

JUDAIC STUDIES

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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 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

The major in Judaic Studies requires thirteen term courses, including three courses selected from a set of core requirements, a language or literature requirement, three courses selected from each of 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 JDST 293; (6) a survey course in Hebrew and Jewish literature.

Language or literature requirements Students must complete either HEBR 110 and 120 or two 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 of the following areas of concentration: 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 DUS, students may design their own areas of concentration.

In each of the two areas of concentration, students choose three courses in consultation with the DUS. These are expected to comprise one introductory course; one seminar taken in the junior year, and one course requiring a final research paper. One relevant course should be 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 DUS.

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, 492) or one-term senior essay (JDST 491 or 492), and additional seminar

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF JUDAIC STUDIES

Professors Joel Baden (*Divinity School*), Leslie Brisman (*English*), Steven Fraade (*Chair*) (*Religious Studies*), Paul Franks (*Philosophy*), Warren Zev Harvey (*Philosophy*) (*Visiting*), Christine Hayes (*Religious Studies*), Hannan Hever (*Literature*), Ivan Marcus (*History, Religious Studies*), Steven Smith (*Political Science, Philosophy*), David Sorkin (*History*), Laura Wexler (*Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, American Studies*), Robert Wilson (*Religious Studies*)

Associate Professors Joseph David (*Law*) (*Visiting*), Marci Shore (*History*), Eliyahu Stern (*Religious Studies, History*)

Senior Lecturer Peter Cole (*Comparative Literature*)

Lecturers Asaf Angermann (*Philosophy*), Yair Assulin (*Comparative Literature*) (*Visiting*), Alessia Bellusci (*History*), Allyson Gonzalez (*Religious Studies*), Margaret Olin (*Divinity School, History of Art, Religious Studies*), Micha Perry (*Visiting*)

Senior Lecturer II Shiri Goren

Senior Lectors Josh Price, Dina Roginsky, Orit Yeret

Core Course

JDST 201b / HIST 220b / RLST 149b, Introduction to Modern Jewish History David Sorkin

A broad introduction to the history of Jewish culture from the late Middle Ages until the present. Emphasis on the changing interaction of Jews with the larger society as well as the transformation of Judaism in its encounter with modernity. HU

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 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 219a / PHIL 403a / RLST 450a, Spinoza and the God of the Bible** Nancy Levene

This course considers Spinoza's metaphysics and social and political thought in light of a family of problems named religion: the concept of God, the relations among politics, divine law, and their institutions, the value of Judaism and Christianity, and the interpretation of the Bible. We read from Spinoza's principal works as well as from the Bible and a few other thinkers, medieval and modern, in conceptual proximity to Spinoza. HU

CLASSICAL PERIOD

* **JDST 235b / MMES 235b / NELC 231b / 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 392a / NELC 382a / RLST 405a, Mishnah Seminar: Tractate Sanhedrin** Steven Fraade

Close study of a section of the Mishnah, the earliest digest of Jewish law, treating religious courts and their jurisprudential practice. Dual attention to the historical significance of the institutions of law represented and to the cultural significance of the rhetoric of that representation. Consideration of the textual practices of rabbinic legal discourse in relation to its social function, as well as to the interplay of law and narrative. Prerequisite: reading fluency in ancient Hebrew. L5, HU

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN PERIODS

* **JDST 270a / HIST 232Ja / HUMS 443a / MMES 342a / RLST 201a, 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 RP

* **JDST 275b / PHIL 213b, The Philosophy of Maimonides** W Harvey

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. HU

JDST 373a / ER&M 244a / PORT 321a / RLST 351a / WGSS 244a, Race, Religion, and Sex in the Inquisition Igor De Souza

The Inquisitions of Spain & Portugal were among the most notorious and secretive institutions in Western history. They have become known for secret trials, burnings at the stake, and fanaticism. We explore how the stereotype fits reality. We also ask other questions: Why were they established? Why did they survive for over three centuries? What purposes did they serve? The course focuses on three categories as case studies for Inquisitorial repression: how the Inquisition racialized individuals through their ancestry; why it created and persecuted “secret” Jews; and how it controlled the practice of sodomy, in Iberia and Latin America. Students explore the legacy of these categories in contemporary Jewish, Latin American, and Iberian contexts. HU

