

CSP 63-1: The Holocaust in Comparative Perspective

Occidental College

Spring 2021

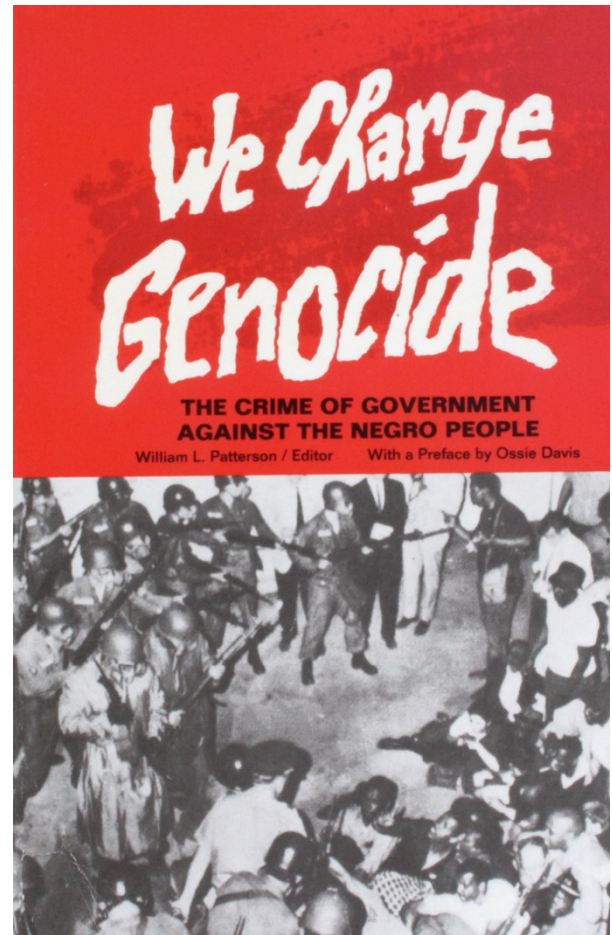
MWF 12:15-1:10 PM (PST)

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he/him/his

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Course Description: US Congressperson Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez set off a political firestorm after describing detention camps at the US-Mexico border as "concentration camps." Many objected to the term because of the comparisons it suggests between state violence at the US-Mexico border and state violence in the Third Reich. Was the Nazi persecution and extermination of European Jewry, Communists, homosexuals, Roma/Sinti, and the disabled a singular, unique, and unprecedented event in world history? What kind of relationship does the Holocaust have with forms of violence and subjugation that precede, coincide, and follow it? In this seminar, we will explore what is at stake in debates on comparing the Holocaust and we will investigate a handful of case studies that put the Holocaust in comparative perspective.



As a first-year seminar, this course is intended to introduce you to the critical thinking, writing, and research skills that will be expected of you throughout your career at Oxy. We will focus on a single topic (the "Holocaust") in a particular frame ("Comparative"), but the skills you learn in this course should also translate to other courses and to critical thinking, writing, and research activities beyond academia. You will learn to read and interpret various textual forms, analyze primary sources according to historical cultural context, evaluate historical and cultural arguments, and articulate your own in interesting, sophisticated, and clear ways.

The course is divided into an introductory unit followed by eight comparative case studies: **Fascism, Racial Contagion, Race Law, Ghettos, Camps, Perpetrators, Jews & Others**, and **Genocide**. We will explore multiple comparative scales (such as the national, transnational, international, and global) and multiple comparative forms (such as diachronic/synchronic, historical/literary, etc.).

The course will culminate in a paper that combines original research and analysis. This research paper will offer a comparative analysis of either (1) unexplored examples of cases studied in the course or (2) a case study including an element of the Holocaust *not* studied in the course. Your original research paper can also take the form of a comparative cultural analysis of literature or film.

Required Texts: All accessible on Moodle.

Class Format and Expectations: We will meet synchronously for discussion on Zoom twice a week, with some exceptions, and once asynchronously for either a pre-recorded lecture or writing activity. Typically, we will meet synchronously on Mondays and Wednesdays and asynchronously on Fridays—again, with some exceptions. Readings and films are due on the day they appear in the course schedule below.

