories, generalizations, and debates about genocide and ethnic cleansing.
- identify and relay an argument of a specific readings concisely and precisely
- think critically about a historian's methodology and execution of a historical problem.
- identify the key works in the historiography of (comparative) genocide.

Communication skills

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- present their point of view concisely and persuasively while staying on topic.
- participate in a group discussion in a productive and collaborative manner.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- **Short analytical responses and book precis – 40%**

Each week, **at least an hour prior** to our weekly Zoom meeting, you will submit on BB a 500-750-word response. These responses will be of two kinds: an analytical response and a precis. The analytical response will be an answer to a prompt (listed in the schedule below) and the precis will be due on any week when we're reading a full monograph or unless otherwise indicated otherwise. In short, unless there is a short essay prompt in the schedule, you will be completing a precis. The expectation for the "short essay" is to deal with the assigned question directly, propose a clear argument, develop this argument in a few paragraphs, and support it with relevant evidence from the assigned reading(s). We will discuss the expectations for the precis in week 3 as it is a specific sub-genre of academic writing.

- **Flipgrid posts – 30%**

Each week **at least an hour prior** you will post a 90-second video of a verbal response to a specific prompt (see the schedule for specific prompts). These videos are intended to be a way for you to practice speaking concisely and precisely on historical topics while supporting your claims with relevant historical evidence presented in the week's readings.

- **Weekly Zoom Discussions – 15% (if able to participate)***

These sessions are intended to provide you with a genuine seminar experience. It can be tough to develop an idea fully in 750 words and one cannot develop one's verbal and argumentative skills without regular practice. In these sessions you can showcase your understanding of the material and also hone your ability to express yourself precisely while engaging with others.

***If you are not able to participate, I can add 5% to the remaining three assignment categories.**

- **Final: Mock Historiography Exam – 15%**

Regardless of where in the program you are, it's never a bad idea to practice for comprehensive exams and demystify them.

REQUIRED READINGS

- David Olusoga & Casper Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide*
- David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*
- Carroll P. Kakel, *The American West and the Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective*
- Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides*
- David Cesarani, *The Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949*
- Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler & Stalin*
- Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*
- Scot Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1 – Definitions & Parameters

August 24-30

- Zachary Stone, *Grad School Essentials: A Crash Course in Scholarly Skills*, Chapters 1, 2, & 4.
 - Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Chapter 1, The Origins of Genocide [<https://www.mcvts.net/cms/lib07/NJ01911694/Centricity/Domain/155/Textbook.pdf>]
- ⇒ **Short essay prompt:** Is the UN definition of genocide a useful tool for academics/historians in determining whether a historical event can qualify as a genocide?
- ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Of the contested cases of genocide, which do you find least persuasive and why? [flipgrid.com/32c8ece1]

WEEK 2 – Why Context Matters

August 31- Sept. 6

- Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Chapter 2, Imperialism, War, and Social Revolution
 - Civil Rights Congress (CRC), *We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People*, a paper presented to the United Nations at meetings in Paris in December 1951, accusing the United States government of genocide based on the UN Genocide Convention. [<https://www.crmvet.org/info/genocide.htm>]
- ⇒ **Short essay prompt:** Explain how the CRC both succeeds and fails to prove its central argument.
- ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Which war or revolution that you are most familiar with directly meets the standards of genocide? [flipgrid.com/bc53ce98]

WEEK 3 – Is the Holocaust Unique?, or How to Write Comparative Histories of Genocide

Sept. 7 – Sept 13.

- Alan S. Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique: Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Routledge, 2018), select chapters.
 - ⇒ **Short essay prompt:** Is the Holocaust one of the very few instances of genocide, properly understood?
 - ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Which historical event that you are most familiar with comes closest to resembling the Holocaust as a genocidal event? [flipgrid.com/e79f3a42]
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WEEK 4 – Racism and Indigenous Genocides

Sept. 14 – Sept 20.

- ⇒ *Racism: A History*, a BBC Documentary, Part II: Fatal Impacts [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5ybNXPuHW8>]
 - ⇒ Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Chapter 3, Genocide of Indigenous People
 - ⇒ **Short essay prompt:** At which point in history did racism turn exterminationist/genocidal? What specifically about this year/event set racism on an almost irreversible genocidal trajectory? [Put another way, which year/event proved to be a point of no return?]
 - ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** How have the US educational system or public spaces in the US addressed the fate of native populations? Feel free to do some research on this question; you can examine the National Museum of the American Indian webpage or peruse a social studies textbook. [flipgrid.com/8df10d4d]
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WEEK 5 – Genocide of the Herero and Nama

Sept. 21 – Sept. 27

- ⇒ David Olusoga & Casper Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide* (Faber & Faber, 2011).
 - ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** State two ways in which the Herero genocide foreshadowed the Holocaust and two key differences between the genocide of the Herero and the Jews. [flipgrid.com/bf2ba94d]
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WEEK 6 – Genocide of California’s Native Americans

Sept. 2-Oct. 4

- David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*
- Benjamin Madley, “California’s Yuki Indians: Defining Genocide in Native American History,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2008), 303–32.

⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Can the comparison of the Herero and Yuki Indian genocides say something more general about colonial/settler genocides of indigenous people?

[\[flipgrid.com/78b1793f\]](https://flipgrid.com/78b1793f)

WEEK 7 – Comparing the American West and German East

Oct. 5-Oct. 11

- Carroll P. Kakel, *The American West and the Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective* (Palgrave, 2011).

⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Identify one persuasive and one less persuasive or questionable comparison Kakel makes about the Nazi East and American West.

[\[flipgrid.com/62970081\]](https://flipgrid.com/62970081)

WEEK 8 – Stalin’s Genocides

Oct. 12 – Oct. 18.

- Eric D. Weitz, *A Century of Genocide: Utopias of Race and Nation* (Princeton UP, 2003), 53-102.
- Norman Naimark, *Stalin’s Genocides* (Princeton UP, 2010).

⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Why does Naimark argue that Stalin committed multiple genocides? According to Naimark, who were his victim groups? [\[flipgrid.com/9971c4b8\]](https://flipgrid.com/9971c4b8)

WEEK 9 – Ukrainian Famine and the Question of Genocide

Oct. 19 – Oct. 25

- Reviews of R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931-1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
 - Mark B. Tauger, *Economic History Net* [https://eh.net/book_reviews/the-years-of-hunger-soviet-agriculture-1931-1933/]
 - Locate a review of your choice for *The Years of Hunger*.

- Michael, Ellman, "The Role of Leadership Perceptions and of Intent in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1934." *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 6 (2005): 823-41.
- R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932-33: A Reply to Ellman, *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 4 (2006): 625-633.
- Michael Ellman, "Stalin and the Soviet famine of 1932-33 Revisited," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 4 (2007): 663-93.
- Hiroaki Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932-1933 Reconsidered," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 4 (2008): 663-75.
- Sergei Nefedov and Michael Ellman, "The Soviet Famine of 1931–1934: Genocide, a Result of Poor Harvests, or the Outcome of a Conflict Between the State and the Peasants?" *Europe-Asia Studies* 71, no. 6 (2019): 1048-65.

⇒ **Short essay prompt:** Considering only the *Europe-Asia Studies* debate, what are the main differences between Davies/Wheatcroft and Ellman in interpreting evidence to make a claim about the Ukrainian famine being a genocide?

⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Based on the evidence presented, would you qualify the Ukrainian famine as genocide? [flipgrid.com/8480c279]

WEEK 10 - Problematizing the Final Solution – Pt. 1

Oct. 26 – Nov. 1

- David Cesarani, *The Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949* (St. Martin's Press, 2016), **Parts 1 – 5**

⇒ No Short Essays or FlipGrid – You're free this week!

WEEK 11 – Problematizing the Final Solution – Pt. 2

Nov. 2 – Nov. 8.

- David Cesarani, *The Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949*, **Parts 6 – conclusion**

⇒ **Short essay prompt:** Genocides are usually best understood as historical processes rather than events. If the Holocaust was a process, what were the discrete junctures/turning points in this process?

⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** In what ways might the general public's view of the Holocaust be erroneous/misguided/misunderstood? [flipgrid.com/a14f9ac0]

WEEK 12 – Comparing Hitler’s and Stalin’s Murder Campaigns

Nov. 9 – Nov. 15

- Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler & Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010).
- ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** Identify two similarities and two differences in Hitler’s and Stalin’s mass murder campaigns and explain whether you consider these men’s mass murder campaigns to be equivalent. [flipgrid.com/ca6952a9]
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WEEK 13 – The Fundamentals of the Rwandan Genocide

Nov. 16 – Nov. 22

- Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis* (Columbia UP, 1997).
- ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** In a course on European genocides, I’ve included an African genocide, perpetrated by two groups within Rwanda. What might have justified the inclusion of the Rwandan genocide in this course given that it’s technically not a European genocide per se? Do you find this rationale intellectually compelling? [flipgrid.com/d34c5f67]
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WEEK 14 – Thanksgiving

Nov. 23 – Nov. 29

- No class. University is closed.
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WEEK 15 – Genocidal Perpetrators

Nov. 30 – Dec. 6.

- Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, Chapter 10, Psychological Perspectives
 - Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Cornell UP, 2008).
- ⇒ **FlipGrid prompt:** If we were to generalize across time and space, what commonalities (esp. in terms of motivations) might we say genocide perpetrators share?
[flipgrid.com/1e85e104]
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WEEK 16 - FINALS WEEK

Mock Comprehensive Exam are **due on BB noon on December 11.**