

**SPRING 2025**

COURSE	COURSE TITLE	DISTRO/FD	INSTRUCTOR	DAY/TIME
ECON 315-0-30	Economic History of Israel		O. Loewenthal	TTH 12:30 – 1:50
HEBREW 111-3-20	Hebrew I		R. Alexander	MWF 9:30 – 10:40
HEBREW 121-3-20	Hebrew II		R. Alexander	MWF 11:00 – 12:10
HEBREW 216-3-1	Hebrew III: Between Two Writers: Sayed Kashua and Etgar Keret	VI	H. Seltzer	MW 2:00 – 3:20
HISTORY 347-0-20	Christians and Jews	IV	D. Shyovitz	TTH 11:00 – 12:20
HISTORY 349-0-20	History of the Holocaust	IV	B. Frommer	MW 3:30 – 4:50
HISTORY 393-0-20	Gender, Race, and the Holocaust	IV	S. Cushman	MW 12:30 – 1:50
JWSH_ST 210-0-1	Jewish Studies: An Overview	V (distro only)	D. Shyovitz	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
JWSH_ST 279-0-1 (also COMP_LIT 270-0-1, MENA 290-6-2)	Exploring Hebrew Literature (in Translation): Past, Present, and Future	VI	G. Ehrlich	MW 11:00 – 12:20
JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-22, MENA 290-4-2)	Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880-1948	IV	M. Hilel	TTH 11:00 – 12:20

## SPRING 2025

COURSE	COURSE TITLE	DISTRO/FD	INSTRUCTOR	DAY/TIME
JWSH_ST 280-6-1 (also MENA 290-6-3/RTVF 351-0-21)	Otherness and Othering in Israeli Film	VI ( through JWSH_ST or MENA only)	H. Seltzer	MW 9:30 – 10:50
RELIGION 220-0-20	Introduction to Hebrew Bible	V	B. Wimpfheimer	TTH 9:30 – 10:50
RELIGION 339-0-22	Jewish Texts as Media	V	S. Schwartz	W 3:30 – 5:50
RELIGION 339-0-23	Ancient Jewish and Christian Narrative	V	B. Wimpfheimer	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
SESP 323-0-20	Trauma and Atrocity: Holocaust Memory, Memorials and Museums		D.M. Cohen	TTH 2:00 – 3:20

### What is Jewish Studies?

Jewish Studies refers to the study of Judaism, Jewish history, Jewish identity, and Jewish culture over time and around the world. Our professors rely on tools of historical research, textual analysis, ethnography, political science, and more as they seek to understand and teach these topics.

Jewish Studies is truly an interdisciplinary way of analyzing and understanding the world. Jewish Studies courses are open to students of all backgrounds. While some students who take our classes are Jewish, many are not. We offer a major and minor for anyone looking to go deeper into the study of Jewish experience. On the other hand, if you're just looking for something a little different from what you usually study, you'll be glad to know that many of our courses satisfy Weinberg distribution/foundational discipline requirements.

Jewish Studies also partners with Middle East and North African (MENA) Languages to provide Hebrew language classes, which are offered at three levels.

For more information: [www.jewish-studies.northwestern.edu](http://www.jewish-studies.northwestern.edu)

## Jewish Studies Spring 2025 Course Descriptions

### ECONOMICS

#### **ECON 315-0-30: Economic History of Israel**

**O. Loewenthal, TTH 12:30 – 1:50pm**

The course provides an overall analysis of the Israeli Economy, its development in the 70 years since the establishment of the state of Israel, and how it coped with various crises during those years. The course will focus on economic growth, the effects of the Israeli-Arab conflict, the inflation crisis and stabilization policy, and on inequality in Israel. We will study those issues by applying fundamental concepts in economic analysis.

### HEBREW

*Students with prior knowledge of Hebrew (learned either through school or at home) will need to take the Hebrew placement exam before registering, unless they have previously taken Hebrew at Northwestern or have permission from the instructor. For more information, please contact Hanna Seltzer at [hanna.seltzer@northwestern.edu](mailto:hanna.seltzer@northwestern.edu)*

#### **HEBREW 111-3-20: Hebrew I**

**R. Alexander, MWF 9:30 – 10:40am**

The three-quarter first-year course in Hebrew is designed to develop all four language skills (speaking, writing, listening, and reading comprehension) as well as provide a cultural foundation. The course is based on *Hebrew From Scratch*, a comprehensive textbook with grammar and interactive exercises for the beginning adult learner. The instructions for the exercises as well as the translations of the vocabulary lists are in English. Otherwise, the course is taught in Hebrew, creating an important immersive environment for the students throughout the year. Hebrew 111-3, taught in the Spring Quarter, builds on material learned in the first two quarters. New words and structures will be integrated into short texts and lively conversations which are part of the wider context of Israeli culture. As always, students will have ample opportunities to practice and expand all skills.

