JUDAIC STUDIES

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FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF JUDAIC STUDIES

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Associate Professors Marci Shore (History), Eliyahu Stern (Religious Studies, History)

Senior Lecturer Peter Cole (Comparative Literature)

Lecturers Asaf Angermann (Philosophy), Shaun Halper (History), Margaret Olin (Divinity School, History of Art, Religious Studies), Liran Yadgar (History)

Senior Lectors Shiri Goren, Dina Roginsky

Judaic Studies enables students to develop a broad knowledge of the history, religion, literature, philosophy, languages, and politics of the Jews. Jewish society, texts, ideologies, material cultures, and institutions are studied from a comparative perspective in the context of histories, cultures, and intellectual traditions among which Jews have lived throughout the ages. As an interdisciplinary program, Judaic Studies employs historical, literary, political, social, and philosophical methods of analysis.

The Judaic Studies major—especially as a second major with Economics, Political Science, Literature, English, Philosophy, or History—offers a broad liberal arts background combined with an intensive preparation in the historical and religious experience of Jewish culture from antiquity to contemporary times. The major epochs of Jewish history are the Persian and Hellenistic, classical, medieval, early modern, and modern periods.

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

Requirements of the major for the Class of 2017 and previous classes Students in the Class of 2017 and previous classes may fulfill the requirements of the major in Judaic Studies that were in place when they entered the major, as described in previous editions of this bulletin (http://www.yale.edu/printer/bulletin/archivepdffiles/YCPS). Alternatively, they may fulfill the requirements of the major as described below for the Class of 2018 and subsequent classes.

Requirements of the major for the Class of 2018 and subsequent classes The major in Judaic Studies requires thirteen term courses, including a set of core requirements, a language or literature requirement, two areas of concentration, and the senior requirement.

Core requirements Each student must elect at least three from the following: (1) a course in Hebrew Bible, such as JDST 110; (2) a course in rabbinic literature or ancient Judaism, such as JDST 235; (3) JDST 200; (4) JDST 201; (5) a course in Jewish thought, such as JDST 281 or 293; (6) a survey course in Hebrew and Jewish literature.

Language or literature requirement Students must complete either HEBR 110 and 120 or two term courses in Hebrew literature in translation. Up to three Hebrew language courses may be counted toward the requirements of the major.

Areas of concentration Students must select two areas of concentration. The standard areas of concentration are ancient Israel/Hebrew Bible; Judaism and Jewish history of Second Temple and Talmudic times; Jewish history and civilization of medieval and Renaissance times; modern Jewish history and civilization; Jewish/Hebrew literature (which requires the study of literature in Hebrew); and Jewish thought. 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 expected to comprise 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, literary, or philosophical 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/Hebrew literature.

Senior requirement Students are required either to complete a two-term senior essay in JDST 491 and 492 related to both areas of concentration, or to complete a one-term senior essay in JDST 491 or 492 related to one area of concentration and an additional seminar related to the other. The senior essay may build on research conducted for one or both of the student’s junior seminar papers.

Study abroad Students majoring in Judaic Studies should be aware of the numerous opportunities for study abroad. Those interested in research and language-study opportunities in the Middle East, Europe, and South America should consult the director of undergraduate studies.
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisites  None

Number of courses  13 term courses (incl senior req)

Distribution of courses  3 courses from (1) Hebrew Bible, (2) rabbinic lit or ancient Judaism, (3) JDST 200, (4) JDST 201, (5) Jewish thought, (6) survey of Hebrew and Jewish lit; HEBR 110 and 120, or 2 courses in Hebrew lit in translation; 2 areas of concentration, with 3 courses in each for a total of 6

Senior requirement  Two-term senior essay (JDST 491 and 492), or one-term senior essay (JDST 491 or 492) and addtl sem

Core Course

JDST 200a / ER&M 219a / HIST 219a / MMES 149a / RLST 148a, Jewish History and Thought 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  Staff
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  Ivan Marcus
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 110, The Bible ]

CLASSICAL PERIOD

* JDST 235b / MMES 235b / RLST 147b, 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

* JDST 256a / RLST 400a, The Dead Sea Scrolls: Legal Polemic and Identity Formation in Ancient Judaism  Steven Fraade
Study of one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Miqts.at Manaseh Torah (4QMMT), which polemically defines the author’s community by distinguishing its religious practices and history from those of its opponents. The text’s elucidation of debates between ancient Jewish groups, as reported in second temple and early rabbinic literatures. Legal discourse and its narrative accompaniments as they rhetorically contribute to the socioreligious self-understanding of the Qumran covenantal community. Prerequisite: reading proficiency in ancient Hebrew.  L5, HU

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PERIODS

* JDST 266b, Medieval Jewish Thought in Muslim Lands  Daniel Lasker
A survey of Jewish thought in Islamic regions during the Middle Ages. Mutual influences and cross-fertilization explored through close reading of Jewish primary sources in their Muslim context. Topics include legal theory, sectarianism, polemics, theology, and philosophy.  HU

* JDST 267a / MMES 267a, Jews of the Medieval Islamic World  Liran Yadgar
A survey of the religious, social, and cultural encounters between Judaism and Islam in the Middle Ages. Topics include the legal position of Jews under Islam; the social structure and relations in everyday life between the two communities; the representation of Jews in the Qur’an and later Islamic sources; and readings in Jewish poetry and fiction written under the influence of Muslim culture.  HU

* JDST 312b / LITR 196b / MMES 312b, Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Spain  Peter Cole
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.  HU TR
MODERN PERIOD

* JDST 306b / MMES 157b / NELC 157b, 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.  

