JUDAIC STUDIES

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FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF JUDAIC STUDIES

Professors  Leslie Brisman (English), Steven Fraade (Chair) (Religious Studies), Paul Franks (Philosophy), Christine Hayes (Religious Studies), Aharon Maman (Religious Studies) (Visiting), Ivan Marcus (History, Religious Studies), Michael Silber (History) (Visiting), Yuval Sinai (Religious Studies, Law School) (Visiting), Steven Smith (Political Science, Philosophy), Laura Wexler (Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, American Studies), Robert Wilson (Religious Studies)

Associate Professors  Hindy Najman (Religious Studies), Marci Shore (History)

Assistant Professors  Joel Baden (Divinity School), Eliyahu Stern (Religious Studies, History)

Senior Lecturer  Peter Cole (Comparative Literature)

Lecturers  Gabriel Citron (Philosophy), Yishai Kiel (Religious Studies), Eve Krakowski (Religious Studies), Margaret Olin (Divinity School, History of Art, Religious Studies)

Senior Lectors  Ayala Dvoretzky

Senior Lectors  Shiri Goren, Dina Roginsky

Judaic Studies enables students to develop a substantial knowledge of the history, religion, literature, languages, and culture of the Jews. Jewish society, texts, ideologies, and institutions are examined in comparative perspective in the context of the history and culture of nations in which Jews have lived and created throughout the ages.

The program in Judaic Studies offers courses that encompass all the major epochs of Jewish history: the biblical period, which includes biblical literature and archaeology; the classical period, which includes the literature and history of rabbinic Judaism and its antecedents; the medieval period, which includes Jewish history and literature in both Christian and Islamic lands; the early modern period, which includes Jewish history from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries; and the modern period, which includes the history and literature of Jews and Judaism from the late eighteenth to the twenty-first century and the impact of different facets of modernization.

The Judaic Studies major, especially as a second major with Economics, Political Science, English, or History, offers intensive background training for those considering admission to graduate or professional schools and to those planning careers in journalism, international relations, foreign service, publishing, the rabbinate, international law, politics, or social work. The interdisciplinary character of the program provides students with both a broad liberal arts background and an intensive preparation in the historical and religious experience of the Jewish culture.

Students considering the major in Judaic Studies should contact the director of undergraduate studies as early as possible.

Requirements of the major  Prerequisite or corequisite to the major in Judaic Studies are two terms of elementary modern Hebrew (HEBR 110, 120) or the equivalent. The major requires thirteen term courses beyond the prerequisites, including a Hebrew language and literature requirement, a set of core requirements, two areas of concentration, and the senior requirement.

Hebrew language and literature  Each student majoring in Judaic Studies must attain the equivalent of the second year of modern Hebrew (HEBR 130, 140). In addition, each student must take two term courses in which Hebrew literature is studied in Hebrew, for which HEBR 130 and 140 (but not HEBR 110 or 120) may count. Students who fulfill the Hebrew language requirement by passing an examination rather than by enrolling in HEBR 130 and 140 must take two other term courses in which Hebrew literature is studied in Hebrew. Students concentrating in Hebrew Bible may, in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies, substitute two years of biblical Hebrew for the language and literature requirement.

Core requirements  Each student must elect at least three from the following: (1) a course in Hebrew Bible; (2) a course in rabbinic literature; (3) JDST 200, History of the Jews and Their Diasporas to Early Modern Times; (4) a course in modern Jewish history or thought; (5) a survey course in Hebrew and Jewish literature.

Areas of concentration  Students must select two areas of concentration. The standard areas are ancient Israel/Hebrew Bible; Judaism of Second Temple and Talmudic times; Jewish history and civilization of medieval and early modern times; modern Jewish history and civilization; and Jewish/Hebrew literature (requires study of literature in Hebrew). With the approval of the director of undergraduate studies, students may design their own areas of concentration.

