

Name:	Dr. Robert G. Waite
Email address:	bwaite9@hotmail.com; waite@gdw-berlin.de
Course title:	Seduction and Terror: Hitler's Germany
Track:	B-Track
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	72 (6 per day)
ECTS-Credits:	6

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 19th 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, the two other Nazis in his cabinet, and supporters on the streets 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.

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

The grade will be determined by the two short papers (40%), the final exam (40%), and class participation (20%).

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), and a weekly schedule of the readings.

Course schedule

Date	Program
Tuesday, June 6, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, Introduction: Germany before Hitler: the rise of political anti-Semitism and the Volkisch ideology</p> <p>11-12:30, World War I, Hitler, and German society, 1914-1918</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip – German Historical Museum</p>
Friday, June 9, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, Aftermath of war: revolution and political violence. Hitler and the emergence of the Nazi Party, 1918-1924</p> <p>11-12:30, the Weimar Republic</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip – Topography of Terror</p>
Tuesday, June 13, 2017	<p>9-10:30, Hitler and the NSDAP, 1924-1933. Hitler as Chancellor</p> <p>11-12:30, the Nazi seizure of power. combating political opponents</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip - Pape Street Memorial Site</p>
Friday, June 16, 2017	<p>9-10:30, Hitler and the Nazi Party in power: remaking society, combating the economic crisis</p> <p>11-12:30, Hitler and the Nazi Party in power: reshaping political life</p> <p>2:00 pm, film - Triumph of the Will</p>
Tuesday, June 20, 2017	<p>9-10:30, Anti-Semitism as state policy, 1933-1938</p> <p>11-12:30, building the “people’s community”</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip - Wannsee Villa</p> <p>1st paper due (3-5 pages)</p>
Friday, June 23, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, Mid-term discussion/review. The “people’s community” - insiders and outsiders</p> <p>11-12:30, mobilizing society: women and youth</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip – Forced Labor Documentation Center Schöneweide</p>
Tuesday, June 27, 2017	<p>9 am - 3:30 pm, The Nazi concentration camp system, 1933-1945, field trip - Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial Center</p>
Friday, June 30, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, Hitler’s ambitions abroad. outbreak of war in Europe, September 1939</p> <p>11-12:30, war and German society, 1939-1942: propaganda and popular support</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip - German-Russian Museum Karlshorst</p>
Tuesday, July 4, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, The Nazi regime at war: Barbarossa, the eastern front</p> <p>11-12:30, Nazi occupation policies: western Europe and eastern Europe</p> <p>2:00 pm, field trip – Soviet War Memorial Treptower Park</p> <p>2nd paper due (3-5 pages)</p>
Friday, July 7, 2017	<p>9-10:30 am, War and German society, 1943-1945: propaganda, despair and desperation</p> <p>11-11:30, opposition and resistance to German hegemony</p>

<p>Tuesday, July 11, 2017</p>	<p>2:00 pm, field trip - German Resistance Memorial Center 9-10:30 am, Holocaust: background and beginnings, the initial wave of killings 11-12:30, Holocaust: the death camps 2:00 pm, field trip - Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe</p>
<p>Friday, July 14, 2017</p>	<p>9-9:30 am, 'Zero Hour': the defeat and collapse of Hitler's Germany 10-12:30, final examination</p>