JUDAIC STUDIES (JDST)

JDST 110a / HUMS 133a / 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

JDST 200a / ER&M 210a / HIST 210a / 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

* JDST 213a / HEBR 150a / MMES 150a, Advanced Modern Hebrew: Daily Life in Israel Orit Yeret
An examination of major controversies in Israeli society. Readings include newspaper editorials and academic articles as well as documentary and historical material. Advanced grammatical structures are introduced and practiced. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. 1.5 RP

* JDST 231b / NELC 242b / RLST 416b, Aramaic Incantation Bowls from Sasanian Mesopotamia Staff
This course is an introduction to the study of Aramaic Incantation Bowls designed for advanced undergraduate students. The course focuses especially on intersections with the Babylonian Talmud and other Jewish traditions, but we also consider the relevance of non-Jewish Mesopotamian sources (e.g. Mandaeans, Syriac Christian, Zoroastrians, Manichaean, ancient Assyrian/Babylonian) and compare contemporaneous and diachronically stratified traditions throughout the Mediterranean, Near East, and Iranian Plateau. We consider the utility and drawbacks of different methodological approaches and explore relevant theoretical and pragmatic issues, including matters of textual transmission, orality and materiality, ritual practice, cosmology, communal identity and authority, gender and sexuality, and the interplay of religion, science, magic, medicine, and other aspects of culture in Late Antiquity. Prerequisite: Previous experience with Hebrew or Aramaic. HU

* JDST 235b / MMES 235b / NELC 231b / RLST 147b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World: From Temple to Talmud 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 265b / HIST 345b / MMES 148b / RLST 202b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries Ivan Marcus
Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to that of 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. HU

* JDST 270b / HIST 232b / HUMS 443b / MMES 342b / RLST 201b, Medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims In Conversation Ivan Marcus
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. WR, HU

JDST 289a / FILM 362a / FREN 384a / ITAL 384a / LITR 338a, Representing the Holocaust Maurice Samuels and Millicent Marcus
The Holocaust as it has been depicted in books and films, and as written and recorded by survivors in different languages and national contexts. Questions of aesthetics and authority, language and its limits, ethical engagement, metaphors and memory, and narrative adequacy to record historical truth. Interactive discussions about films (Life Is Beautiful, Schindler’s List, Shoah), novels, memoirs (Primo Levi, Charlotte Delbo, Art Spiegelman), commentaries, theoretical writings, and testimonies from Yale’s Fortunoff Video Archive. WR, HU

* JDST 305b / HEBR 158b / MMES 168b, 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. HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. 1.5, HU RP

* JDST 306b / MMES 157b / NELC 157b, Israeli Narratives Shiri Goren
This course looks at contemporary representations of social, political, and domestic space in Israel through cultural production such as literature, visual work, and art. It focuses on close reading of major Israeli works in translation with attention to how their themes and
forms relate to the Israeli condition. Reading and viewing include: Amos Oz's major novel A Tale of Love and Darkness, Anne Frank: The Graphic Diary, Maya Arad's novella "The Hebrew Teacher," TV show Arab Labor and writing by Yehudah Amichai, Etgar Keret, and Sayed Kashua, among others. We discuss topics and theories of personal and collective identity formation, war and peace, ethnicity and race, migration, nationalism, and gender. No knowledge of Hebrew required. WR, HU TR

* JDST 316b / ENGL 456b / HUMS 427b / LITR 348b, The Practice of Literary Translation Peter Cole
This course combines a seminar on the history and theory of translation (Tuesdays) with a hands-on workshop (Thursdays). The readings lead us through a series of case studies comparing, on the one hand, multiple translations of given literary works and, on the other, classic statements about translation—by translators themselves and prominent theorists. We consider both poetry and prose from the Bible, selections from Chinese, Greek, and Latin verse, classical Arabic and Persian literature, prose by Cervantes, Borges, and others, and modern European poetry (including Pushkin, Baudelaire, and Rilke). Students are expected to prepare short class presentations, participate in a weekly workshop, try their hand at a series of translation exercises, and undertake an intensive, semester-long translation project. Proficiency in a foreign language is required. HU

* JDST 319a / HEBR 162a / MMES 161a, Israel in Ideology and Practice Dina Roginsky
An advanced Hebrew class focusing on changing ideology and politics in Israel. Topics include right and left wing political discourse, elections, State-R eligion dynamics, the Jewish-Arab divide, and demographic changes. Materials include newspapers, publications, online resources, speeches of different political and religious groups, and contemporary and archival footage. Comparisons to American political and ideological discourse. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5 RP