In each of the two areas of concentration, students choose three term courses in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies. These are normally expected to include one introductory course; one seminar taken in the junior year and requiring a final research paper; and one relevant course in an area outside Judaic Studies, such as a course relating to the larger historical context if the concentration is in a historical period, or a course in the theory or practice of literature if the concentration is in Jewish or Hebrew literature. Most seminars listed under “Electives within the Major” may be counted as junior seminars in a student’s areas of concentration with permission of the director of undergraduate studies.
Senior requirement  Students are expected to write a one- or two-term senior essay (JDST 491 and 492). If a one-term senior essay is chosen, the student must complete an additional seminar. The one-term essay normally relates to one of the student’s areas of concentration, while the seminar relates to the other. A two-term essay should relate to both of the student’s areas of concentration. The senior essay, whether completed during one or two terms, should build on one or both of the student’s junior seminar papers.

Study in Israel  Students majoring in Judaic Studies should be aware of the numerous opportunities for study and travel in Israel. Those interested in either a summer or an extended stay in Israel should consult the director of undergraduate studies.

Courses in the Graduate School  Qualified students may elect courses in the Graduate School with permission of the director of graduate studies, the director of undergraduate studies, and the instructor of the course. They may also offer toward the degree as many as four courses taken in professional schools of the University with permission of the instructors, the director of undergraduate studies, and the dean or registrar of the schools involved. (See "Courses in the Yale Graduate and Professional Schools" under "Special Arrangements" in the Academic Regulations.) A list of relevant graduate and professional school courses is available from the director of undergraduate studies.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR
Prerequisites  HEBR 110, 120 or equivalents
Number of courses  13 term courses (incl senior req)
Specific courses required  HEBR 130 and 140, or two courses in Hebrew lit as specified
Distribution of courses  3 courses from (1) Hebrew Bible, (2) rabbinic lit, (3) JDST 200, (4) modern Jewish history or thought, (5) survey of Hebrew and Jewish lit; 2 areas of concentration, with 3 courses in each (normally 1 intro, 1 junior sem, 1 outside Judaic Studies related to concentration) for a total of 6
Substitution permitted  2 years of biblical Hebrew for HEBR 130, 140 or equivalents for students with an area of concentration in Hebrew Bible
Senior requirement  Two-term senior essay (JDST 491, 492), or one-term senior essay and addtl sem

Core Course
JDST 200a  History of the Jews and Their Diasporas to Early Modern Times
Ivan Marcus
A broad introduction to the history of the Jews from biblical beginnings until the European Reformation and the Ottoman Empire. Focus on the formative period of classical rabbinic Judaism and on the symbiotic relationships among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jewish society and culture in its biblical, rabbinic, and medieval settings. Counts toward either European or non-Western distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.  HU RP

Special Project and Senior Essay Courses
*JDST 471a or b, Individual Tutorial  Eliyahu Stern
For students who wish, under faculty supervision, to investigate an area in Judaic Studies not covered by regular course offerings. May be used for research or for directed reading, but in either case a long essay or several short ones are required. To apply for admission, a student should present a prospectus with bibliography and a letter of support from the faculty member who will direct the work to the director of undergraduate studies.

*JDST 491a and JDST 492b, The Senior Essay  Eliyahu Stern
The essay, written under the supervision of a faculty member, should be a substantial paper between 6,500 and 8,000 words for one term and between 12,500 and 15,000 words for two terms.

Electives within the Major

BIBLICAL PERIOD
JDST 110a / HUMS 349a / RLST 145a, The Bible  Christine Hayes
The writings common to both Jewish and Christian scripture examined as diverse and often conflicting expressions of the religious life and thought of ancient Israel. The works’ cultural and historical setting in the ancient Near East; the interpretive history of selected passages influential in Western culture. Introduction to a wide range of critical and literary approaches to biblical studies. Students view course lectures, which survey the entire Bible, on line; class time focuses on specific biblical passages and their subsequent interpretation in Jewish and Christian culture.  HU

