

HIS 4090 SEC. 2: WORLD WAR II THROUGH FILM

History & Political Science Department
Point Loma Nazarene University
2 Units
Fall 2021 Quad 1

Meeting days: Tuesdays

Meeting times: 2:45-6:25pm

Meeting location: RLC 103

Final Exam: Oct. 19

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Office hours: Mondays, 2:30-3:30 (in person)

Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30 (on Zoom)

Other days/times (in person or Zoom) by appt

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a “Special Topics in History” course on the topic of “World War II Through Film.” We will seek to better understand the main causes and events of the Second World War, while also exploring the relationship between war, history, and cinema. Film is both a primary source and secondary source, and provides us with ample opportunity to discuss the relationship between the two and the role of perspective in shaping sources. Along with discussing the role of cinema during and after the war, we’ll also be learning about the major theatres of the war, the Holocaust, the treatment of POWs and civilians, the internment of Japanese Americans, and life on the home front.

PLNU MISSION

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

HISTORY PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate the relationship between primary and secondary materials by assessing a historian’s work and recognizing the evidence used to construct that historical argument. (Assessed through film review and book review.)
- Present and analyze, in written or oral presentation, different perspectives on an event from the past. (Assessed through film review and book review.)

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Explain many of the major events of the Second World War.
2. Analyze the relationship between cinema and war during World War II.
3. Analyze the significance and use of film as both a primary and secondary source.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Content of this Course

We can't even hope to fully cover every aspect of such a vast war in this one semester, nor will we try. However, I've selected films and reading assignments that give us at least a glimpse into multiple important facets of the war: the modern weapons, tactics, and battles that raged in air, land, and sea; the ideological battles about racial and national superiority; the targeting of civilians, including the Holocaust; and what was happening on the home front for Americans. This course not only uses film to teach about these subjects, but as a way of interrogating film as a source. How do these films present the historical information? From whose perspective, based on which sources, and to what effect? I've selected films that span a broad range of time periods, beginning with those made during the war, so that we can see how the films themselves have changed over time.

As you know, this course deals entirely with the most horrific war the world has ever seen, and each week we will be viewing either primary source (real) footage or secondary source (fictional/staged) footage of the war. Some of these films are rated R. All of them are, in ways, devastating, as they explore the worst things that humans can do to each other. Some worse, even, than it seems possible to imagine. Violence in all of its forms—including physical, sexual, and emotional—will be a frequent part of the films we watch, just as it was a constant part of the war. If you think that this will be particularly difficult for you or have any concerns about this, please speak with me about it as soon as possible. That being said, there will also be a constant reminder that there is hope, that there is goodness in the world, and that there are ways of resisting evil ideologies. One of those ways is by studying history and taking seriously the task of remembering and preserving the truth. That is part of why we won't shy away from the horrors of the war, not for entertainment, but to solemnly remember them and think about what they mean for the history, present, and future of the world. As Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate said in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, "I have tried to keep memory alive... I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices."

Participation

Your engagement with the class is a huge component of your success in this course, and also enhances the learning of your classmates. Your participation is therefore evaluated throughout the semester. Since you cannot participate if you do not attend class, attendance will be taken at the start of each class. Since we have only 7 class sessions, it is essential that you attend all of them. You will lose 15 points (out of 100 possible) for each absence. Arriving late or leaving

early will be considered ½ an absence. (University-excused absences are an exception and will not affect your grade.) Your participation grade includes attendance and active engagement in class discussions. A template for the weekly film notes will be discussed in class and provided on Canvas.

Quizzes and Online Discussions

To help you be prepared for our classes and ready for a thoughtful face-to-face conversation, online quizzes and/or discussions will be given regularly via Canvas. Please make sure to do the quizzes and discussions on time. **Quizzes and discussions cannot be made up** if you miss them. It is your responsibility to regularly check Canvas and the syllabus for these assignments.

