

**Marie Curie-Sklodowska University  
Doctoral School of Social Sciences**

**Genocide, The 'Crime of Crimes'**

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About the Course

While governments have often abused their citizens, our course examines genocides, arguably the worst form of abuse and the 'crime of crimes.' In genocides, governments try to destroy a group of people based on their membership in a particular racial, ethnic, religious, and/or national group. Our course will introduce genocides and examine these topics: what is genocide, why/where does it happen, how to prevent ongoing and future genocides, and the multiple legacies of genocides. We will also examine selected cases: the Holocaust, the classic historical case, and contemporary situations in Myanmar and China that many have described as genocide. In these case studies, we will focus on the people affected by genocide as well as the events of the genocide.

Readings

All readings will be emailed to students.

Course Requirements

To earn credit for this course, students must complete an independent writing project and participate in our class discussions.

**Independent Writing Project:** Students will write either a 9-12 page (2,0 spacing) research paper on a topic relevant to the course or one book review examining two books on a similar topic. Your project must be approved by the instructor. The final written product is due on 13 June. The instructor will be happy to review rough drafts of your work prior to submission. The independent writing project is worth 90% of the course grade.

**Participation in Class Discussions:** Students are expected to be active members of our class and take part in class discussions. This is worth 10% of the course grade.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

3 March      What is Genocide? Why is it the 'Crime of Crimes'?

'Convention on the Crime and Punishment of Genocide' (9 December 1948) – read the first three articles of the Convention

Lemkin, 'Genocide: A Modern Crime' in Samuel Totten and Paul R. Bartrop, The Genocide Studies Reader, pp. 6-11

17 March      The Holocaust: The Classic Case of Genocide

Christopher R. Browning, 'The Nazi Empire' in Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies

'Eyewitness Accounts – The Jews' in Totten and Bartrop (ed), The Genocide Studies Reader

Watch portions of this video: 'Memory of the Camps' (1985) (note: graphic scenes)

<https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-memory-camps/>

<https://vimeo.com/126475724>

31 March      Contemporary Situations in Myanmar and Xinjiang

View the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's exhibition on 'Burma's Path to Genocide'

<https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/burmas-path-to-genocide>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 'To Make Us Slowly Disappear: The Chinese Government's Assault on the Uyghurs' (November 2021)

28 April      Preventing and Ending Genocides

Chapter 6: 'Tools and Approaches' and Chapter 7: "Successes, Risks, and Unknowns" in Scott Strauss, Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention (2016)

5 May            The Legacies of Genocides

Richard Evans, 'From Naziism to Never Again: How Germany Came to Terms with Its Past,' Foreign Affairs (November/December 2018)

Laurence Rees, 'Life of An Auschwitz Guard,' Politico (13 July 2015)

Gregory Stanton, 'Twelve Ways to Deny a Genocide' (2005)

If interested, watch the Netflix documentary 'The Auschwitz Accountant' about the trial of Oskar Groening, the 'Auschwitz guard' of the assigned reading

Iff interested, watch this video on 'The Last Survivors' (of the Holocaust).

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=crkVNLgPPV0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crkVNLgPPV0)