On days when we meet synchronously, join class using the following link:

<https://occidental.zoom.us/j/82857505892>

Meeting ID: 828 5750 5892

Passcode: 528062

Course Assignments:

Forum Posts: Six times throughout the semester, you will write a 300-500-word reflection that synthesizes the week's materials and/or extends and develops its ideas. You may choose to reflect on an interesting passage in the assigned reading. Or, you may develop a critical analysis of an interesting passage in the assigned reading that extends and develops ideas from class discussion. You also may add miscellaneous comments about the week's materials and make connections to previous readings/discussions, developing your own line of inquiry. These forum posts should be written carefully and thoughtfully, with attention to grammar and writing composition.

Forum posts will be graded on a scale of 3 (3=adequate word count, minimal to no errors in grammar or writing composition, clear and thoughtful; 2=may lack the required word count, some errors in grammar or writing composition; 1= may lack the required word count, evident errors in grammar or writing composition, lacks clarity). The lowest two forum posts will be dropped.

Textual Analysis: 3-4 pages summarizing a text and analyzing its comparative argument. Further instructions to follow.

Primary Source Analysis: 3-4 pages comparing two primary sources assigned in the **Fascism** unit. Further instructions to follow.

Film Analysis: 1-2 page close reading of a scene or scenes in either of the films *Night and Fog* (1955) or *Nosferatu* (1922).

Research Question: Develop a clear, focused, and complex research question along with a hypothesized answer and the kinds of sources you think you will need to support it.

Provisional Research Paper Bibliography: An outline of the sources you plan to use in your research paper, broken into sections and accompanied with explanations of how each section will further answer your research question. Further instructions to follow.

Provisional Research Paper Argument: An organized and cohesive outline of your overall argument and its different layers. Further instructions to follow.

Research Paper: 10-12 pages articulating an original, comparative argument based in research and analysis. You will first write a draft of the research paper and will have an opportunity for revision.

Course Assessment:

20% - Forum Posts
10% - Textual Analysis
10% - Primary Source Analysis
10% - Film Analysis
40% - Research Paper

5% - Research Question
10% - Provisional Research Bibliography
10% - Provisional Research Argument
5% - Research Paper Draft
10% - Final Research Paper

10% - Class Engagement: You should arrive to class discussion with some insights to contribute. Together, we will build and refine our initial ideas. Students' regular presence and prepared and critical participation are essential for the success of our class. I will assess the *quantity* (i.e., frequency) of your contributions to class discussions and the *quality* of your engagement with the sources and with your classmate's comments.

All work is expected at the stated and/or written deadline. There are no make-ups for forum posts. For other assignments, late work will drop a full letter grade for each day it is late. Assignments/papers turned in one minute after the due time will be considered one day late. I am usually generous with extensions as long as students ask in advance of the due date. The most important thing is to communicate.

Grading Scale: (CSP is graded S/U)

A	B	C	D	F
90-100	80-89	70-79	60-69	<60

Office Hours:

Open Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:45-3:15 PM (PST)

These are an open Zoom meeting, perfect for dropping in with a quick question or a discussion with classmates. To join, use the zoom link and passcode below.

<https://occidental.zoom.us/j/3475717108>

Passcode: 599776

Scheduled Appointments: Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 PM (PST) and by individual appointment

Sign up for a 15-minute slot at the below link, or email me to schedule another time. Once you sign up for a slot at the below link, you will receive a confirmation email that the appointment has been set up. In that email you can find the Zoom link & password. At the time of our individual office hours appointment, simply click the Zoom link or call the phone number in the confirmation email or in the calendar event itself.

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/selfsched?sstoken=UU1zZlFnV055b2VtfGRlZmF1bHR8M2Y1MTI4ZDZjY2EzYWU5ZjM4MjNkMWI0MTA1MzU4OTE>

Zoom Policies: As a student participating in an online learning environment, you must abide by all College rules and regulations including, but not limited to, rules in the applicable course syllabus/outline, the Student Code of Conduct Policy, the Policy on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination, as well as any applicable laws. Any violation of these rules may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the College, and/or legal action.

Recordings of lectures will be made available through Moodle, but only for the express and sole use of those registered in the course. The recorded material will be removed at the end of the semester. No other recording of classroom instruction is permitted. The sharing, altering, or distorting of any audio-visual capture of a class session is not permitted. All content contained in the records shall be subject to the College's Policy on Intellectual Property.