CLASSICAL PERIOD
*JDST 235b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World  Steven Fraade
The emergence of classical Judaism in its historical setting. Jews and Hellenization; varieties of early Judaism; apocalyptic and postapocalyptic responses to suffering and catastrophe; worship and atonement without sacrificial cult; interpretations of scriptures; law and life; the rabbi; the synagogue; faith in reason; Sabbath and festivals; history and its redemption. No prior background in Jewish history assumed.  HU
The cultural and ideological underpinnings and the social and religious functions of purity systems in ancient Judaism, from biblical systems and their ancient Near Eastern context, through the purity debates of the Second Temple period, to rabbinic and early Christian discussions. The distinct religious realms associated with purity, including ritual purity, moral purity, holiness, and eating taboos; insights from recent scholarship in the field.

Study of the Damascus Document, one of the most important of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Attention to the document’s place in the history of biblical interpretation and ancient Jewish law; the nature and rhetorical function of its textual practices, both narrative and legal; and its relation to the central sectarian writings of the Qumran community. Prerequisite: reading proficiency in ancient Hebrew.

Close study of a tractate of the Mishnah, the earliest digest of rabbinic law, and its accompanying Tosefta, dealing with rules for the establishment of New Moons, the intercalation of the lunar calendar, the testimony and examination of witnesses, the festival of the New Year (Rosh HaShanah), and the sounding of the Shofar. Dual attention to the historical significance of the legal and ritual institutions represented and to the cultural significance of the rhetoric of that representation, including the interplay of law and narrative. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew.

Critical study of Talmudic narrative through analysis of selected stories from the Babylonian Talmud. Historical, literary, cultural, philological, comparative, and theological perspectives on the narratives. The role of the Babylonian redactors and storytellers and the significance of their cultural context in the formation of Talmudic stories; implications of the narratives for historical reconstructions; tools of theoretical and methodological analysis used in the field of Talmudic studies.

Comparative study of the religious phenomenon of prophecy, with a focus on Jewish and Christian traditions. Biblical narratives about prophetic activity explored in their original Near Eastern and Greek cultural settings; the role of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible and in later interpretive traditions; modern examples of the relationship between prophecy and apocalypse.

Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the Prophet Muhammad to Suleiman the Magnificent. Topics include Islam and Judaism; Jerusalem as a holy site; rabbinic leadership and literature in Baghdad; Jewish courtiers, poets, and philosophers in Muslim Spain; and the Jews in the Ottoman Empire.

How members of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities thought of and interacted with members of the other two cultures during the Middle Ages. Cultural grids and expectations each imposed on the other; the rhetoric of otherness—humans or devils, purity or impurity, and animal imagery; and models of religious community and power in dealing with the other when confronted with cultural differences. Counts toward either European or Middle Eastern distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.

Introduction to central problems and themes in medieval philosophy. The confrontation between Greek philosophy and the Abrahamic or scriptural religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; conceptions in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and ethics to which the encounter gave rise. Philosophers include Augustine, Saadiah, al-Farabi, al-Ghazali, Maimonides, ibn-Rushd, Aquinas, Crescas, and Ockham.

Varieties of Jewish religious life in the Islamic world from the ninth through the fourteenth century. The development of medieval rabbinic and nonrabbinic (particularly Karaite) literatures in their contemporary Near Eastern contexts; scripturalism, exegesis, theology, and legal writing; popular religion and religious identity in everyday life.

Introduction to the philosophical system of the medieval Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides. His radically nonanthropomorphic conception of God; his resultant understanding of the nature of man and the ends of life; and the ways in which he took ethics, religion, and politics to be structured toward the fulfillment of those ends.