#### **HEBREW 121-3-20: Hebrew II**

**R. Alexander, MWF 11:00am – 12:10pm**

Second-year Hebrew is a three-quarter sequence covering comprehensive grammar explanations and examples as well as cultural themes. The purpose of this course is to enlarge the students' vocabulary, and to reinforce and expand their knowledge of Hebrew grammar, as well as to deepen their knowledge of Israeli culture. Class will consist of interactive exercises for the intermediate learner, readings of a level-appropriate difficulty with more information on Israeli daily life and reality and listening to form of songs and clips in Hebrew. In Hebrew 121-3, taught in the Spring quarter, we will expand our knowledge of past tense verbs to forms of לאכול, (לכתוב, פעל שלמים (לכתוב, לאכול), and (לרקוד) and (להרגיש, להזמין, להרגיש) and פיעל (לדבר, לספר) and פעל ל"ה (לרצות, לעשות) and (לרקוד). These variety of forms will allow us to develop our self-expression and to include writing and conversations about childhood memories, everyday situations like visit at the doctor, volunteering in organizations, and more. We will learn more prepositions and their conjugations (like שלי, שלך like) and more useful grammar structures like צריך, יכול, אפשר. We will have a fun unit about family and childhood (prepare your pictures!) and we will also learn about the Jerusalemite Zoo. As always, grammar and new vocabulary will be woven into the content.

## **HEBREW 216-3-1: Hebrew III: Between Two Writers: Sayed Kashua and Etgar Keret**

### **H. Seltzer, MW 2:00 – 3:20pm**

The topic of this course is The Four-Dimensional Jerusalem. In this course, students will gain a deeper understanding of some of the complexities of Israeli culture through the specific example of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world and she saw many victories and downfalls. It is the subject of writing for poets and storytellers, Jews and non-Jews alike, and it is often the setting for many films and TV series that were produced in Israel. Jerusalem is immensely diverse, encompassing ultra-orthodox Jews next to secular Jews, Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi ones, and Jews and Arabs. In this class we will get a glimpse of these sectors as they are portrayed in literary and visual art. We will read poems by Yehuda Amichai (the poet who lived and died in Jerusalem and wrote about and to Jerusalem throughout his entire life) and a short story that takes place in the Mahane Yehuda's Market and portrays the fragile relationship between the various groups in Jerusalem. We will watch clips from a dance project that brings to life love stories that took place in Jerusalem and we will speak with Miriam Engel, the artist who created this project. We will learn about the complex relationship between Jews and Arabs in Jerusalem, the volatile situations and the unique projects of social organizations that strive to promote understanding and co-existence. We will also learn about the history of Jerusalem and how this history affects the current intricacies of this unique city.

## **HISTORY**

### **HISTORY 347-0-20: Christians and Jews**

#### **D. Shyovitz, TTH 11:00 – 12:20pm**

Varieties of historical encounters between Jews and Christians. Origins of the "Jesus movement"; rabbinic attitudes toward Christianity; medieval polemic and engagement; the modern "Judeo-Christian tradition"; Christian Zionism and postwar ecumenicism.

### **HISTORY 349-0-20: History of the Holocaust**

#### **B. Frommer, MW 3:30 – 4:50pm**

This course examines the Holocaust of European Jews from its origins through its aftermath in the context of Nazi Germany's murderous campaigns against other groups of victims, including disabled persons, sexual minorities, Roma, and Slavs. We will read first-hand accounts and analyze primary documents written by victims and perpetrators as we seek to understand the causes, course, and consequences of the genocidal policies of Germany and its Axis allies. From Vichy France in the West to the occupied Soviet territories in the East, the persecution, expropriation, and murder of millions necessitated the participation of countless civilians and state officials. With a special focus on Eastern Europe, where the greatest number of Jews lived and nearly all of the murdered died, we will explore questions of local complicity, the motives of perpetrators and of those who sought to impede them, and the responses of the continent's Jews and other victims to the onslaught. The course will conclude with postwar efforts to punish the Holocaust's perpetrators, to commemorate its victims, and to deny that genocide was even committed.