Important Dates:

1/29: Forum Post DUE
1/31: *Night and Fog* viewing (optional)
2/5: Textual Analysis DUE
2/12: Forum Post DUE
2/17: Primary Source Analysis DUE
2/24: Film Analysis DUE
2/26: Forum Post DUE
3/1: *Writing Portfolio DUE*
3/5: Research Questions DUE
3/19: Forum Post DUE
3/25: *Son of Saul* viewing (optional)
4/2: Provisional Research Paper Bibliography DUE
4/6: *The Act of Killing* viewing (optional)
4/9: Forum Post DUE
4/16: Provisional Research Paper Argument DUE
4/26: Draft of Research Paper DUE
5/3: Final Research Paper DUE

Course Schedule:

WEEK 1:

Monday, January 18, 2021 (MLK Day)

No class.

I. Introduction

Wednesday, January 20, 2021:

No reading.

Friday, January 22, 2021: (***asynchronous***)

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: The Holocaust

WEEK 2:

Monday, January 25, 2021: On Historical Comparison

1. Michael Rothberg, "Notes on Historical Comparison in the Age of Trump (and Erdoğan)," *The Massachusetts Review* 60, no. 4 (2019): 818-826.

Wednesday, January 27, 2021: Early Approaches

1. George Padmore, "Hitler Will Treat Jews Like Blacks," *Chicago Defender* (Chicago, IL), November 13, 1937.
2. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000 [1950]), 31-39.
3. W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto," *Jewish Life*, May 1952, 14-15.

Friday, January 29, 2021: (***asynchronous***)

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: Comparison and Representation

DUE: Forum Post (11:59 PM PST)

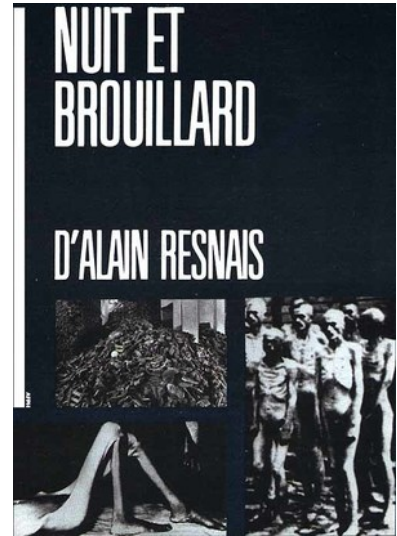
WEEK 3:

Sunday, January 31, 2021: (Optional)

7:00 PM (PST): *Night and Fog* viewing

Monday, February 1, 2021: Film

1. FILM: [*Night and Fog*](#) [Nuit et Brouillard], directed by Alain Resnais (Paris: Argos Films, 1955).
2. Louisa Rice, "The Voice of Silence: Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog* and collective memory in post-Holocaust France, 1944-1974," *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 31, no. 1 (2002): 22-29.



Wednesday, February 3, 2021: Literature

1. Michelle Cliff, *Abeng*, (New York: Plume, 1995 [1984]), 66-81.

II. Fascism

Friday, February 5, 2021: (**asynchronous**)

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: Fascism

DUE: Textual Analysis (11:59 PM PST)

WEEK 4:

Monday, February 8, 2021: Primary Sources

1. "The Program of the German Workers' Party: The Twenty-Five Points" in *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, ed. Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013 [1920]), 12-14.
2. Victor Klemperer, "From the Diary of the First Year," *The Language of the Third Reich* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013 [1933]), 29-40.
3. [*Triumph of the Will*](#) [*Triumph des Willens*], directed by Leni Riefenstahl (Berlin: Universum Film AG, 1935). **[watch the first 20 minutes and skip to the mass rallies around hour one (you only need to watch a few minutes)]**
4. Adolf Hitler, "Speech to the Great German Reichstag" in *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, ed. Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013 [1939]), 723-724.

Wednesday, February 10, 2021: Fascism in Comparative Perspective

1. Mark Neocleous, "Racism, Fascism and Nationalism," in *Fascism Reader*, ed. Aristotle A. Kallis (London: Routledge, 2003), 349-356.
2. Enzo Traverso, *The New Faces of Fascism* (London: Verso, 2019), 1-8, 20-26, 65-73.

III. Racial Contagion

Friday, February 12, 2021: **asynchronous**

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: Racial Contagion

DUE: Forum Post (11:59 PM)

WEEK 5:

Monday, February 15, 2021 (Presidents' Day)

No class.

