



Detailed Course Syllabus

Academic Year		2025/2026	Semester	Summer
Study Program	University Undergraduate Program	Specialization/Major in	History, Sociology, Communication Sciences	Year of Study 1-3

I. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Name	The Ustashas and the Independent State of Croatia		
Abbreviation UISC	IZBP256	Code	278811
Status	Elective	ECTS	4
Prerequisites	None		
Total Course Workload			
Teaching Mode	Total Hours	Teaching Mode	Total Hours
Lectures	30	Seminars	15
Class Time and Place	CUC, according to the published timetable		

II. TEACHING STAFF

Course Holder

Name and Surname	Mario Jareb		
Academic Degree	PhD	Professional Title	Associate Professor
Contact E-mail	mario.jareb@unicath.hr	Telephone	
Office Hours	According to the published timetable		Office

Teaching Language

English

Course Description

The undergraduate course "Ustashas and the Independent State of Croatia" is focused on the appearance and development of the inter-war Ustasha Organization (Ustasha-Croatian Revolutionary Organization-UHRO) and the Ustasha-Domobran Movement before April 1941. The latter is to be viewed as a set of organizations under the leadership of Ante Pavelic, of which the UHRO constituted a part. The UHRO was founded as a small paramilitary organization to take the armed struggle to establish an independent Croatian state. At the same time, among the emigrants in North and South America and among Croatian workers in Europe were created mass emigrant organizations of the Croatian Home Guard (*Hrvatski domobran*), which publicly acted and sought not only to

gather Croats but also to influence the public opinion of the countries in which they operated.

The center of attention of the undergraduate course “Ustashas and Independent State of Croatia” is the period of the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska - NDH*), ruled by the Ustasha movement and its leader (*Poglavnik*) Ante Pavelić. In this period, he was both the leader of the Movement and the Chief of the State, so the fundamental characteristic of that state was the absolute power of Pavelić and Ustashas. That was, however, an attempt to transform the Croatian state into a totalitarian state modeled after its “great allies,” fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany, to which NDH depended until the end of the war (to Italy until its capitulation in 1943). One of the most important consequences of such efforts is the introduction of intolerance towards all forms of free opinion and the persecution of all those who have been marked as enemies, whether they were enemies or not. Such a policy resulted in mass persecution and murder of many dissenters, with a particularly tragic case of the Jewish community that has become a target of persecution primarily because the NDH authorities have copied German National Socialist anti-Semitic policies. Substantial attention is also paid to the attitude of the NDH authorities towards Serbs, from persecution because of their religious and ethnic affiliation to the appearance of Chetniks and the change of policy. The latter is mirrored in establishing the Croatian Orthodox Church and accepting the Orthodox population as the Croats of the Orthodox faith. The adherence of NDH to Italy and Germany is an essential characteristic of the life of that state throughout the war, so relations with the Italians and Germans are also paid considerable attention. With the approach of the end of the war, the question of the fate of the wartime NDH appeared, and even the possible transition to the side of the Allies. That was mainly reflected in what is known today as the coup Lorković-Vokić.

However, what threatened the existence of the NDH the most was the growth of Tito's Partisan Movement led by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia/Croatia. The Movement formally advocated the resurrection of the Yugoslav state on the principle of equality of its people and also for the equal position of the Croatian people, which was supposed to obtain its Croatian federal unit. The Partisan Movement also attracted many Croats to its side during the war. Finally, the Partisan victory in the war and the collapse of the NDH left the fate of the Croatian people in the hands of the Communists as the leading force of the Partisan Movement. The collapse of the NDH caused the withdrawal towards the west of many Croats led by the leadership of the NDH, the Ustasha movement, and the members of its armed forces. In the fleeing columns, a massive number of civilians did not want to face the establishment of the communist regime in Croatia. The tragic fate of a large number of Croats who withdrew and eventually fell into the hands of the Yugoslav forces is well known today. Numerous mass graves testify to the cruelty of new Yugoslav rulers who established a totalitarian communist regime in the restored Yugoslav state. Some of those who withdrew, including Pavelić, some NDH prominent government officials, Ustasha movement leaders, and military commanders, still managed to avoid the tragic fate of many Croats captured by Yugoslav forces. Some later managed to sail for Argentina after a long hiding in Austria and Italy. They soon renewed their emigrant political activity in Argentina, mainly related to glorifying the failed Independent State of Croatia.