## **HISTORY 393-0-20: Gender, Race, and the Holocaust**

### **S. Cushman, MW 12:30 – 1:50pm**

The aim of this seminar is to introduce students to the history and historiography of race and gender during the Holocaust. As in many historical contexts, race and gender interacted dynamically and created the particular context of Nazi-occupied Europe, which was a place where Jewish men and women suffered in particular ways, German men and women participated in particular ways, and other racial groups - men and women alike - were targeted, collaborated, resisted and rescued. We will read a variety of texts that explore the influences that shaped the behavior and response of an array of people during the Holocaust. Racism sat directly in the center of the Nazi world view. Once the Nazis got into power, they sought to translate ideology into policy. Still, their racial policies evolved over time, spurred by opportunism, innovation, and war. And too, Jewish men and women responded in ways similar and divergent to the Nazi onslaught. Sexism was also seemingly an important aspect of the Nazi perspective. While they indeed embraced an anti-feminist stance, the Nazis nevertheless sought to incorporate "German" women into the national community and women participated actively in the implementation of Nazi racism.

## **JEWISH STUDIES**

### **JWSH\_ST 210-0-1: Jewish Studies: An Overview**

#### **D. Shyovitz, TTH 2:00 – 3:20**

Jewish Studies encompasses the study of Judaism, Jewish history, Jewish culture and the lives of contemporary Jews. This course offers an introduction to the field through seminar-style discussions, and guest presentations by members of Northwestern's Jewish Studies faculty. Students will become familiar with the methodologies scholars use to research, understand, and analyze Jewish culture while gaining knowledge of specific topics in Jewish Studies. Open to students of all backgrounds.

### **JWSH\_ST 279-0-1 (also COMP\_LIT 270-0-1/MENA 290-6-2): Exploring Hebrew Literature (in Translation): Past, Present, and Future**

#### **G. Ehrlich, MW 11:00 – 12:20**

This course seeks to provide a broad introduction to modern Hebrew literature and explore various literary generations, beginning with the rise of Hebrew Revival Literature in the early 20th century, moving through the later writers of *Dor Tashah* (The 1948 Generation), the subsequent generation of writers from the 1960s and 1970s, and culminating in the postmodern turn of the 1990s and the more contemporary literature of the 2000s. Throughout the course, we will read texts from both central, canonical writers and more marginal, contemporary ones. Additionally, we will examine aspects of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in Hebrew literature. Ultimately, this course will allow students to discover the beauty and richness of modern Hebrew literature. The literary works will be accompanied by films, academic articles, and theoretical texts. No previous knowledge of Hebrew, Israel, or Judaism is required! All the Hebrew texts will be read in translation.

**JWSH\_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-22/MENA 290-4-2): Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880 – 1948****M. Hilel, TTH 11:00 – 12:20**

This course explores the complex social and cultural dynamics between ordinary Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel from the late 19th century to 1948. Moving beyond the conventional narrative of rivalry, violence, and conflict, we adopt a Relational History approach to uncover a richer and more nuanced understanding of this contested period. Focusing on interactions that extended beyond political tensions, we will examine shared identities, joint experiences, and daily encounters that shaped relations between ordinary Arabs and Jews. Topics include collaborations in mixed cities, the education system, business and labor markets, political organizations, leisure venues, and more. We will also delve into communal, personal and, at times, even romantic relationships that developed amidst the growing national struggle. Using primary historical sources, this course invites students to critically analyze how Jews and Arabs navigated their everyday lives in diverse public spheres, shedding light on an often-overlooked dimension of their shared history.

**JWSH\_ST 280-6-1 (also MENA 290-6-3/RTVF 351-0-21): Otherness and Othering in Israeli Film****H. Tzucker Seltzer, MW 9:30 – 10:50**

Since its inception, Israeli society is comprised of various and different social groups; immigrants, Arabs, Jews, foreign workers, religious people, secular people, ultra-orthodox Jews, Christians, to name several. In a society where many feel themselves as outsiders, how do social norms apply and is there actually something such as “social norms”? Or perhaps there are social norms within each group of “others”? What happens when social norms of a certain group clash with what is supposedly the social norms of “Israeli society”? And is there an actual entity of “Israeli society” or is it only imagined by those who seek to be part of it? Film in its nature is an introspective tool, and in the case of Israeli film it has always been a prism through which Israeli directors examine questions of identity, the treatment of “others”, and the relationship between the center and the margins. In this class we will watch various Israeli films that relate to the notion of otherness and to the dilemmas that arise from the characters’ complex position in Israeli society. Among the movies we will watch are “Borrowed Identity”, “The Matchmaker”, “Sandstorm” and “Baba Joon”. We will read texts that will contextualize the movies and will shed light on the stance of otherness in Israeli society. No previous knowledge of Hebrew or Israel or Israeli cinema is required. All the movies will have English subtitles and all the readings will be in English, as well as the lectures and class discussions.