Wednesday, February 17, 2021: Antisemitism, Disease, and German Culture

1. FILM: *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror*, dir. F. W. Murnau (1922)

DUE: Primary Source Analysis (11:59 PM PST)



Friday, February 19, 2021: Race, Sexuality, and Public Health (*synchronous*)

1. Sander Gilman, "The Jewish Disease: Plague in Germany 1939/1989," in *The Jew's Body* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 210-233.
2. FILM: [The Eternal Jew](#) [Der Ewige Jude], dir. Fritz Hippler (1940)

WEEK 6:

Monday, February 22, 2021: Yellow Peril and COVID-19

1. Loki Siu & Claire Chun, "Yellow Peril and Techno-orientalism in the Time of Covid-19: Racialized Contagion, Scientific Espionage, and Techno-Economic Warfare," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 23, no. 3 (October 2020): 421-440.

IV. Race Law

Wednesday, February 24, 2021: (*asynchronous*)

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: Race Law

DUE: Film Analysis (11:59 PM PST)

Friday, February 26, 2021: (*synchronous*)

LIBRARY WORKSHOP

DUE: Forum Post (11:59 PM PST)

WEEK 7:

Monday, March 1, 2021: The American Connection

1. "The First Stage: Anti-Jewish Legislation," in *A Holocaust Reader*, edited by Lucy S. Dawidowicz (New York: Berhman House, Inc, 1976), 35-53.
2. James Q. Whitman, *Hitler's American Model* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 1-16.

WRITING PORTFOLIO DUE 5 PM (PST)

Wednesday, March 3, 2021: Immigration, Citizenship, Blood

1. James Q. Whitman, *Hitler's American Model* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 34-37, 59-69, 73-80, 127-131.

Friday, March 5, 2021:

No class.

DUE: Research Questions (11:59 PM PST)

SPRING BREAK (March 8-12, 2021)

V. Ghettos

WEEK 8: Comparisons Across Time and Space

Monday, March 15, 2021:

1. *Pre-Recorded Lecture: Ghettos*
2. Mitchell Duneier, "A Nazi Deception," in *Ghetto: The Invention of a Place, the History of an Idea* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), 3-25.

Wednesday, March 17, 2021: Comparisons Within

1. Katarzyna Person, "Sexual Violence during the Holocaust—The Case of Forced Prostitution in the Warsaw Ghetto," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 33, no. 2 (Winter 2015): 103-121.

2. Anna Hájková & Michael Beckerman, "Treating Epidemics in a Nazi Ghetto," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, December 29, 2020, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/treating-epidemics-in-a-nazi-ghetto/?fbclid=IwAR0eM6Nilno6WDQfag7lx2fuJyq7CS09nuKarbsclyhZCsU6yJkHtQiqWYI>.

VI. Camps

Friday, March 19, 2021: (**asynchronous**)

1. Pre-Recorded Lecture: Camps

DUE: Forum Post (11:59 PM PST)

WEEK 9:

Monday, March 22, 2021: The *Konzentrationslager* (KI)

1. Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KI: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015), 3-21.
2. Elissa Mailänder, "The Majdanek Concentration and Death Camp: An Overview," in *Female SS Guards and Workaday Violence*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2015), 23-44.

Wednesday, March 24, 2021: The Concentrationary Universe

1. Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. By Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 1986), 1-11, 25-56.

Thursday, March 25, 2021: (Optional)

7:00 PM (PST): *Son of Saul* viewing

Friday, March 26, 2021: (*synchronous*)

1. FILM: *Son of Saul* [Saul fia], dir. László Nemes (2015)

WEEK 10:

Monday, March 29, 2021 (Passover)

No class.

Wednesday, March 31, 2021: Mass Civilian Detention

1. Andrea Pitzer, *One Long Night: A Global History of Concentration Camps* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2017), 3-16, 294-323.