* JDST 326a / LITR 317a, Marxist Theory of Literature Hannan Hever
The role of Marxist thought in understanding literary institutions and texts in the twentieth century. Marx's theory of ideology; Lukacs's theory of literature as the basis for development of Marxist literary theory; the Frankfurt and materialistic schools. Readings include works by Raymond Williams, Catherine Belsey, Walter Benjamin, Pierre Macherey, and Frederic Jameson. HU

* JDST 335a / GMAN 254a / PHIL 274a / RLST 249a, Jewish Philosophy Paul Franks
Introduction to Jewish philosophy, including classical rationalism of Maimonides, classical kabbalah, and Franz Rosenzweig's inheritance of both traditions. Critical examination of concepts arising in and from Jewish life and experience, in a way that illuminates universal problems of leading a meaningful human life in a multicultural and increasingly globalized world. No previous knowledge of Judaism is required. WR, HU

* JDST 342b, History of the State of Israel Staff
This seminar examines the history of the state of Israel from the precursors of the Zionism in the nineteenth century to the present. In this course, we examine the origins of Zionist ideology and inquire into the historical conditions as well as the political strategies and the cultural developments that made its success possible. Topics of study include immigration to Palestine-Israel 1840-2000; the Israel-Arab conflict before and after 1948; Israeli politics of nation building: statehood, religion and ethnicity; and the emergence of modern Hebrew Culture. Intended for advanced undergraduates, this course also focuses on the different ways in which the history of the emergence of Israel has been understood and written. HU

* JDST 343b / ENGL 483b / HUMS 428b / LITR 348b, The Practice of Literary Translation Robyn Creswell
A sequel to LITR 348, The Practice of Literary Translation. Students apply to this workshop with a project in mind that they have been developing, either on their own or for a senior thesis, and they present this work during the class on a regular basis. Practical translation is supplemented by readings in the history of translation practice and theory, and by the reflections of practitioners on their art. These readings are selected jointly by the instructor and members of the class. Topics include the history of literary translation—Western and Eastern; comparative approaches to translating a single work; the political dimension of translation; and translation in the context of religion and theology. Class time is divided into student presentations of short passages of their own work, including related key readings; background readings in the history of the field; and close examination of relevant translations by accomplished translators. Students receive intensive scrutiny by the group and instructor. Prerequisite: LITR 348.

* JDST 376a / RLST 316a, Love and Romance in Medieval Jewish Culture Caroline Gruenbaum
This course explores the fascinating body of love stories and romance in medieval Jewish culture, written mostly between the tenth and fourteenth centuries across the Mediterranean basin and Christian Europe. This corpus includes poetry, narratives, folktales, philosophical texts and chivalric romance. From magical herbs to men dressed in women's clothing, these entertaining stories challenge our perceptions of medieval Jewish culture as a place only of religious observance and rabbinic stringency. In these stories, "love" appears in various forms with some repeating characteristics, such as the objectification of the female body, a woman's duplicity, or the happy marriage between two suitable partners. Men are alternatively the victims and the perpetrators of horrific acts done in the name of love. Through a close reading of these texts in English translation, students learn to understand the complexities of love, marriage, and romance in medieval Jewish literary culture. No previous knowledge of Judaism, Hebrew, or medieval literature is expected. WR, HU

* JDST 392b / NELC 382b / RLST 405b, Mishnah Seminar: Tractate Megillah Steven Fraade
Study of rabbinic texts treating rules for the public recitation and translation of the Scroll of Esther on the holiday of Purim and of other sacred scriptures and translations throughout the year, with special attention to the relation between law and ritual and the narrativity of both. EMWAR area of concentration designations: STHJ, RabJud, ScrInterp. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew. L5, HU
* JDST 401b / HEBR 152b, Reading Academic Texts in Modern Hebrew  Dina Roginsky
Reading of academic texts in modern Hebrew, for students with a strong background in Hebrew. Discussion of grammar and stylistics; special concentration on the development of accuracy and fluency. Prerequisite: HEBR 150 or permission of instructor. Conducted in Hebrew. L5 RP

