The concentration camp is an emblem of the modern world. From the camps of nineteenth-century colonialism to the Soviet Gulag, Nazi death camps, and more contemporary detention centers for refugees and political prisoners in the War on Terror, this course explores the underlying logic of extrajudicial encampment. Why have modern states—across the ideological spectrum—made use of concentration camps against real and perceived enemies? We examine the deep roots of the camp in 19th-century European politics and society, while exploring the global dimensions of the camp today. With a transnational and comparative lens, we examine memoirs, film, and theoretical and historical scholarship to explore the diverse manifestations of concentration camps over the past two centuries. Why did this system of punishment and terror first develop, and why does it continue to exist in the world today?

This class is cross-listed with International Studies. We will read about the following countries: United States, Britain, Australia, France, Germany, Soviet Union, Poland, Algeria, Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, China, North Korea, Israel and Palestine, India, Cuba, the Philippines, Turkey, and we’ll mention many others in passing.
EXPECTATIONS

A primary responsibility of students is to complete the weekly reading before the date of the scheduled class and to contribute their thoughtful, reflective opinions in class discussions. Students should allocate enough time to complete the required reading, 50-150 pages per week. The readings can be interpreted in a variety of ways and students should formulate some initial positions and questions to offer in class discussion.

Students who are disabled or impaired should meet with the professor within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss the need for any special arrangements. Students should keep the professor informed of absences well in advance if possible. Notification of an absence does not excuse the absence; upon returning to classes, students are responsible for contacting instructors, producing appropriate documentation for the absence, and completing any missed work.

All cellphones, smartphones, tablets, and any other electronic devices should be turned off during class. The use of laptop computers in this class is a privilege, which may be revoked at any time. Laptops may be used for taking notes only. Anyone caught using a laptop for any other purpose will be asked to leave the class, and will no longer be permitted to bring a computer to class.

DISCUSSIONS AND CRITICAL READING

Discussion and class participation is a very important part of your grade and your intellectual development. Incisive, imaginative and thoughtful comments that are based on assigned readings and that generate and facilitate discussion are weighed heavily in final grades. Asking questions, responding to your peers and contributing to an ongoing discussion are a necessary part of the learning experience. In-class reports and presentations will also contribute to your participation grade.

ASSIGNMENTS

Fluent and professional writing is one of the core skills of history. The skills you develop in this class will serve you well in whatever career you choose. We will discuss strategies for writing throughout the semester.

You will write TWO SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (600-800 words) in which you respond to prompts (distributed in class) based on readings and class discussions. These are designed so that you may hone your writing and analytical skills in preparation for the FINAL ESSAY. In the FINAL ESSAY (2000 words), you will compare and contrast two camp regimes that we discuss in class. Your paper will analyze areas of similarity and account for areas of contrast with reference to the motivations and ideologies that govern each camp system. You should also note the impact of expedient and practical factors. Outside research is encouraged when necessary, but papers should mostly draw from relevant readings assigned in class. A more
detailed assignment sheet with sample topics will be handed out in class. The final essay is due on May 1 at 3pm.

There will also be short open-book pop quizzes that test your factual understanding of historical events.

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**GRADING**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignment 1 (due February 20)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignment 2 (due March 29)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open-book Pop Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay (due May 5)</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Please note that late assignments or essays will be penalized a half grade per day.

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**READINGS**

The following readings are available at the bookstore. They are also widely available at online merchants.


All other readings are available through links provided, or else through sakai.

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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**WEEK 1**

January 16 Class Introduction

January 18 What is a Concentration Camp?
WEEK 2

January 23 Cultural Origins of the Camp

January 25 Reports on “Proto-camps”

REPORTS: With a partner, you will be assigned to research one of the following topics based on readings suggested by me and any other additional research you may choose to pursue: Ghettos, workhouses, prisons (x2), POW camps, criminal tribe camps, labor compounds (x2), slave plantations, native reservations, quarantine camps (x2).

You will report to the class on your findings. Imagine you are delivering an “executive summary.” How did the institution develop? Where did it come from, and how did it change over time? How might the institution be related to “concentration camps”? In what ways is it different? Your presentation will last approximately 10 minutes, and you will field questions from the class for another 5-10 minutes.

WEEK 3

January 30 Reports on “Proto-camps”

February 1 Reports on “Proto-camps”

WEEK 4

February 6 Colonial Camps in India and South Africa

February 8 Anglo-Boer War Concentration Camps

WEEK 5

February 13 Colonial Legacies
Film viewing: *Ohm Kruger* (1941).

February 15 German South-West Africa


http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7033042.stm


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**WEEK 6**

**FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE FEBRUARY 20**

**February 20 World War I**

**February 22 The Armenian Genocide**

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**WEEK 7**

**February 28. The Soviet Gulag**

**March 1 Alexander Solzhenitsyn**
Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

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**WEEK 8**

**NO CLASS READING WEEK**

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**WEEK 9**

**March 13 Nazi camps: The Early Years**
REPORTS: With a partner, choose one additional chapter of interest in this volume and present on it in class. What was its argument? How does it contribute to our understanding of Nazi camps?

March 15 Nazi camps: The Big Picture

WEEK 10

March 20 Nazi Camps: An Organized Terror?
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, read as much as you can for the first class and make sure you finish the whole book by the second class.

March 22 The Holocaust
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, read as much as you can and finish the book for next week.

WEEK 11

March 27 If this is a Man
Class Viewing of *Night and Fog*.

March 29 Concentration Camps USA

SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE MARCH 29

WEEK 12

April 3 Chinese Camps: Republican and Revolutionary
April 5 North Korean Gulag

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**WEEK 13**

**April 10 Aquariums of Pyongyang**

**April 12 The African Gulag**

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**WEEK 14**

**April 17 The Security State**

**April 19 NO CLASS Dr. Forth is at a conference**

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**WEEK 15**

**April 24 Refugee Camps: the flip side?**

**April 26 Camps in the 21st Century**
We will read media articles on camps relevant to the politics of April 2018. Reading assignments will follow.

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**FINAL ESSAYS DUE MAY 1st, 3pm**