Introduction to the Golden Age of Hebrew poetry in Muslim Andalusia from the tenth century through the twelfth. Major figures of the period and the cultural and philosophical questions they confronted. The Judeo-Arabic social context in which the poetry emerged; critical issues pertaining to the study and transmission of this literature. Readings from the works of several poets. Readings in translation. Additional readings in Hebrew available.
MODERN PERIOD

JDST 237a / GMAN 388a / HUMS 410a / LITR 327a / RLST 322a, Translating the Sacred

JDST 293b / HIST 248b / RLST 214b, Introduction to Modern Jewish Thought Eliyahu Stern
An overview of Jewish philosophical trends, movements, and thinkers from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first. Topics include enlightenment, historicism, socialism, secularism, religious radicalism, and Zionism. HU

*JDST 306a / MMES 157a / NELC 157a, Israeli Narratives Shiri Goren
Close reading of major Israeli novels in translation with attention to how their themes and forms relate to the Israeli condition. Theories of war and peace, migration, nationalism, and gender. Authors include Yehoshua, Grossman, Matalon, Castel-Bloom, and Kashua. No knowledge of Hebrew required. HU Tr

JDST 318b / LITR 282b, Cultural Study of Israel Hannan Hever
Major trends in cultural studies explored using Israel as a case study; focus on the political-critical approach. Theoretical questions regarding the definition of culture; critical approaches to cultural texts; theories of high, low, and popular cultures; the constitution of the subject within the cultural arena. Attention to literature, cinema, music, and visual art. HU

*JDST 319b / HEBR 162b / MMES 161b, Israel in Ideology and Practice Dina Roginsky
The social history of modern Israel from the inception of Zionism in the late nineteenth century to the present, with emphasis on the ideological processes that led to the foundation of the state in 1948. Topics include political dynamics, the complicated relationship between state and religion, Jewish-Arab relations, and contemporary Israeli society. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. 1.5 RP

JDST 323b / MMES 160b / NELC 155b, State and Society in Israel Dina Roginsky
The interplay between the state and society in Israel. Current Israeli discourse on controversial issues such as civil rights in a Jewish-democratic state, Jewish-Arab relations, and right and left politics. Issues of orthodoxy, military service, globalization, and multiculturalism in Israel. Sociopolitical changes that have taken place in Israel since the establishment of the state in 1948 and that have led to the reshaping of Israeli Zionist ideology. HU

*JDST 330b / MMES 350b / RLST 330b, Multiculturalism and Jewish Law in Israel Yuval Sinai
Introduction to the history of pluralism and multicultural models in the Jewish legal tradition. The role of Jewish law in contemporary Israeli society; tensions between Jewish law and secular law; possible reconciliation of these tensions in light of both Jewish legal tradition and the realities of the modern Jewish and democratic state of Israel. HU

*JDST 331a / MMES 351a / RLST 331a, Jewish Law in the State of Israel Yuval Sinai
A historical study of Jewish law as the basis for modern Israeli law. Examination of cases in Israeli secular civil courts and in rabbinical courts. Attention to the wide range of subjects in which Jewish law has been utilized: public law, war and peace, criminal law, torts and biomedical law, morality, employment, judicial processes of procedure and evidence, and civil rights. HU

JDST 332a / MMES 197a / RLST 193a, Zionism Eliyahu Stern
Introduction to the core ideas of the Zionist movement from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth. Focus on internal Jewish debates and criticism of the movement by European and Middle Eastern intellectuals. Social, political, cultural, and messianic ideological strands within the movement and their interpretations of various historical experiences and ideas located in the Jewish tradition. HU

*JDST 333b / HIST 220Ja, Orthodox Jewry in Modern Times Michael Silber
The history of Orthodox Jewry from the mid-eighteenth century to the present. Innovations introduced by the Jewish Enlightenment, and the traditional establishment’s responses to them; the mainstream, neoorthodox, and ultraorthodox wings of the Reform movement; issues of identity and culture surrounding Jewish nationalism, the Zionist movement, and the emergence of the State of Israel. HU

*JDST 334b / HIST 224Ja, Jewish Emancipation in the Modern Era Michael Silber and Eliyahu Stern
The expansion of the rights of Jewish people in Europe and the United States from the late eighteenth century through the early twentieth. The influence of factors such as capitalism, citizenship, nationalism, and social and economic developments. Case studies used to compare the emancipation process in different nations and societies. HU