Expected Educational Outcomes	1. Master basic historiographical concepts from Croatian history of the Second World War; 2. Distinguish processes in Croatia, Europe, and the World War II according to historiographic approaches and research achievements; 3. Recognize
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the hierarchy of historical factors and causality of historical processes; 4. Critically analyze and interpret sources, scientific and professional literature; 5. Adhere to ethical principles in work.

Textbooks and Materials

Required	<p>R. Harris, <i>Croatia: A History. From Revolution to Independence</i> (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2024), pp. 289-307, 337-482, 707-726.; <i>A History of the Croats. The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries</i> (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2022), pp. 279-282, 287-290, 297-336.; M. Jareb, <i>Ustaško-domobranski pokret od nastanka do travnja 1941. godine</i> (Zagreb: Školska knjiga and Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2006), pp. 631-648; M. Jareb, "Marseilles 1934: The death of the king", in: <i>A Transnational History of Right-Wing Terrorism: Political Violence and the Far Right in Eastern and Western Europe since 1900</i>. (Abingdon, Oxford, New York (NY): Routledge, 2022), pp. 115-128; M. Jareb, <i>Mediji i promidžba u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj</i> (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2016), pp. 941-960.; M. Jareb, "The NDH's relations with Italy and Germany", <i>Totalitarian movements and political religions</i>, 7 (2006), 4: 459-472.; Lj. Boban, <i>Croatian borders, 1918-1993</i> (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1993).</p>
Supplementary	<p>E. Gitman, <i>When Courage Prevailed: The Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945</i> (St. Paul (MN): 2011); R. Harris, <i>Stepinac: His Life and Times</i> (Leominster: Gracewing, 2016), pp. 101-201; M. Jareb, "Allies or Foes? Mihailović's Chetniks during the Second World War", in: <i>Serbia and the Serbs in World War Two</i> (Basingstoke, New York (NY): Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 155-174; J. Batelja, <i>Blessed Alojzije Stepinac - The rescue of Jews and Serbs during World War II</i> (Zagreb, 2020); M. Jareb, <i>Ustaško-domobranski pokret od nastanka do travnja 1941. godine</i> (Zagreb: Školska knjiga and Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2006); H. Matković, <i>Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, Drugo, dopunjeno izdanje s koloriranim prilogom Ikonografija</i> (Zagreb: Naklada P.I.P. Pavičić, 2002); N. Barić, „Domobranstvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941.-1945.“, in: <i>Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941.-1945.</i>, S. P. Ramet (ed.) (Zagreb: Alinea, 2009), pp. 67-86; Z. Dizdar, „Četnički pokret na području Hrvatske i Bosne i Hercegovine (1941.-1945.)“, in: <i>Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941.-1945.</i>, S. P. Ramet (ed.) (Zagreb: Alinea, 2009), pp. 43-66; N. Kisić Kolanović, <i>NDH i Italija: Političke veze i diplomatski odnosi</i> (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2001); J. Krišto, <i>Sukob simbola: Politika, vjere i ideologije u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj</i> (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Globus, 2001); Z. Hasanebgović, <i>Jugoslavenska muslimanska organizacija 1929. – 1941. (U ratu i revoluciji 1941. – 1945.)</i> (Zagreb Bošnjačka nacionalna zajednica za Grad Zagreb i Zagrebačku županiju, 2012), pp. 727-819; J. Jareb, <i>Državno gospodarstveno povjerenstvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske od kolovoza 1941. do travnja 1945.: Dokumentarni prikaz</i> (Zagreb Hrvatski institut za povijest, Hrvatski državni arhiv i Dom i svijet, 2001), pp. 32-35; Z. Radelić, <i>Hrvatska seljačka stranka 1941.-1950.</i> (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 1996), pp. 21-31.</p>

Examination and Grading

To Be Passed	Yes	Exclusively Continuous Assessment	No	Included in Average Grade	Yes
Prerequisites to Obtain Signature and Take Final Exam		1. Regular attendance at classes – attendance of at least 70 % of classes according to the study program.			2. Fully completed seminar obligations - prepared and submitted presentation, accepted written version of the paper.

3. **Obtaining a minimum success rate of 35 % during classes within the assigned teaching activities** - achieved cumulatively.

