

## Syllabus French 2211F

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Visiting hour : on appointment

### **Description :**

#### **Holocaust and literature : Understanding suffering**

This course will offer a brief description of life during the Holocaust through the reading of a few essential testimonial texts. We first will briefly survey the events and questions and place them in their proper historical, religious, human and political frames. Through the eyes of the witnesses, we shall try to understand some facets of the human tragedy that the Holocaust constitutes and how it is lived on a daily basis. The course wishes to present individual experiences of this historical event, which remains the paradigm of genocides of the XXth century. We want to explore the ways people react to extraordinary circumstances and interact within a society where all rules have changed. We will listen to voices describing the cruelty of the executioners, the humanity of the rescuers, the passivity of the bystander and the fears of the victims. The course explores the specific experiences of several groups, including women, hidden children, freedom fighters, etc. and will try to offer a reading of the past that will facilitate the understanding of contemporary events. We shall not avoid delicate or horrific situations or sensitive ethical questions.

We will also call on some visual support. No previous knowledge of the historical, religious or political background is required.

### **Texts**

- Kertész, Imre, *Fatelessness*
- Levi, Primo, *If This is a man* or *Survival in Auschwitz* (same text)
- Wiesel, Elie, *Night*

## Assignments

Class participation	10%
Reading review	20%
Film review	15%
Conversation	15%
Final research work	40%

Reading review	4 pages or 1000 words
Film review	3 pages or 700 words
Research Paper	10 pages or 2500 words
Conversation	30 minutes of discussion on the research paper

The subject of the Research Paper can be determined according to the interest of the student after a discussion with the professor or chosen out of a list that will be provided.

For the review, we suggest that you find books linked to your personal interest or studies from the list of book suggestions. Please, consult the Professor for guidance, should you choose a book not on the list or to discuss any ideas. The same applies for the movies.

There will be no final examination.

## Schedule

September 13	Presentation: Genocide		
September 20	The Holocaust		
September 27	Antisemitism		
October 4	<i>Night</i>	Research proposal	
October 11	No class	Reading week	
October 18	<i>Night</i>	Reading review	
October 25	<i>Night</i>		
November 1	<i>If This is a man</i>		

November 8	<i>If This is a man</i>		
November 15	<i>If This is a man</i>	Film review	
November 22	<i>Fatelessness</i>		
November 29	<i>Fatelessness</i>	Research work	
December 6	<i>Fatelessness</i>		

**I would greatly appreciate if you would not consult your telephone during the course and use your computer only for course purposes.**

For Academic offenses, please consult :  
<http://www.uwo.ca/french/academicinformation.html>.

**Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:**

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Please note that in all courses offered by the Department of French Studies, this same requirement will also apply to assignments worth less than 10% of the final grade. Final examinations must be written at the scheduled time unless formal alternative arrangements for a Special Examination have been approved (by the instructor, the Department and the Home Faculty Dean's Office) based on valid documented grounds.

A downloadable Student Medical Certificate can be found here:  
<https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading.

**Support services**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Statement on Plagiarism, Cheating and other Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence in the Academic Handbook available on the Academic Calendar website, here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg113.html>

**Policy on Attendance**

“Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of Registration.” (Academic Handbook)

**Important Academic Information for Students Taking Courses in the Department of French Studies**

[http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic\\_information/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/french/undergraduate/counselling/academic_information/index.html)