JDST 335a / PHIL 274a, Concepts of God in Jewish Philosophy Gabriel Citron
Introduction to Jewish philosophy, from Philo to Maimonides and Spinoza to Levinas. Focus on different conceptions of God and their interrelations. Corporeal views of God and their culmination in pantheism and panentheism; incorporeal conceptions of God and their apatheosis in negative theology; contemporary existential understandings of God. HU

Language and Literature

*JDST 016a / RLST 014a, Authorship, Originality, and Forgery Hindy Najman
The concept of authorship in the production of writing, art, and music. Variation in production and reception practices across cultures and historical periods. Concepts of originality and attribution in ancient Judaism and Christianity, including their role in the generation and reception of scriptural and interpretive traditions. Anachronistic conceptions of intellectual property and forgery in modern interpretations of ancient texts. WR, HU
*JDST 215a / LING 214a, Hebrew and Semitic Linguistics  Tamas Biro
Study of linguistic phenomena in Semitic languages, with a focus on Hebrew. Perspectives from historical-comparative, philological, sociolinguistic, and contemporary-generative methodologies. Prerequisite: an introductory course in linguistics or familiarity with a Semitic language.  SO

*JDST 305a / HEBR 158a, Contemporary Israeli Society in Film  Shiri Goren
Examination of major themes in Israeli society through film, with emphasis on language study. Topics include migration, gender and sexuality, Jewish/Israeli identity, and private and collective memory. Readings in Hebrew and English provide a sociohistorical background and bases for class discussion. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor.  L, HU, RP

*JDST 316b / ENGL 456b / HUMS 427b / LITR 348b, The Practice of Literary Translation  Peter Cole
Intensive readings in the history and theory of translation paired with practice in translating. Case studies from ancient languages (the Bible, Greek and Latin classics), medieval languages (classical Arabic literature), and modern languages (poetic texts).  HU

*JDST 317a / LITR 281a, Modern Hebrew Poetry  Hannan Hever
The cultural history of Hebrew poetry in the twentieth century, when poetry became a central arena for the rise of Jewish nationalist culture. Major movements, from Bialik’s romanticism through postmodernism of the 1990s and early twenty-first century. Close reading of poems in the original language accompanied by articles on the history of Hebrew poetry. Readings in Hebrew and in English; discussion in English. Prerequisite: reading proficiency in modern Hebrew.  HU

*JDST 360a / HEBR 160a, Hebrew in a Changing World  Dina Roginsky
Sociological aspects of Modern Hebrew as the language is used in Israel to construct norms, expectations, and daily experiences. Readings and class discussions address changes in Israeli society and culture at large. Prerequisite: HEBR 140.  L5

JDST 407b / HEBR 161b / MMES 156b, Israeli Popular Music  Dina Roginsky
Changes in the development of popular music in Israel explored as representations of changing Israeli society and culture. The interaction of music and cultural identity; modern popular music and social conventions; songs of commemoration and heroism; popular representation of the Holocaust; Mizrahi and Arab music; feminism, sexuality, and gender; class and musical consumption; criticism, protest, and globalization. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent.  L5

*JDST 409a / HEBR 159a / MMES 159a, Conversational Hebrew: Israeli Media  Shiri Goren
An advanced Hebrew course for students interested in practicing and enhancing conversational skills. Focus on listening comprehension and on various forms of discussion, including practical situations, online interactions, and content analysis. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor.  L5, RP

*JDST 413a / NELC 165a / RLST 411a, Biblical, Qumranic, and Targumic Aramaic  Aharon Maman
Survey of the historical and philological aspects of biblical, Qumranic, and Targumic Aramaic. Comparison of the dialects’ grammar and historical development; some attention to topics in comparative Semitic philology and historical linguistics; the influence of Hebrew and Aramaic on one another over time. Reading and extensive philological analysis of texts in each of the three dialects. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent.  HU