



Gratz Insider, January 2012 - Story Continuation

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Gratz Launches the First Online Master's Program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Program director Dr. Michael Steinlauf describes the new Master's program - the fifth Master's degree available at Gratz - as "an enormous breakthrough that will bring Holocaust and Genocide education to the smallest communities in this country and throughout the world."

News of this program has sparked excitement among prospective students, both nationally and internationally. E-mails have come in from Egypt, England, Ireland and Canada and from across the United States, underscoring the need for programs such as the one at Gratz. "I am a teacher in Wichita, Kansas," wrote one prospective student, "and we do not have any programs like this that I would have access to."

"The Holocaust," says Gratz program coordinator Mindy Blechman, "is the ultimate example of what can happen from failing to stand up to hatred and bigotry," which explains why this subject is being used in schools to combat racism, intolerance and bullying. Five states have already mandated Holocaust education and another ten have recommended it, creating a significant need for teacher training in this area - a need that can be met by the Gratz Master's program.

While designed for a wide range of students - museum docents, social workers, religious leaders, members of community organizations and people with a personal interest in the Holocaust - the program fills a particular need for teachers. It not only covers the Holocaust and contemporary issues in racism and genocide, but also offers electives on teaching these subjects. In addition to the M.A., Gratz offers a graduate certificate program in Holocaust and Genocide studies. Full-time public and private school educators receive a substantial tuition discount.

Given its roots as both a teaching college and a Jewish institution, Gratz is uniquely positioned to engage the subject of the Holocaust. The program faculty draws from leading Holocaust educators on three continents, including experts on pre-war Jewish life and Jewish resistance during the Holocaust. The wealth of resources at Gratz includes the Tuttleman Library and the Holocaust Oral History Archive with audio testimonies of survivors, liberators and other witnesses. Students in the program have many courses to choose from, as well as options for supervised teaching, an internship at the Archive, or a summer study trip to Poland.

With online access, Gratz aims to extend the reach of Holocaust and genocide education throughout the country and the world. And by training teachers, Gratz hopes to bring the crusade against intolerance and indifference to the next generation.

For more information, contact [Mindy Blechman](#) at 215-635-7300, x 154.