MODERN PERIOD

* **JDST 293b / HIST 248Jb / 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 296a / LITR 443a / MMES 256a, State and Religion in Israel** Hannan Hever and Yair Asulin

The seminar focuses on the complex relations between Judaism practiced in Israel and the state’s social makeup. Judaism plays a political and social role in the public sphere of the State of Israel, which contains alongside religion institutions also secularism and post-secularism. Institutional religions function as part of the structure of social conflicts in Israel as they collide with other, social institutions such as the education system or the army, as well as the literary institution. Through readings in Israeli poetry and fiction we study political theology of Jewish sovereignty as a hermeneutical code to understanding Israeli literature as it represents chasms and contacts within Israeli society. Readings for the seminar include essays that enable understanding Hebrew literature on the background of Zionist and anti-Zionist thought and politics. HU

* **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. HU TR

* **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-Religion dynamics, the Jewish-Arab divide, and demographic changes. Materials include newspapers, publications, on-line 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 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 355b / GMAN 372b / LITR 228b, Reflections on the Holocaust** Katrin Truedtedt

Reflections on how the Holocaust has shaken the self-understanding of modern Western culture. We focus on theoretical reflections characterizing the Holocaust as undermining the very possibility of experience, representation, and of inhabiting a shared world. The course aims to give perspective on the complex factors conditioning the Holocaust; the rise of nationalism and fascism, antisemitism and racism; the relation between modernity and barbarism; inclusion and exclusion; law and bare life; World War II and the emergence of the Camp System in Eastern Europe; collaboration, resistance, survival, and testimony. Readings by Hannah Arendt, Theodor W. Adorno, Giorgio Agamben, Shoshana Felman, Primo Levi, Timothy Snyder, and others. HU

* **JDST 358b / HUMS 203b / WGSS 210b, Feminism and Judaism** Igor De Souza

The impact of feminism in three key areas of contemporary Jewish life: religion, Zionism, and identity. The critique of Zionism, in a trend known as post-Zionism, from feminist lenses. Feminism and Zionism in the construction of sexualized and racialized Jewish identities (LGBT Jews/Jews of color).

Language and Literature

* **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. L5 RP

* **JDST 282b / LITR 437b / RLST 238b / SPAN 282b, Judeo-Spanish Culture, Language, and Literature** Allyson Gonzalez

This course explores the rich body of culture, language, and literature that emerged in the Sephardi (Judeo-Spanish) diaspora following the expulsion of Jews from Iberia in 1492, and continuing to the present. This course is taught in English. TR HU

*** JDST 329b / LITR 235b, Modern Jewish Poets** Peter Cole

This course introduces students to a diverse group of modern Jewish poets—from Gertrude Stein, Moyshe Leyb-Halpern, and Adrienne Rich to Muriel Rukeyser, Yehuda Amichai, Paul Celan, Edmond Jabès, Leonard Cohen, and others. Writing in English, Yiddish, German, Hebrew, and French, these poets gave seminal expression to Jewish life in a variety of modes and permutations, and in the process produced poems of lasting and universal value. The class explores work as art and considers pressing questions of cultural, historical, and political context. All readings are in English. HU

*** JDST 391a / NELC 381a / RLST 407a, Midrash Seminar: The Exodus from Egypt** Steven Fraade

The Exodus from Egypt as seen through rabbinic eyes. Close readings of the early rabbinic commentary (midrash), Mekhilta, to the narrative of Exodus 13:17ff (the lection Beshallah). Particular attention to the methods and language of rabbinic exegesis and to the rhetorical interplay of tradition and scriptural commentary. Interpretations and interpretive strategies compared and contrasted with those of other ancient biblical exegetes (Jewish and non-Jewish), where available. 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 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 416a or b / GMAN 102a or b, 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.