

ACADEMIC SESSION 2018-2019

HI4008 – SPECIAL SUBJECT
HITLER

30 CREDITS: 11 WEEKS

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your [MyAberdeen](#) Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure. **You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.**

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR

Course Co-ordinator: Prof Thomas Weber

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Office Hours: See School webpages

Discipline Administration

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TIMETABLE

For time and place of classes, please see [MyAberdeen](#)
Students can view their university timetable at

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>

(Please check your email account regularly, as a couple of sessions might have to be rearranged.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Hitler is omnipresent in modern life. He appears everywhere in the media and he is invoked all the time in public and private discourse. Yet Adolf Hitler remains an enigma. While he tends to be reduced to a one-dimensional cardboard cut-out villain outside of academia, inside academia there has been a tendency in recent years to diminish Hitler's importance and to push Hitler to the side-lines.

During the course, we will examine the degree to which Hitler did, or did not, matter as an actor in his own right. We shall do so by studying Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, as well as a number of other selected documents. In the process, we shall discuss, amongst other questions, what difference *Mein Kampf* made, how Hitler staged himself, why Hitler staged himself in the way that he did, as well as how Hitler's transformation and radicalization had come about.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course aims to examine, understand and analyse Adolf Hitler's place in the history of the first half of the twentieth century through detailed study of contemporary sources as well as secondary literature. By the end of the course students should be able:

- to understand and critique the evolution of Adolf Hitler from a nobody to the leader of the National Socialist Party and to the author of up to three books;
- to comprehend and analyse scholarly debates surrounding Hitler;
- to appreciate and practise methodological and conceptual issues relevant to the study of Hitler;
- to offer analytical explanations rather than mere descriptions of the key developments in the period based upon a critical engagement with both sources from the period and subsequent histories of the event;
- to assess and judge issues which were, and remain, controversial and emotionally charged;
- to appraise critically relevant primary and secondary literature;
- to appreciate and practise the skills characteristic of the professional historian;

- to enhance their skills in written and verbal communications, through essay and examination work, seminar presentation and discussion;
- to enhance their teamwork skills, through collaboration with other students in group work;
- to enhance their ability to learn independently, through preparation for seminars and written work;
- to enhance their IT skills, through use of bibliographical tools, as demonstrated in the library session.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Seminars are held twice a week (see specific details regarding the timetable above). Attendance at seminars is compulsory and will be monitored. Failure to attend will result in the withdrawal of the Class Certificate.

Each student will give a c. 25-30 minute presentation, convene a seminar, and also contribute to small group work. After each presentation there will be a general discussion. Presentations have to be accompanied by a handout, which has to be available to all members of the seminar at least 48 hours in advance. The handouts have to include a suggested reading list of secondary titles, as well as extracts from primary sources which will be analysed during and after the presentation.

Students are **expected** to discuss their presentation, in advance, with the course co-ordinator. Students may choose to lecture, assign discussion questions, and/or organise group work – indeed, any method of ‘presenting’ which suits their needs, interests, or abilities. Everyone will read the assigned material for the presentation. Students can (but are not required to) make use of PowerPoint in their presentations. Those not presenting will be expected to respond and:

- Provide an overview and analysis of the main argument(s) in the material under discussion;
- Critique the argument(s) in the material under discussion;
- Support the argument(s) advanced in the material under discussion.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Week 1:

Monday: Seminar 1 – Presentation Assignments, Seminar Format, Aims and Objectives; general discussion about Hitler; composing a bibliography on Hitler

Thursday: Seminar 2 – Hitler’s childhood and adolescence

Week 2:

Monday: Seminar 3 – Hitler’s Vienna years

Thursday: Seminar 4 – Private Hitler’s first war

Week 3:

Monday: Seminar 5 – Pasewalk; introduction to quantitative text analysis

Thursday: no session

Week 4:

Monday: Seminar 6 – Hitler’s state of health and of his mental mind

Thursday: Seminar 7 – Revolution

Week 5:

Monday: Seminar 8 – Hitler’s time in the Reichswehr; the Gemlich letter

Thursday: Seminar 9 – Gobbets & discussion of essay writing techniques.

Week 6:

Monday: Seminar 10 – Gobbets Training and Test

Thursday: no class

Week 7: Reading & gobbet writing week

No classes

Week 8:

Monday: Seminar 11 – Hitler’s initiation into the German Worker’s Party (DAP); the party programme of the NSDAP

Thursday: Seminar 12 – Hitler takes over the helm of the NSDAP & Intellectual influences on Hitler, 1920-1923

Week 9:

Monday: no class

Thursday: Seminar 13 – Hitler’s speeches, 1920-1923

Week 10:

Monday: Seminar 14 – Hitler’s 1st book & the Putsch

Thursday: Seminar 15 – Hitler’s trial

Week 11:

Monday: Seminar 16 – The writing of *Mein Kampf*

Thursday: Seminar 17 – the mid-1920s and the writing of Hitler’s ‘2nd Book’

Week 12: Revision Week:

-an additional revision session will be scheduled on request.

For three sessions external speakers will join us either via Skype or in person, necessitating alternative times for these sessions, which will be announced in due course:

Seminar 18 – session with Ulrich Schlie, Andrassy University & German Foreign Office on the legacy of Hitler for the 21st century

Seminar 19 – session with two film makers about Hitler & film

Seminar 20 – How to stage a Hitler exhibition and how to publish books on Hitler? Focusing on the Berlin Story Bunker and the Berlin Story publishing house.

READING LIST

-Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (various editions)

-The 1941 Houghton Mifflin edition is available through The Internet Archive:

https://archive.org/stream/meinkampf035176mbp/meinkampf035176mbp_djvu.txt

-You may want to purchase a hardcopy of *Mein Kampf* too, as this is the core text for our course. I would suggest that you will get either the translation by Reynal & Hitchcock or by Ralph Manheim

-For a German edition of *Mein Kampf*, see,

<https://archive.org/stream/Mein-Kampf2/HitlerAdolf-MeinKampf-Band1Und2855.Auflage1943818S.djvu.txt>

-German History in Documents and Images, German Historical Institute Washington D.C., Section on 1918/19-1933, Subsection 12: 'The Rise of the Nazis',

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi->

[dc.org/sub_doclist.cfm?sub_id=350§ion_id=12](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_doclist.cfm?sub_id=350§ion_id=12)

-You may also find Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham's *Nazism: A Documentary Reader* (Exeter, various editions) as well as Roderick Stackelberg's *The Nazi Germany Sourcebook* (various editions) of use to you.

A secondary reading list on Hitler will be drawn up by the class in Week 1 and Week 2 and subsequently placed on MyAberdeen.

Gobbets in the exam will come from either *Mein Kampf* or from Subsection 12 of Section on 1918/19-1933 of the German History in Documents and Images website of German Historical Institute Washington D.C.

ASSESSMENT

3 hour Exam (100%)

Formative Assessment:

- 30 minute presentation that introduces one of the seminar topics as well as key documents plus Q&A.
- Gobbet exercises

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to **MyAberdeen- Organisations- Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates**. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

EXAMINATION

The exam last 3 hours and comes in the form of: 1 x Gobbet Question and 2 x Essay-style responses. **General exam guidance will be given in the Student Handbook**

Past exam papers can be viewed at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/>.

PLEASE NOTE: Candidates whose first language is not English may refer to English/native tongue dictionaries, when permitted by their Schools to do so. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the examination venue. Invigilators are entitled to request inspection of dictionaries prior to the examination, thumbing through them to check that there is no extra written material present.