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<b>Course title:</b>	Seduction and Terror: Hitler's Germany
<b>Track:</b>	B-Track
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>Contact hours:</b>	72 (6 per day)
<b>ECTS-Credits:</b>	6

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### Course description

The 'thousand year Reich' that Hitler promised when he became Chancellor of Germany in January 1933 lasted but 12 years. During this time, Hitler and his Nazi Party came to dominate Europe, terrorizing vast numbers of Germans, launching a devastating war, and orchestrating the murder of more than five million Jews. In spite of the terror and vast destruction, Hitler and the Nazi Party gained the active support and involvement of most Germans. How was this possible? What roles did seduction and terror play?

This class focuses on Hitler's Germany and it begins with the 19<sup>th</sup> century background. Central to this session will be a discussion of the broad political currents, the agitators and petty demagogues who fueled the dissatisfaction and spread it widely. We will also examine the popular literature that Hitler and many of his supporters read and absorbed.

Crucial to understanding the lure of Hitler and the Nazi Party was Germany's experience in the First World War, a conflict that decimated a generation and destroyed Europe, as it was known. It left in its wake a shattered, humiliated, and deeply torn Germany. In this climate of uncertainty and despair, Hitler and the Nazi Party grew from a small group on the fringe of radical politics in Munich to a national force. This development is of central importance to this session. Those traits of Hitler crucial to his success, particularly his charisma, will be defined and analyzed within the broader political context of Weimar political and cultural life.

In late January 1933, Hitler gained the long desired but elusive goal: he became chancellor of Germany, the leader of a coalition government. The political intrigues leading to his appointment will be discussed. Much attention will be paid in this session to how Hitler, his cabinet, and supporters were able to consolidate the control over the state and society within a matter of months. This came at the cost of political liberties, through the growing use of terror, oppression, and intimidation. Yet, Hitler gained supporters as he seemingly offered economic stability and a new unity to the German people. How did the regime solidify its control over society and political life?

A key element of Hitler's rule was the concentration camp system, what came to be a vast network of prisons, centers of oppression and death. How this developed from the dozens of small concentration camps set up across Germany immediately following Hitler's takeover of power in 1933 to the well-organized and highly centralized system in 1939 will be the focus of this session. During the war, the concentration camp system spread across Germany and occupied Europe.

Hitler's ambitions, the conquest of 'living space' in Eastern Europe, the ruthless exploitation of these territories, and the annihilation of the Jews, motivated his foreign ambitions and led directly to World War II, the most destructive conflict in human history. We will also discuss the measures taken against the handicapped, homosexuals, Sinti and Roma.

In Germany and in occupied Europe opposition and resistance emerged and challenged Nazi rule. Opponents were motivated by a variety of reasons, some personal, some political. These too will be discussed.

Lastly, the class will examine the end of the war, the so-called 'zero hour', the destruction and collapse of Germany.

We will also be visiting local museums, historical sites and locations that reveal the operations of Nazi rule. These visits to sites in and near Berlin are a key element of the class and the experience of studying here.

**Student profile**

We welcome students from all disciplines who are interested in gaining an insight into the operations and dynamics of Nazi rule in Germany and its attempt to annihilate the Jews and to dominate the continent.

**Prerequisites**

Interest and curiosity.

**Required language skills**

The language of instruction is English. Language proficiency on an advanced Intermediate level (Mittelstufe II) is a prerequisite for participation. For orientation purposes, you can assess your language skills here (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR):

<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>

**Course Requirements**

Attendance in class, the careful reading of the assigned course materials, participation in the field trips, the discussion of the material in class, the completion of two short research papers (3-5 pages), and the final examination. Guidelines for the papers as well as suggested topics will be provided during the first session.

**Grading**

Class participation: 20%  
 Two short papers: 40%  
 Final exam: 40%

**Reading**

A course reader will be provided at the first meeting of the class. This includes a recent monograph on Nazi Germany, a selection of articles offering the newest research and insights, excerpts from original documents (in translation), a weekly schedule of the readings and a series of questions as a guide through each of the texts.

**Course schedule**

Date	Program*
Tuesday, June 02, 2020	<b>Session 1</b> Introduction. Germany before Hitler: the rise of political anti-Semitism and the Volkisch ideology

	<p><b>Session 2</b> World War I, Hitler, and German society, 1914-1918</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Field trip: German Historical Museum</p>
Friday, June 05, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Aftermath of war: revolution and political violence. Hitler and the emergence of the Nazi Party, 1918-1924</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> The Weimar Republic: politics, culture and social change</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Field trip: Topography of Terror</p>
Tuesday, June 09, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Hitler and the NSDAP, 1924-1933. Hitler as Chancellor</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> The Nazi seizure of power. combating political opponents</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Field trip: Pape Street Memorial Site</p>
Friday, June 12, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Hitler and the Nazi Party in power: remaking society, combating the economic crisis</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> Hitler and the Nazi Party in power: reshaping political life</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Film: Triumph of the Will</p>
Tuesday, June 16, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Building the “people’s community”</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> Anti-Semitism as state policy, 1933-1938</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Field trip: House of the Wannsee Conference</p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> paper due (3-5 pages)</b></p>
Friday, June 19, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Mid-term discussion/review. The “people’s community” - insiders and outsiders</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> Mobilizing society: women and youth</p> <p><b>Session 3</b> Field trip: Forced Labor Documentation Center Schöneweide</p>
Tuesday, June 23, 2020	<p><b>Session 1 to Session 3</b> The Nazi concentration camp system, 1933-1945, field trip - Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial Center</p>
Friday, June 26, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b> Hitler’s ambitions abroad. outbreak of war in Europe, September 1939</p> <p><b>Session 2</b> War and German society, 1939-1942: propaganda and</p>

	<p>popular support  <b>Session 3</b>                  Field trip: German-Russian Museum Karlshorst</p>
Tuesday, June 30, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b>                  The Nazi regime at war: Barbarossa, the eastern front  <b>Session 2</b>                  Nazi occupation policies: western Europe and eastern Europe  <b>Session 3</b>                  Field trip: Soviet War Memorial Treptower Park</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> paper due (3-5 pages)</b></p>
Friday, July 03, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b>                  War and German society, 1943-1945: propaganda, despair and desperation  <b>Session 2</b>                  Opposition and resistance to German hegemony  <b>Session 3</b>                  Field trip: German Resistance Memorial Center</p>
Tuesday, July 07, 2020	<p><b>Session 1</b>                  Holocaust: background and beginnings, the initial wave of killings  <b>Session 2</b>                  Holocaust: the death camps  <b>Session 3</b>                  Field trip - Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe</p>
Friday, July 10, 2020	<p><b>9-9:30 am</b>                  'Zero Hour': the defeat and collapse of Hitler's Germany  <b>10-12:30</b>  <b>Final exam</b></p>

\*Field trips may be subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, adaptation of class times is possible.