

# Holocaust & Genocide Education History and Pedagogy



JEWISH COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS COUNCIL  
MINNESOTA & THE DAKOTAS

BrightWorks

## Certificate Program

Winter 2026-2027

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**Facilitator:**  
**Kristin Thompson**  
Founding Director, *Humanus Network*,



*Prior to founding Humanus Network, Holocaust and Human Rights Educational Consulting, Kristin was a classroom history teacher in MN for 20-years and Education Program Coordinator at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. where she facilitated their educator training programs. She also represented JCRC as the Co-Chair of the MN Dept. of Education's Task Force regarding the new Social Studies standards for Holocaust, Genocide of Indigenous Peoples, & Other Genocides Education.*

**Guest Speakers:**  
**Dr. James Waller, Carl Wilkens, Staff of USHMM Simon Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide**

## OVERVIEW

**The Certificate Program in Holocaust & Genocide Education: History & Pedagogy** is a statewide professional learning initiative preparing educators for Minnesota's new Holocaust and genocide education mandate taking effect in the 2026–2027 school year.

This intensive program provides rigorous historical content, sound pedagogical training, and classroom ready resources rooted in primary sources and aligned with the new MN Academic Standards. Grounded in the internationally recognized Participant Centered Approach developed by Paul Salmons and Wolfgang Schmutz, the program equips educators to engage students through inquiry, evidence, and ethical reflection.

Through a structured sequence of pedagogical sessions, Holocaust history modules, genocide education sessions, and a culminating project, educators gain the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to teach difficult history with accuracy and confidence.

## PROGRAM MODEL

The Certificate Program is built on extensive research in Holocaust and genocide education and decades of professional teacher training experience in the U.S. and internationally.

**Pedagogy:** Educators learn how the field of Holocaust education has evolved, explore best practices, and apply the USHMM Guidelines for Teaching. Sessions introduce the Participant Centered Approach, support teachers in writing a rationale, and provide tools for selecting historically accurate, age appropriate classroom resources.

**History:** Participants engage in a concise, chronological study of the Holocaust using primary sources and historical inquiry. Sessions strengthen content knowledge, address common gaps and misconceptions, and model strategies for ensuring historical accuracy and evidence based learning in the classroom.

**Genocide Education:** Educators examine the legal definition of genocide, UN frameworks, early warning systems, and case studies of Rwanda and Bosnia to build a clear understanding of contemporary genocide and prevention. Sessions feature expert guest speakers who provide leading scholarship, firsthand testimony, and policy-focused insight.

## CERTIFICATE

Upon completion, this program will undergo several forms of evaluation, and will provide Certification and Continuing Education Units (CEUs).



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## Certificate Program

Fall 2026

### Schedule:

#### Program Kick-off Session (In-person) 9AM – 2PM

*Introductions, Why the Certificate Program & Why Now?, New MN State Standards in Holocaust & Genocide Education, Pedagogical Approaches, Participant-Centered Learning*

#### Historical Content Sessions (Online – 90 min each):

*History of Judaism & Diversity of Jewish Experiences  
Antisemitism – Historical to Contemporary  
Rise of Nazism  
The Power of Propaganda*

#### Mid-Program Check-in (In-person) 9AM – 2PM

*Pedagogical Approaches continued,  
Project Design, Historical Content Session:  
Collaboration & Complicity in the Holocaust,*

#### Historical Content Sessions Continued (Online – 90 min each):

*Challenges of Escape  
Ghettos, Camps, and “The Final Solution”  
Rescue and Resistance Efforts  
Aftermath of WWII and the Holocaust*

#### Genocide Studies & Program Wrap-Up (In-person): 9AM – 4:30PM

*Definition of Genocide, Raphael Lemkin,  
Examples of Genocide, Case Studies,  
Prevention Efforts, Program Wrap-Up*

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### At the conclusion of the program, participants will:

- ✓ Demonstrate a strong, evidence based understanding of Holocaust history, grounded in primary sources and historical inquiry.
- ✓ Apply the Participant Centered Approach and the USHMM Guidelines for Teaching to design accurate, age appropriate instruction on the Holocaust and genocide.
- ✓ Work confidently with archival materials—documents, photographs, artifacts—to create a classroom ready lesson or module that enhances their existing curriculum.
- ✓ Develop a clear rationale, learning goals, and instructional plan for teaching about the Holocaust and genocide in their specific classroom context.
- ✓ Use program provided tools to evaluate and select high quality classroom resources that meet academic standards and reflect best practices.
- ✓ Identify warning signs and risk factors for mass violence, drawing on historical analysis and insights from expert guest speakers.
- ✓ Demonstrate understanding of at least two legally defined cases of genocide, supported by scholarship from Dr. James Waller, testimony from Carl Wilkens, and policy expertise from the USHMM’s Simon Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide.

## PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS:

### Participants are expected to:

- ✓ Attend all pedagogy, history, and genocide education sessions, including those led by expert guest speakers.
- ✓ Complete a final project: a classroom ready lesson or module using archival primary sources and aligned with the Participant Centered Approach and USHMM Guidelines.
- ✓ Write a rationale articulating why and how they teach about the Holocaust and genocide.
- ✓ Select historically accurate, age appropriate classroom resources that support their instructional goals and reflect best practices in Holocaust and genocide education.

For more information contact **Susie Greenberg,**  
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