Final Exam: Film Review

You will select two of the films to expand your film notes and write a 3-4 page review in which you discuss the historical context and accuracy of the film. More instructions will be given in class and posted on Canvas.

Book Review

You will select a Holocaust memoir to read and write a 3-4 page book review about it. More instructions will be given in class and posted on Canvas.

GRADING

Please contact me at any point during the semester if you have questions about the status of your grade. Grades are weighted and will be calculated as follows:

Assignment distribution by percentage:		Letter grades assigned as follows:	
• Participation	25%	A=93-100	C=73-76.99
• Film Notes	20%	A-=90-92.99	C-=70-72.99
• Quizzes/ Online Discussions	15%	B+=87-89.99	D+=67-69.99
• Book Review (Holocaust Memoir)	15%	B=83-86.99	D=63-66.99
• Final Exam: Film Review	25%	B-=80-82.99	D-=60-62.99
		C+=77-79.99	F=0-59.99

REQUIRED TEXTS

Films and reading that you are doing for your homework will be accessible through links on Canvas or the library. You do not need to purchase any texts.

COURSE POLICIES

All students can and should succeed in this course, so please let me know if there are things I can do to help you. Please speak with me as soon as possible if any problems arise or if you have any questions about how to succeed in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

Please talk with me as soon as possible if for whatever reason you are having trouble completing your work, so that we can find the best solution. All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due, unless otherwise indicated on Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances. There are no make-up quizzes/ online discussions, since those are to help you come prepared to class. There are no make-up exams (midterms and final), unless you have contacted me in advance, in which case I *may* allow it depending on the circumstances. If papers, projects, or activities are turned in late, they will be subjected to a 10% penalty per day. Please ask me for more information if you believe you will need to turn in an assignment late.

Laptops, Cell Phones, and Recording Devices: In order to create the most conducive learning environment, all phones should be silenced and not used during class, especially when we are viewing films. No recording of lectures or class discussions is allowed without prior permission from the professor.

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

As it says in the Catalog, students are expected to do two hours of preparation for each hour spent in class. I have designed the readings and assignments with this in mind.

Due to our current pandemic conditions, there is the possibility that classes may periodically need to be held in an asynchronous or synchronous online format. The attendance policy still applies to these types of class formats. Our course will follow all of the PLNU policies related to Covid-19. Please see the [PLNU Covid-19 website](#), the Covid-19 Canvas course, and the [PLNU catalog](#) for the most current policies. All of us, including me, can show our respect and care for each other by not coming to class if we don't pass the Campus Clear app or have any covid symptoms. Covid-related absences are excused. You will still be responsible for getting the notes from a classmate for any classes you miss. If I or a member of my household are in isolation or quarantine, our class may need to meet remotely for that time. **Please check for Canvas announcements on a regular basis. That is where I will always post any course updates.**

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	In Class	Homework
Week 1 No class		<p>Due before class on the following week. All links and details are on Canvas.</p> <p>Film notes are due via Canvas after each class period. We'll discuss this in class.</p>
Week 2 Sept 7	Introduction to course <i>World War II in Colour</i> (2009). Episode 1: "The Gathering Storm" (51 min) – Netflix	View selections from <i>Why We Fight</i> (1942-1943), <i>Memphis Belle</i> (1944), and <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> (1998). Read "Making Sense of Film" Complete the quiz/discussion on Canvas
Week 3 Sept 14	Film TBD	Select and request from the library a Holocaust memoir to read. Tell us the title on the Canvas discussion page. Reading about the Nazi use of film as propaganda (on Canvas).
Week 4 Sept 21	Film TBD	Start reading the Holocaust memoir you selected.
Week 5 Sept 28	Film TBD	Reading and quiz/discussion on Canvas
Week 6 Oct 5	Film TBD	Book review of Holocaust memoir due
Week 7 Oct 12	Film TBD	Reading and quiz/discussion on Canvas
Week 8 Oct 19	Film TBD	Film Review due (that is your Final Exam)