JDST 323a / MMES 160a / NELC 155a / SOCY 155a, 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.  

JDST 332a / HIST 216a / MMES 197a / RLST 193a, Zionism  Shaun Halper
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.  

* JDST 338a / GMAN 231a / RLST 138, Twentieth-Century German-Jewish Thought  Yotam Hotam
Relations between secular and theological notions in the writings of twentieth-century German-Jewish thinkers, including Gershom Scholem, Leo Strauss, Hans Jonas, and Hannah Arendt. Focus on the scholars’ ongoing engagements with topics such as godly love, the conflict between reason and revelation, the relations between Judaism and Christianity, worldliness and transcendence, and mysticism.  

* JDST 350b / PLSC 303b / RLST 306b, Theological Politics and Foundations of Modern Political Thought  Meirav Jones
Foundations of political thought, including ideas such as modern sovereignty, social contract, international law, toleration, and republicanism, were laid at a peculiarly religious period in European history. From 1560 through 1670, writings on political theory and theoretical texts by Bodin, Grotius, Hobbes, and Spinoza coincided with Europe’s Wars of Religion, laying groundwork for contemporary theological and political questions.  

Language and Literature

* JDST 240a, Talmudic Judaism and Early Christianity  Yishai Kiel
Examination of the complex and multifaceted relationships between talmudic Judaism and early Christianity through the lens of classical rabbinic literature. Close study of the partition of Judaism and Christianity through reading of talmudic texts that, explicitly or implicitly, bear on doctrinal, practical, and theological concerns rooted in scriptural, patristic, and monastic forms of early Christianity.  

* 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).  

* JDST 339a / LITR 418a / MMES 418a / RLST 203a, Sovereignty, Diaspora, and Nationality in Introduction to Modern Hebrew Literature  Hannan Haver
Overview of the Poetics, Culture, History and Political dynamics of Modern Hebrew Literature as a national literature over the last 300 years. The course will trace the literary development of its diasporic condition in Europe through the Hebrew Literature that is created in the Israeli Jewish sovereignty. Readings in translation. No background in Jewish literature, Hebrew literature, or Jewish culture is required.  

* JDST 345a / GMAN 358a / LITR 416a, Georg Lukács: Literature and Politics  Hannan Haver and Kirk Weters
Literary-critical, aesthetic, political, and theoretical writings of Georg Lukács. Lukács as a Jewish thinker and Marxist critic; the development of his thought against the backdrop of twentieth-century history; his influence and reception in Germany, Israel, Austria, the United States, and the Soviet Union.  

* JDST 391a / RLST 407a, Midrash Seminar: The Song of Moses  Staff
Close reading of the earliest running commentary to Moses’ farewell song in Deuteronomy 32, as found in the collection Sifre Haazinu. The rhetoric and early rabbinic methods of scriptural interpretation; the commentary’s place in the history of interpretation and its contributions to the historical study of ancient Jewish society and culture. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew.  

* JDST 405a / HEBR 156a / MMES 216a, Dynamics of Israeli Culture  Shiri Goren
Controversies in Israeli society as revealed in novels, films, poetry, newspaper articles, Web sites, art, advertisements, and television shows. Themes include migration and the construction of the Sabra character; ethnicity and race; the emergence of the Mizrahi voice; women in Israeli society; private and collective memory; the minority discourse of the Druze and Russian Jews; and Israeli masculinity and queer culture. Conducted in Hebrew. Papers may be written in English or Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor.  

* 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.  15

* 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.  15  RP

* JDST 416a or b / GMAN 158a or b / GMAN 159, Reading Yiddish  Joshua Price
This course is designed to build literacy in Yiddish, the vernacular of Ashkenazi Jewry. With focus on the accelerated treatment of Yiddish grammar, regularly supplemented with simple primary texts (poems, songs, folktales), and followed by close readings of (modern) Yiddish literature, students will be able to navigate most Yiddish texts with the aid of a dictionary. May not be taken concurrently with elementary or intermediate German.

* JDST 417b / HEBR 164b / MMES 167b, Biblical to Modern Hebrew for Reading Knowledge  Dina Roginsky
Instruction in the linguistic needs of students who have reading knowledge of Biblical Hebrew but cannot read or converse in Modern Hebrew. Concentration on reading comprehension of Modern Hebrew for research purposes, particularly scholarly texts tailored to students’ areas of interest. Two years of Biblical or Modern Hebrew studies, or permission of the instructor.  15  RP