Examination Manner	1. Teaching activities (continuous knowledge assessment, midterm exams, seminar). 2. Final exam (written).
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Grade Scale:
insufficient (1) – 0 to 49.9%
sufficient (2) – 50–64.9%
good (3) – 65–79.9%
very good (4) – 80–89.9%
excellent (5) – 90% and above.

Grading Manner	a) Teaching activities: a) Seminar obligations – 20 % of the grade b) Midterm exam 1 – 25 % of the grade c) Midterm exam 2 – 25 % of the grade b) Final exam: a) Final exam – 30 % of the grade (<i>to pass, it is necessary to solve at least 50% of the exam</i>) Written exam – 30 %
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Detailed Overview of Grading within ECTS

ACTIVITY TYPE	ECTS Student Workload Coefficient	GRADE PERCENTAGE (%)
Class Attendance	1.2	0
Seminar Presentation	0.56	20
Midterm Exam	0.7	25
Midterm Exam	0.7	25
Total in Class	3.16	70
Final Exam	0.84	30
TOTAL ECTS (Classes + Final Exam)	4	100

Midterm Exam Dates	Midterm Exam 1: 8 th class; Midterm Exam 2: 14 th class
Final Exam Dates	According to the published timetable

IV. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

Lectures

Week	Topic
1.	Introductory Lecture
2.	The roots of Ustashism and the emergence of the Ustasha organization (Ustaša, hrvatska revolucionarna organizacija - UHRO) in emigration in the early 1930s
3.	UHRO actions during the 1930s in emigration and homeland - from paramilitary and terrorist actions to the assassination in Marseille and the "great Ustasha silence."
4.	Ustasha and pro-Ustasha activities in the homeland aimed to establish an independent Croatian state.
5.	The establishment of the Independent State of Croatia in April 1941 and its first weeks of existence. Symbols, boundaries, and the character of the new regime.
6.	NDH's relationships with its "great allies" - Italy and Germany
7.	Relationship to political dissenters and persecution of Jews, Serbs and Roma
8.	The Serbian question in the NDH - from the enemies of the Croats to the Croats of Orthodox faith
9.	The system of repression and armed forces
10.	Economy and daily life - from "dots" (ration cards) to Allied bombs
11.	Cultural life, media, and propaganda
12.	Tito's Partisan Movement as the main threat to the survival of NDH
13.	The end is near – the last year of the war, an attempt to turn the Croatian state to the Allied side, and the collapse of the NDH.
14.	Bleiburg, the Way of the Cross, and the second Ustasha emigration
15.	Concluding Lecture

Seminars

Week	Topic
1.	Views on the Ustashism and the Independent State of Croatia in today's Croatian public
2.	The beginnings of the Ustasha organization - the Ustasha program and the ideology
3.	Political terrorism and assassinations - from Sarajevo to the Yugoslav People's Assembly and Marseille
4.	Ustasas in Croatian lands before the establishment of the NDH - a marginal group or a significant political force?
5.	The collapse of Yugoslavia and the emergence of the NDH - a series of coincidences or pre-planned events
6.	Relations with Italy and Germany – Alliance or domination of the NDH's "great allies" Ustasha totalitarianism in comparison to totalitarianism of its "great" German and Italian allies
7.	Persecution of political dissenters and minorities - a comparative approach to the Holocaust and the persecution of political dissenters and minorities in other European countries
8.	Midterm exam 1; The Serbs in the NDH - persecution, the uprising of July 27, 1941, Chetniks and Croatian Orthodox Church

9.	Ustasha militia, Croatian Home Guard, and Croatian Armed Forces—Organization and Activities. “Fearless Ustashes”? Was the Home Guard a source of people and weapons for partisans or a relevant combating force?
10.	The Croatian economy in war conditions - destruction and inability to produce and do business. Supply of population and shortages, bombing, and war destruction.
11.	Cultural life, media, and propaganda in the NDH. Did the muses be silent, or did they sing? War difficulties, the rise of publishing, and the strengthening of new media and strictly controlled information.
12.	Tito’s Partisan Movement. National liberation and plural, or totalitarian and communist? Yugoslav and federalist, or Greater Serbian and anti-Croatian?
13.	Lorković-Vokić coup between facts and the myth. A coup with Poglavnik or against him?
14.	Midterm exam 2: Withdrawal to the West - an attempt to save people or an inevitable introduction to unnecessary suffering? Concealed mass graves, public and dealing with the past.
15.	Croatian or Ustasha emigration?