

# Course Syllabus

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## Ethical and Scientific Legacy of the Nazi Medical Crimes



**Semester & Location:** Fall 2020 - DIS Copenhagen

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**Type & Credits:** Core Course - 3 credits

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**Major Disciplines:** Ethics, History, Public Health

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**Faculty Members:** Torben Jørgensen

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**Program Coordinator:** Katrine Trolle - [ktr@dis.dk \(mailto:ktr@dis.dk\)](mailto:ktr@dis.dk)

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**Time & Place:** Mondays and Thursdays 14:50-16:10

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## Description of Course

In this course we trace the intellectual roots of Nazi medicine, such as the concept of racial hygiene, which influenced global medical thinking much before the Nazis came to power in Germany. We address the ethics of using knowledge and concepts left to us by the Nazis and other totalitarian regimes (Imperial Japan; The Soviet Union), such as much of our knowledge of the condition and treatment of hypothermia, which came about after inhumane experiments. We delve into case studies, covering some of the reasoning and motivations of doctors and nurses to accept and implement the Nazi (and other totalitarian) medical thinking, and discuss more contemporary examples of members of the medical professions who transgress against the ethics and norms of their field.

## Learning Objectives

- acquire a general understanding of how democratic Weimar became Nazi Germany
- acquire an understanding of the living conditions in a totalitarian state

- gain an understanding of the global impact of eugenics on the medical professions
- gain an insight into the personal dynamics behind the motivation of doctors and nurses for entering into perverted medicine
- gain knowledge of the arguments pertaining to the debate over use/non-use of the results of unethical research

## Faculty

Torben Jørgensen

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<mailto:torbenjorgensen4@hotmail.com> (<mailto:torbenjorgensen4@hotmail.com>) Cand. mag. in History, U. of Copenhagen; with the Danish Center for Holocaust and genocide research (2000-2003); with the Danish Institute for International Studies (2003-2005); Project Manager at the Danish Jewish Museum (2007-2008).

## Readings

R.J. Lifton, The Nazi Doctors

P.J. Weidling, Nazi Medicine and the Nuremberg Trial

G. Aly et al, Cleansing the Fatherland

U. Schmidt, Karl Brandt

E. Scheffer, Asbergers Children

M. Kravetz, Woman Doctors in Weimar and nazi Germany

S. Kühl, the nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Rascism and German national Socialism

F.R. Nicosia et al, Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi Germany

Hal Gold, Unit 731 Testimony

M.S. Bryant, nazi Euthanasia on Trial

A. Pasternak, Inhuman Research

## Academic Regulations

Please make sure to read the [Academic Regulations](https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/) (<https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/>) on the DIS website. There you will find regulations on:











- [Course Enrollment and Grading](https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/course-enrollment-grading/) (<https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/course-enrollment-grading/>)














[regulations/course-environment-grading/](#)

- **Attendance** [\(https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/\)](https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/)
- **Coursework, Exams, and Final Grade Reports** [\(https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/coursework-exams-final-grade-reports/\)](https://disabroad.org/copenhagen/student-resource/academic-regulations/coursework-exams-final-grade-reports/)

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## Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Mon Aug 24, 2020	 introduction: From Hippocrates to Mengele	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Aug 27, 2020	 medical ethics 1	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Aug 31, 2020	 medical ethics 2	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Sep 3, 2020	 eugenics and racial hygiene as a global movement	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Sep 14, 2020	 the nazi society and its medical professionals	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Sep 17, 2020	 From T4 to the genocide of the Jews	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Sep 21, 2020	 The perpetrator in history	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Sep 24, 2020	 Rationality run amok: Dr. Hirschmeyer at Neuengamme	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Sep 28, 2020	 Racial medicine: Dr. Mengele at Birkenau	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Oct 1, 2020	 Nurses in nazi Germany	2:50pm to 4:10pm

Date	Details	
Mon Oct 12, 2020	 Inhuman experimentation 1: Hypothermia	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Oct 15, 2020	 Inhuman experimentation 2: High altitude	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Oct 19, 2020	 Inhuman experimentation 3: Forced sterilization	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Oct 22, 2020	 Inhuman experimentation 4: Asberger's children	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Nov 2, 2020	 Inhuman experimentation 5: The women from Ravensbrück	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Nov 5, 2020	 The legacy of nazi medicine: Trials	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Nov 9, 2020	 The legacy of nazi medicine: The debate over the use/non-use of unethical experiments	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Nov 12, 2020	 Contemporary cases 1: post-WWII experiments	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Nov 16, 2020	 Contemporary cases 2: The doctor in the torture chamber	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Nov 23, 2020	 individual project supervision 1	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Nov 26, 2020	 Individual project supervision 2	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Mon Nov 30, 2020	 Individual project supervision 3	2:50pm to 4:10pm
Thu Dec 3, 2020	 Wrapping it all up: What did we learn	2:50pm to 4:10pm