Friday, April 2, 2021: Concentrationary Literature (*synchronous*)



1. Sherman Alexie, "Inside Dachau," *The Beloit Poetry Journal* 36, no. 4 (1996): 12-16.

DUE: Provisional Research Paper Bibliography (11:59 PM PST)

VII. Perpetrators

WEEK 11:

Monday, April 5, 2021: Ordinary Men

1. Heinrich Himmler, "Speech at Posen, in *The Third Reich Sourcebook*, ed. Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013 [1943]), 785-791.
2. Christopher Browning, "One Day in Jozefow: Initiation to Mass Murder," in *Lessons and Legacies I: The Meaning of the Holocaust in a Changing World*, Vol. 1, ed. Peter Hayes (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 300-315.
3. OPTIONAL: Elissa Mailänder, "Annihilation as Work: The Daily Work of Killing in the Camp," in *Female SS Guards and Workaday Violence*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2015), 159-188.

Tuesday, April 6, 2021: (Optional)

7:00 PM (PST): *The Act of Killing* viewing

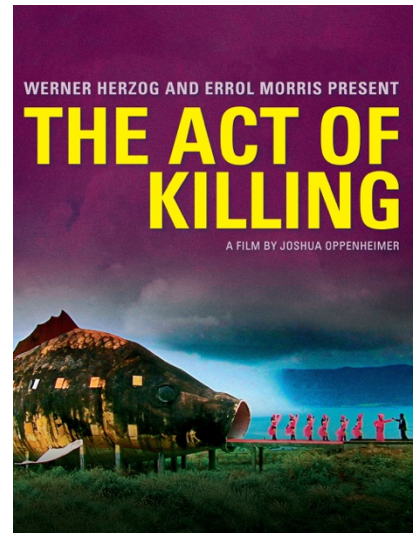
Wednesday, April 7, 2021: Representing Perpetrators

1. FILM: *The Act of Killing*, directed by Joshua Oppenheimer (Austin: Drafthouse Films, 2013)
2. Alexandra Schultheis Moore, "Film After Atrocity: An Interview with Joshua Oppenheimer," in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Human Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 480-498.

Friday, April 9, 2021: (**asynchronous**)

WRITING DAY

DUE: Forum Post (11:59 PM)



VIII. Jews and Others

WEEK 12:

Monday, April 12, 2021: The Holocaust and North Africa

1. Aomar Boum and Sarah Abrevaya Stein, "Introduction," in *The Holocaust and North Africa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019), 1-12.

2. FILM: *Le chant des mariées* [*The Wedding Song*], directed by Karin Albou (France: Pyramide Distribution, 2008).

Wednesday, April 14, 2021: Jewish and Romani Testimony

3. Ari Joskowicz, "Separate Suffering, Shared Archives: Jewish and Romani Histories of Nazi Persecution," *History & Memory* 28, no. 1 (2016): 110-132.

Friday, April 16, 2021: (*asynchronous*)

WRITING DAY

DUE: Provisional Research Paper Argument (11:59 PM PST)



IX. Genocide

WEEK 13:

Monday, April 19, 2021: A Concept Emerges

GUEST LECTURE: Zoé Samudzi

1. Civil Rights Congress, "We Charge Genocide" (1951)

Wednesday, April 21, 2021: Holocaust Studies or Genocide Studies?

1. A. Dirk Moses, "Revisiting a Founding Assumption of Genocide Studies." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6, 3 (December 2011): 287-300.

Friday, April 23, 2021: (*asynchronous*)

WRITING DAY

WEEK 14

Monday, April 26, 2021: Peer Review

DUE: Draft of Research Paper *IN CLASS*

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE MONDAY, MAY 3 (11:59 PM PST)

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Credit Hour Policy: CSP 63 is a 4-unit course. It is expected that students in this class will be devoting at least twelve (12) hours a week (including in-class time) on average.

Academic Ethics & Integrity: Students are expected to comply with the Student Handbook, in particular the section on [Academic Ethics](#). Whenever outside sources are used, they must be properly credited. Plagiarism occurs when the ideas, organization, or language of another are incorporated into one's work without properly crediting the original source with a citation or other disclosure. It includes re-writing or re-formatting material without acknowledging the original source of the ideas. Even if the language and organization are in the student's own words, any ideas or information that are not common knowledge must be acknowledged in a reference. Students are responsible for knowing and using the correct procedures for acknowledging and identifying sources of borrowed material. Failure to properly credit sources in all or part of work presented in draft or final form to anyone is plagiarism, regardless of whether it occurs as a result of dishonest intent or carelessness and regardless of the course credit attached to it. Penalties for academic misconduct are severe (see "Academic Misconduct"), and ignorance of the principles and policies concerning cheating and plagiarism is not a defense.

