



SELF PROGRAM 2022/2023

Fascism, Vulnerability, and the Escape from Freedom

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Course information

Number of credits: 6 credits

Contact hours: 30 hours

Hours taught per week: 2,5 hours

Teaching period: fall semester 2022

Course description:

On the 100th anniversary of Mussolini's "March on Rome" (October 28, 2022) this course will examine a century of struggle between liberal democracy and fascist authoritarianization. Students will become familiar with older fascist experiments in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain; and with more recent fascist experiments in Europe, the Americas, and Asia. The course will use an interdisciplinary approach with readings from history, psychology, literature, and philosophy. The primary texts will be Robert Paxton's *Anatomy of Fascism*, Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*, Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, and Jason

Stanley's *How Fascism Works*. Students will also be encouraged to read Professor Delogu's new book, *Fascism, Vulnerability, and the Escape from Freedom: Readings to Repair Democracy* (Punctum 2022). The thesis of the book—inspired by previous studies of Tocqueville and democracy's strengths and weaknesses—is that acute vulnerability (provoked by extreme inequality, war, a pandemic, or other disasters) can derange the faculty of judgment of ordinary people and lead them to reject free and inclusive democratic practices and embrace instead a leader-savior's program of exclusionary protectionism. In other words, fascism is an escape from freedom carried out by hurt people who in turn hurt other people.

Prerequisites:

None

Course outline: class consists of 12 sessions of 2 ½ hours each = 30 contact hours.

Calendar: (exact dates will be provided in a revised syllabus in September 2022)

Week 1	What is fascism? What is democracy? Why should I care?
Week 2	Reading: Delogu, Introduction
Week 3	Paxton / Delogu on Paxton
Week 4	Fromm / Delogu on Fromm
Week 5	Arendt, Adorno, and the Authoritarian character
	VACATION – NO CLASS – Toussaint vacation , ONE WEEK
Week 6	Mid-term exam: 20 questions in class + take-home essay question
Week 7	Roth's <i>The Plot Against America</i>
Week 8	Roth's <i>The Plot Against America</i>
Week 9	Jason Stanley explains How Fascism Works
Week 10	Masha Gessen on Putin's Russia and Trump's America
Week 11	Timothy Snyder on Ukraine
Week 12	Final Exam in class + final version of paper due

Assessment:

Your grade for this course will be computed from 3 equally weighted assignments: **Mid-Term Exam, Final Paper, Final Exam**. Quality peer-editing and in-class participation can also boost your grade. Basic attendance is a minimum requirement. Oral presentations will happen on a volunteer basis.

Mid-Term: Answers to 20 factual questions about class readings + Short essay (800-word essay or textual commentary of a passage from a reading, 48-hour take home).

Final Exam: Short essay (dissertation or textual commentary)

Paper guidelines:

Write an essay that identifies the argument and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of a **scholarly** (i.e., not journalism) English-language article, chapter, or book on our course topic (in the contemporary French context or in some other area of the world and time period). You will first do library and Internet research to find a suitable “target text”; then read it (taking notes); then write an outline of your “talking points”; then write your factual summary of the argument followed by your **argued** comments (an argument is a claim supported by reasons and evidence). Target texts must be pre-approved by the instructor.

Formatting

Times Roman 12, double-spaced, 1-inch (2 cm) margins. 1,500 words (+/- 10%).

Type your full name and email address at the top of the first page – not in a header!

Respect word count limits, your classmate’s work, and all deadlines. **Electronic submissions only; send .doc or .docx files (not PDF) to: c.jon.delogu@gmail.com**

2022 self TD midterm CHEN

Sample file titles (all must contain the name of the author !!!)

2022 self FVF paper CHEN	(imagine the author’s family name is CHEN)
2022 self FVF paper CHEN md	(imagine Mary DARKE reads the paper)
2022 self FVF paper CHEN v2	(this is the file name of CHEN’s final paper)

Final Exam: Choice between a short commentary of a two-page document, or a short essay based on a quotation or key words (e.g., “Fascism and Global Capitalism”)

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) unexcused absences will be allowed; otherwise no mark will be given. An unexcused absence at a test (final test or continuous assessment) means no credits for the course.

Plagiarism is stealing and then lying about it. It’s illegal and disrespectful. Don’t do it !

Bibliography:

Most of the books for this class are affordable and readily available. Some, such as Fromm and Paxton and Delogu, are available in free full-text online versions.

I’m glad you’re here!

I am enthusiastic about teaching this class! I look forward to your questions and comments and to learning along with you from what you say in class and from your written work. We’re in this together—not brothers or equals exactly, but nevertheless partners—exploring a

topic of general interest no matter whether you are for or against fascism, freedom, or democracy.