* JDST 402b / HEBR 169b / LING 169b / MMES 162b, Languages in Dialogue: Hebrew and Arabic  Dina Roginsky
Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Hebrew and Arabic have been in cultural contact, especially in medieval Spain, the Middle East, and North Africa – as evidenced by the Judeo-Arabic languages. In modern Israel, Arabic is the native tongue of about 20% of its population, yet lack of communication exists today between Hebrew speakers and Arabic speakers for mainly political reasons. This L5 advanced Hebrew class explores cultural and linguistic contacts between the two languages and relationships between the communities, including both Jewish and non-Jewish Arabic speakers and Hebrew speakers. Additionally, students benefit from regular meetings with a parallel L4 Arabic class which discusses similar topics. The shared meetings enable Hebrew learners and Arabic learners to participate together in one class, to promote social interaction based on mutual respect and to focus on cultural and linguistic aspects of the material. L4 Hebrew or equivalent (placement test). L5 RP

* JDST 416a / GMAN 102a, 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 418b / GMAN 103b, Reading Yiddish II  Joshua Price
Intermediate study of Yiddish literary language with annotated readings from classic authors including: Mendele, Sholem Aleichem, Peretz, Bergelson, Der Nister, Bashevis, as well as American and Soviet Yiddish poetry. Secondary readings in English will offer a broader introduction to the modern Yiddish canon. Continuation of GMAN 102/JDST 416. Previous knowledge of German or Hebrew-Aramaic recommended but not required.

JDST 674b / HEBR 578b, Languages in Dialogue: Hebrew and Arabic  Dina Roginsky
Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Hebrew and Arabic have been in cultural contact, especially in medieval Spain, the Middle East, and North Africa – as evidenced by the Judeo-Arabic languages. In modern Israel, Arabic is the native tongue of about 20 percent of the population, yet lack of communication exists today between Hebrew speakers and Arabic speakers for mainly political reasons. This advanced Hebrew class explores cultural and linguistic contacts between the two languages and relationships between the communities, including both Jewish and non-Jewish Arabic speakers and Hebrew speakers. Additionally, students benefit from regular meetings with a parallel Arabic class that discusses similar topics. The shared meetings enable Hebrew learners and Arabic learners to participate together in one class, to promote social interaction based on mutual respect, and to focus on cultural and linguistic aspects of the material.

JDST 677a / CPLT 574a, Marxist Theory of Literature  Hannan Hever
Marxist thought has played a major role in the understanding of literary institutions, as well as literary texts. Within Marxist thought, literature always had a unique function in the processes of ideology, class struggles, and the constitution of the subject; material Marxism, cultural Marxism, European Marxism, and neo-Marxism all studied the work of literature as an institution and as both reflection and construction of reality, and of its perception. The aim of this seminar is to acquaint ourselves with Marxist theories of literature in the twentieth century. We start with the very basics of Marxism, focusing especially on the theory of ideology. We then study Lukács’s theory of literature as the basis of the development of Marxist literary theory, followed by the literary theories developed by the Frankfurt School, the materialistic school of Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci, E.P. Thompson, Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, Terry Eagleton, Catherine Belsey, Fredric Jameson, and others. Open to undergraduates. All texts are in English, and no previous knowledge is required.

JDST 692a / HSAR 731a / RLST 798a, Witnessing, Remembrance, Commemoration  Margaret Olin
Memory and its expressions structure and inform many aspects of contemporary visual culture. Beginning with Albert Camus’s novel *Le Plongeur*, this seminar pursues readings about memory and witnessing chosen from among the works of such writers as Sigmund Freud, Frances Yates, Maurice Halbwachs, and the authors of the book of Genesis, as well as writings about commemoration by James Young and Pierre Nora, among others. Discussions apply these readings to the study of witnessing and memorializing as artistic practices and examine visual realizations of such works, including some monuments and memorials near campus — but with a nonexclusive emphasis on Jewish examples, such as videos in the Fortunoff archive. Student projects center on theory or on special cases of witnessing or commemoration, ritual, memorial practice, and monuments, whether built, written, aural, electronic, or played out on the streets. Qualified undergraduates welcome.