Title IX: In the event that you choose to write or speak about having experienced sexual or interpersonal violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual harassment, as a designated Responsible Employee, I must notify the Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at Oxy and reporting options both on and off-campus. If you do not want the Title IX Office notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus:

- Marianne Frapwell, Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (young@oxy.edu)

The sexual misconduct policy, along with additional resources, can be found at: <http://www.oxy.edu/sexual-respect-title-ix/policies-procedures>. If you would like to contact the Title IX Office directly, you can email Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at afulcher@oxy.edu or call 323-259-1338.

Special Accommodations/Learning Differences: No matter the mode of course instruction, approved academic accommodations remain in effect. Students with documented disabilities and learning differences who are registered with Disability Services are required to present their accommodation letter to the instructor at the beginning of each semester, or as soon as possible thereafter. Any student who has, or thinks they may have, a physical, learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at accessibility@oxy.edu to learn about available services and support. More information is available at <http://www.oxy.edu/disability-services>.

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith or Conscience: Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes

that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website: <https://www.oxy.edu/office-religious-spiritual-life>

Student Academic Support Resources: The College has a wide range of [Student Academic Support Resources](#).

- If you'd like to take advantage of the College's Academic Coaching resource, which offers one-on-one sessions focused on supporting your time management skills, online learning strategies, and other study skills, you may schedule an academic coaching meeting by sending an email to academiccoaching@oxy.edu. Share what you'd like to work on, and an academic coach will schedule an appointment with you within a few days.
- The Center for Digital Liberal Arts (CDLA) offers [library research consultations](#) and [discipline-specific peer tutoring for coursework](#) and [language learning](#). We also offer peer-to-peer [support for learning technologies](#) from Moodle and Zoom to Adobe, app making, and ProTools.
- The Writing Center offers opportunities to work on all forms of writing for any class or other writing tasks such as personal statements, senior comprehensives, etc. We offer peer-to-peer consultations with knowledgeable Writing Advisers and sessions with Faculty Writing Specialists. For fall 2020, all of our appointments will be remote: either synchronous virtual meetings or asynchronous writing feedback. See the [Writing Center website](#) for more information about our fall hours and how students can sign up for appointments. We will update our information again for spring 2021. Please contact the Writing Programs-Center Director, Julie Prebel (jprebel@oxy.edu; x1307) for more information on how the Center can work with you.
- The [Academic Mastery Program](#) provides challenging workshops for students enrolled in general chemistry, organic chemistry, introductory physics, cellular and molecular biology, and basic calculus courses. These workshops are led by upper-level students and provide an opportunity to test knowledge and skills in the context of new and challenging problems. The workshops provide a time to work intensively and collaboratively with other committed students in an atmosphere that is demanding yet relaxed.
- The [Scientific Scholars Achievement Program \(SSAP\)](#) is a student-initiated, student-led academic support program that supports the development of a diverse body of individuals who will advance and enhance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) professional fields in an endeavor to meet the complex and evolving demands of a culturally heterogeneous society. SSAP provides tutoring in introductory and gateway STEM courses and encourages collaboration among classmates. All questions and learning styles from students are welcomed and encouraged. Through educational and social events, SSAP aims to build community between faculty and students studying math and science at Occidental.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation policy: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-handbook/general-college-policies/discrimination-harassment-and-retaliation>. I strive to foster an inclusive classroom

environment. Consistent with College policy on [discrimination, harassment, and retaliation](#), I seek to maintain an environment of mutual respect among all members of our community. Please come to me with any concerns.

Emmons/Student health: Your health and well-being has always impacted learning and academic success, and this reality is only heightened as we learn and live through a global pandemic. Symptoms such as anxiety,

depression, loss of motivation, difficulty concentrating, and strained relationships can occur. Emmons Counseling staff are committed to supporting the mental health needs of all of our students, regardless of where you're located. Emmons provides virtual walk-ins, crisis support, and consultation to all students, and ongoing individual telecounseling to students residing in California. All students residing outside of California will have access to ongoing telecounseling through a national telecounseling service. Emmons also assists students with finding local therapy referrals. All students continue to have access to the 24/7 confidential hotline at (323) 341-4141. To get connected to any of the free, confidential services at Emmons call (323) 259-2657 or schedule an appointment online at <https://myhealth.oxy.edu> using your Oxy login credentials.