

HIST 3397/5397: World War II in Germany (Study Abroad)

University of Texas at Tyler

Spring Semester/May 2026¹

Instructor: Prof. Matt Stith

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Office: CAS 127

Office Hours: T/R, 11:00-12:30; Or by appointment. **Note:** I will be available all day, every day during the study abroad portion of the class, and I will be available 24/7 should there be an emergency.

Course Description:

This course explores the Second World War and the Holocaust in Germany through readings, discussion, lectures, and a trip to Germany. We will tour major and minor historic sites, monuments, and cultural sites on a range of topics regarding the conflict and its consequences. Travel and tours will be contextualized with readings and discussions to gain a strong understanding and appreciation for the course and consequences of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Germany and Europe as a whole.

Content Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a strong understanding of the causes, course, and consequences of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Europe generally and Germany specifically.
2. Think critically and objectively about the Second World War and the Holocaust in Europe and Germany's role in the broader course of the global conflict.
3. Develop analytical skills through thinking, speaking, touring, and writing about history and the Second World War and Holocaust.



<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/gallery/german-occupation-maps>

¹ Note that this class will take place in May 2026 even though it is listed as a Spring 2026 course. There will be a few meetings in the spring semester, and I will post important information on Canvas, but the class is primarily in May. See schedule below for more details.

Required Reading:

- Nicholas Stargardt, *The German War: A Nation Under Arms* (Basic Books, 2015)
- Selected primary sources (available on Canvas)

Assignments:

- Travel Experience (50 pts)
 - o In 500+ words, please write an essay that discusses your 1) previous travel experience, 2) why you think travel is important for humans generally and scholars specifically, and 3) what you hope to gain from this study abroad experience.
- Book Synopses (2 x 50 = 100 pts)
 - o Please write two 600+ word synopses of what you gained from the first and second halves of Nicholas Stargardt's *The German War*.
 - Synopsis 1: pp. 1-232
 - Synopsis 2: pp. 233-570
- Travel Journal (100 pts)
 - o Students will keep a daily journal while we're in Germany. By the end of each day, please write 250+ words in which you consider the following: 1) What did you learn about the history of Germany that day—WWII or otherwise? 2) What did you learn about German culture that day? 3) Reflect on your personal experience that day—surprises, struggles, etc.
- Attendance and Active Participation (200 pts)
 - o Attend and actively participate in all course related events in Texas and in Germany. Failure to do so (without instructor consent) will result in a zero on the attendance/participation grade.
- Video Presentation (50 pts)
 - o In a 5-7 minute video made after we return, please share your experience in Germany using the following questions as your guide: 1) What did you learn about the history of Germany? 2) What did you learn about German culture? 3) How did visiting Germany impact you? Please use pictures that you took throughout the presentation.
- *Grad Students Only--All the above plus:
 - o ~10-minute presentation to the class **while in Germany**.
 - Based on primary source material and situated within relevant secondary scholarship.
 - One-page synopsis and full bibliography to be turned-in to instructor.

Attendance, Participation, and Decorum:

This is an upper-level university course. Attendance and participation are mandatory. Considering the nature of this travel class, it is imperative that you show up on time² for all meetings, tours, and any other class-wide event. *All* students must attend *all* class events. Failure to do so without instructor consent will result in a zero on the participation grade.

Point Breakdown:

Travel Experience Essay:	50 pts
Book Synopses:	50pts x2 = 100 pts
Travel Journal:	100 pts
Attendance and Participation:	200 pts
<u>Video Presentation</u>	<u>50 pts</u>
Total:	500 pts

Grade Scale:

500-450 = A
449-400 = B
399-350 = C
349-300 = D
299-000 = F

² On study abroad trips, showing up on time means showing up early. One late person makes *everyone* late. Don't be that person.

Make-up Policy:

I will work with you on an individual basis regarding any missed assignments.

Academic Honesty **[***IMPORTANT***]**

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further sanctions from the University of Texas at Tyler. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. Please carefully read the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <https://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8-student-conduct-discipline.pdf>

- UT Tyler Statement on AI:

- o UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

- My Statement on AI:

- o **AI is not permitted in this course.** All work students submit for this course should be their own. Do your *own* work without artificial intelligence. The use of ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values and will be treated as cheating (see above).

Course Schedule/Itinerary

- January 12-May 1 (Spring Semester)
 - o I will post Canvas updates, hold information sessions, etc., throughout the semester. I would also like to meet informally as a group a couple times to get to know everyone and talk about the trip. There will be one mandatory class session on campus and one mandatory individual meeting before we leave. We'll work out specifics early in the semester.
- Friday, February 27
 - o **Travel Experience Essay due by 11:59pm on Canvas**
- Friday, May 1:
 - o **Book Synopses 1 & 2 due by 11:59pm on Canvas**
- Study Abroad Itinerary [subject to change]
- Monday, May 18, 2026 – Munich
 - o Arrive; WWII Walking tour of Munich
- Tuesday, May 19, 2026 - Munich
 - o Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site
 - o NS-Dokumentationszentrum München (WWII Museum)
- Wednesday, May 20, 2026 - Munich
 - o Individual/Small Group Tours: Students will customize their own Munich tour itinerary in advance, subject to instructor approval.
- Thursday, May 21, 2026 - Nuremberg
 - o Half-day walking tour of Nuremberg
- Friday, May 22, 2026 - Nuremberg
 - o Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds
 - o Memorium Nuremberg Trials

- Saturday, May 23, 2026 – Nuremberg
 - o Individual/Small Group Tours: Students will customize their own Nuremberg tour itinerary in advance, subject to instructor approval.
- Sunday, May 24, 2026 - Berlin
 - o Munich to Berlin
 - o Explore the City
- Monday, May 25, 2026 - Berlin
 - o Historic tour of Berlin
 - o Topography of Terror Documentation Center, which stands on the site of the former SS and Gestapo headquarters.
- Tuesday, May 26, 2026 - Berlin
 - o Individual/Small Group Tours: Students will customize their own Munich tour itinerary in advance, subject to instructor approval.
- Wednesday, May 27, 2026 - Berlin
 - o Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen
 - o House of the Wannsee Conference
- Thursday, May 28, 2026 – Berlin → Tyler
- Sunday, June 7
 - o **Video Presentation due by 11:59pm on Canvas**

Other required syllabus information : See Canvas