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

### **RELIGION 220-0-20: Introduction to Hebrew Bible**

#### **B.Wimpfheimer, TTH 9:30 – 10:50**

There is no understating the significance of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament in Western Culture. The Bible is a text that has been repeatedly turned to for spiritual guidance, for explanations of mankind's origins and as the basis of both classical art and contemporary cinema. English idiom is peppered with phrases that originate in the Hebrew Bible and many a modern political clash can be understood as a conflict over the Bible's messages and their implications. This course introduces students to the Hebrew Bible by reading sections of most of the Bible's books. But reading is itself a complicated enterprise. The Bible has been put to many different uses; even within the world of academic scholarship, the Bible is sometimes a source of history, sometimes a religious manual, sometimes a primitive legal code and sometimes a work of classical literature. This course will introduce students to the various challenges that present themselves within the study of the Hebrew Bible and the varied approaches scholars take when reading the Hebrew Bible. This course is a critical introduction to the Hebrew Bible.

### **RELIGION 339-0-22: Jewish Texts as Media**

#### **S. Schwartz, W 3:30 – 5:50**

This course approaches Jewish texts through the lens of media studies. The course will explore a range of classical and contemporary Jewish textual genres, as well as Jewish textual objects, from Torah scrolls and Jewish type, to digital commentary, music, and performance. Students will learn how to engage texts deeply through different hermeneutics, including through close-reading and in partnership with other students. Our approach will also pay attention to the media and materiality of Jewish transmission across different kinds of Jewish sources. All non-English language texts will be presented in translation. No prior background with Jewish sources necessary. Class time will be divided between partnered text study and group discussion, and a special site visit to Special Collections at the University Library.

### **RELIGION 339-0-22: Ancient Jewish and Christian Narrative**

#### **B.Wimpfheimer, TTH 2:00 – 3:20**

Narratives are centrally important to religions. From foundational myths that create the space within which religion happens to discrete episodes that ground specific rituals, narratives are the very stuff of religion. The purpose of this course is to consider narratives as a special site for the production of religious meaning; the course will draw heavily from both religion theory and literary theory. Issues we will cover include: whether textual meaning is located in the author, text or reader; how the religious context of a narrative affects its possible interpretations; how myths and rituals comprise different modes of narrative; the relationship between narrative time and religious time; the challenge to authority inherent to much religious narrative; the variety of ways through which religious figures mobilize narrative to further their authority. This course will utilize Jewish and Christian narratives from the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Rabbinic Literature, Apocrypha, Gnostic Texts and Church Fathers as primary texts. Students will be expected to build on materials covered in the course by applying narrative theory to the study of these narratives. Students will also learn about the near simultaneous emergence of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism and put these two religious formations in conversation. Some of the theoretical works to be used are: Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*; Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*; Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality;" Robert Segal, ed., *The Myth and Ritual Theory*; Jerome Bruner, *The Making of Stories*; Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*; Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?*

**SESP GENERAL****SESP 323-0-20: Trauma and Atrocity: Holocaust Memory, Memorials, and Museums****D.M. Cohen, TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm**

What is Holocaust memory? How has Holocaust memory changed over time, and how does the Holocaust continue to affect our understanding of trauma, atrocity, and human rights today? This course addresses individual memory, including survivor and witness testimony, memory and trauma, and the impact of the Holocaust on survivors' families and communities. We also explore collective Holocaust memory and the development of mainstream framings of Holocaust history. We consider Jewish, Roma, and other victim narratives, including national memorialization, rituals of commemoration, and the development of Holocaust memorials, museums, and institutions in the United States and around the world. And we study how we have come to remember the Nazi perpetrators and their collaborators. We draw on course texts, including film and fiction, to ask questions about the relationships between individual and collective memories, as well as between commemoration and education.