JDST 701a / RLST 763a, The Bible  Christine Hayes
This course introduces students to the writings common to both Jewish and Christian scripture (the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible or Tanakh found in all Bibles) and examines these writings as diverse and often conflicting expressions of the religious life and thought of ancient Israel as well as a foundational element of Western civilization. Special emphasis on the writings’ cultural and historical setting in the ancient Near East; close reading of selected passages; the interpretive history of selected passages influential in Western culture. Students are also introduced to a wide range of critical and literary approaches to biblical studies, including source criticism, tradition criticism, redaction criticism, and contemporary literary criticism. Students view course lectures, which survey the
entire Bible, online; class time focuses on comparative materials, close readings, and the interpretation of specific biblical passages in Jewish and Christian culture.

J DST 720b, Aramaic Incantation Bowls from Sasanian Mesopotamia  Staff
This course is an introduction to the study of Aramaic incantation bowls. It focuses especially on intersections with the Babylonian Talmud and other Jewish traditions but also considers the relevance of non-Jewish Mesopotamian sources (e.g., Mandaean, Syriac Christian, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, ancient Assyrian/Babylonian) and compares contemporaneous and diachronically stratified traditions throughout the Mediterranean, Near East, and Iranian Plateau. We consider the utility and drawbacks of different methodological approaches and explore relevant theoretical and pragmatic issues, including matters of textual transmission, orality and materiality, ritual practice, cosmology, communal identity and authority, gender and sexuality, and the interplay of religion, science, magic, medicine, and other aspects of culture in late antiquity. Prerequisite: previous experience with Hebrew or Aramaic.

J DST 721b / NELC 703b / RLST 751b, Introduction to Judaism in the Ancient World: From Temple to Talmud  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.

J DST 727b, Mishnah Seminar: Tractate Megillah  Steven Fraade
Study of rabbinic texts treating rules for the public recitation and translation of the Scroll of Esther on the holiday of Purim and of other sacred scriptures and translations throughout the year, with special attention to the relation between law and ritual and the narrativity of both. EMWAR area of concentration designations: STHJ, RabJud, ScrInterp. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew.

J DST 760a / RLST 772a, Rabbinics Research Seminar  Christine Hayes
An in-depth survey of research debates and of methods and resources employed in the study of classical (pre-Geonic) rabbinic literature of all genres. Required of graduate students in ancient Judaism. Prerequisites: knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic, ability to read academic Hebrew, and permission of the instructor.

J DST 761a / HIST 596a / MDVL 596a / RLST 773a, 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.

J DST 764b / HIST 590b / MDVL 590b / RLST 777b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh through the Sixteenth Century  Ivan Marcus
Introduction to 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.

J DST 806a / HIST 603a / MDVL 603a / RLST 616a, Jews and Christians in the Formation of Europe, 500-1500  Ivan Marcus
This seminar explores how medieval Jews and Christians interacted as religious societies between 500 and 1500.

J DST 852a / HEBR 519a, Israel in Ideology and Practice  Dina Roginsky
An advanced Hebrew class that focuses on changing ideology and politics in Israel. Topics include right- and left-wing political discourse, elections, state-religion dynamics, the Jewish-Arab divide, and demographic changes. Materials include newspapers, publications, online resources, speeches of different political and religious groups, and contemporary and archival footage. Also, this course draws comparisons to American political and ideological discourse. Prerequisite: HEBR 502 or equivalent.

J DST 842a / CPLT 688a / RLST 775a, What is Political Theology?  Hannan Hever
This course investigates the theological aspects of modern political ideologies. It takes its title from the controversial work of the German political thinker Carl Schmitt, who argued that theological assumptions stood behind the veneer of secular politics. Concepts such as sovereignty, citizenship, universalism, law, and the state of exception have been said to have their provenance in Jewish and Christian concepts of God, election, Messiah, the commandment, and antinomianism. In recent years the study of the theological origins of political concepts has become important for both those seeking to critique the neutrality of certain western-democratic institutions as well as those hoping to better understand the relationship between religion and politics. Subjects covered in the course include sovereignty, universalism, law, election, commandment, messianism, and nationalism. Readings focus on the work of modern political thinkers such as Benedict Spinoza, Thomas Hobbes, and Bruno Bauer, whose normative works assumed a direct relationship between the political and the theological, as well as those who have theorized the very idea of political-theology, such as Martin Buber, Alain Badiou, Slavoj Zizek, Daniel Boyarin, and Giorgio Agamben.

J DST 861b / HIST 597b / RLST 797b, Twentieth-Century Jewish Politics  David Sorkin
This seminar explores major aspects of twentieth-century Jewish politics with an emphasis on new forms of political practice.