

Winter 2022 Courses

COURSE	COURSE TITLE	DISTRO	INSTRUCTOR	TIME
HEBREW 111-2-20	Hebrew I		R. Alexander	MTWTH 10:00 – 10:50 (Remote)
HEBREW 121-2-20	Hebrew II		H. Seltzer	MTWTH 11:00 – 11:50
HEBREW 245-0-1	Current Events in Israeli Society through Online News Media		H. Seltzer	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
HISTORY 203-3-20	Jewish History 1789-1948	IV	Y. Petrovsky-Shtern	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
HISTORY 349-0-20 (also GERMAN 349-0-20)	History of the Holocaust	IV	S. Ionescu	TTH 11:00 – 12:20
JWSH_ST 101-6-1 (First-year seminar)	1948: History & Memory of the 1 st Arab/Israeli War		S. Hirschhorn	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
JWSH_ST 279-0-1 (also COMP_LIT 202-0-21, AMER_ST 310-0-50)	Modern Jewish American Literature: Ethnicity, Assimilation, Performance	VI	D. Mihailescu	TTH 11:00 – 12:20
JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-30, MENA 290-4-21)	Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880-1948	IV	M. Hilel	TTH 12:30 – 1:50
RELIGION 339-0-20	Modern Judaism, Race, and Racism	V	E. Rosenblatt	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
RELIGION 339-0-22	Introducing the Talmud	V	B. Wimpfheimer	MW 9:30 – 10:50
RELIGION 374-0-20	God after the Holocaust	V	C. Sufrin	MW 11:00 – 12:20
SPANISH 395-0-1	Jewish Argentina (taught in Spanish)	VI	L. Kerr	TTH 9:30 – 10:50

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 requirements.

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

www.jewish-studies.northwestern.edu

Jewish Studies Winter 2022 Course Descriptions

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.

HEBREW 111-2-20: Hebrew I

R. Alexander, MTWTH 10:00 – 10:50am

This course 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. Hebrew 111-2, taught in the Winter Quarter, builds on material learned in the first quarter. We will learn the impersonal form widely used in everyday Hebrew, we will be introduced to adjectives in Hebrew, and we will get to know more question words, more numbers, and the direct object, a unique form in Hebrew. All these 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. Prerequisite: Hebrew 111-1 (Fall 2021) or placement in Hebrew 111-2 after taking the placement exam.

HEBREW 121-2-20: Hebrew II

H. Seltzer, MTWTH 11:00-11:50pm

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 121-2, taught in the Winter quarter, we will begin learning the past tense as we explore the past and present of the Ethiopian community in Israel as part of our exploration of Israel's social issues and cultural challenges. We will also learn the possessive preposition לְ (to/for me, to/for you, etc.) and will have a fun unit on commercials. We will be introduced to the body parts and colors in Hebrew, and we will read and talk about children's drawings and art. As always, the grammar and new vocabulary will be woven into the content. Prerequisite: Hebrew 121-1 or equivalent; or instructor consent.

HEBREW 245-0-1: Hebrew III: Current Events in Israeli Society through Online News Media

H. Seltzer, TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm

Israel's press and broadcasters are many and varied, reflecting differences in language, political viewpoint and religious outlook. This course engages students in learning about the importance of the Israeli media and how it reports on current events and cultural topics for its diverse citizens. Questions such as "What kind of press does Israel have?", and "How well is Israel's immigrant and minority population represented in the media?" will be discussed. We will be introduced to the wide spectrum of Israeli newspapers, and based on an analysis of their homepages, we will learn to decipher the audience to which each newspaper gravitates. By doing so, we will also learn the special terms and vocabulary unique to Israeli media. We will read newspaper articles and watch clips from Israeli TV news about political and social matters. Among the topics we will cover are: the Ethiopian community and recent protests, poverty in Israel and its connection to climate change, and the new Israeli government (formed in June 2021) and its challenges. The in-depth exploration of a variety of news topics will help students build a comprehensive vocabulary, explore the specialized language of media Hebrew as well as begin to comprehend the diverse and complex reality of Israeli society and daily life. Prerequisite: Hebrew 121-3 or equivalent; or instructor consent.

HISTORY

HISTORY 203-3-20: Jewish History 1798-1948

Y. Petrovsky-Shtern , TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm

Modernity has dramatically changed the profile of Western Civilization and had a major impact on European Jews. The course will take students from the French Revolution that started integrating the Jews into the fabric of European society to the establishment of the State of Israel. It will highlight the plurality of models of Jewish integration and acculturation, the formation of new Jewish identities, the split of the traditional community under the impact of Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment), the rise of Liberal and Orthodox trends within Judaism, and the spread of Jewish political movements such as socialism and nationalism. Based on a plethora of English-language documents, the course will introduce students to those problems of interaction between the general society and the Jewish minority that pointed toward the twentieth century transformation of modernity. In sum, the course will explore the fascinating response of Jews to modernity on political, societal, theological, and cultural levels.

HISTORY 349-0-20 (also GERMAN 349-0-20) History of the Holocaust

S. Ionescu, TTH 11:00 – 12:20pm

The 20th century was probably the bloodiest era in human history and many people consider the Holocaust to be the climax of mass murder and atrocity in a long history of tragedies. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Holocaust has attracted the attention of both the general public and academics, who were especially interested in understanding the reasons for human participation in such a horrendous event. This course will explore the roots, the development, and the aftermath of the Holocaust, focusing particularly on Eastern Europe, which was the main site of Jewish life in Europe and the main target of Nazi onslaught. During this course we will discuss many of the events within Holocaust history by looking at specific individuals and the choices they willed or were compelled to make. While we will explore primarily the experience of the Jews, we will also consider other categories of other victims (such as the Roma and Sinti, Slavs, gay men and lesbians, disabled persons, and Jehovah's Witnesses) and the actions of perpetrators and their local collaborators, rescuers, resisters, and bystanders. In the last part of our course we will scrutinize the legacies of the Holocaust during the first postwar years, including the survivors' struggles to rebuild their lives, criminal justice, and restitution and reparations. Our examination of the Holocaust will be based primarily on historical texts of Holocaust scholars as well as on wartime and postwar documents and autobiographical accounts of gentile and Jewish participants in the Holocaust. In addition to such texts, we will watch excerpts from documentary films, which depict the Nazis and the Holocaust from various perspectives.

JEWISH STUDIES

JWSH_ST 101-6-1 (first-year seminar) 1948: History & Memory of the 1st Arab/Israeli War

S. Hirschhorn, TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm

The 1948 war between Palestinians, Arabs, and Israelis is the first of many subsequent major battles between the Jewish State and her neighbors and is still remembered as the source of what might accurately be seen as an ensuing seventy-plus year war. Yet, the war is not remembered by shared facts – or even similar terminology – one side calls it a ‘War of Independence’ and the other ‘the Naqba’ [The Catastrophe.] How can historians understand both the history and memory of these events between 1948 and 1949 that continue to have such resonance in the present? This course will first examine how these two national communities living in the same space between the river and the sea came into increasing conflict from the late 19th century. We will examine the rise of Zionism, as well as Palestinian nationalism, first under Ottoman, then British rule. The class underscores the role of both individuals and institutions in the building of two proto-nations and their respective positions on the eve of war in 1948 – examining how this shaped outcomes both during and after the battle. The course will interrogate the 1948 war itself through an inter-disciplinary lens, using both primary and secondary sources drawn from scholarly texts as well as memoir, literature, photography, film, the arts, and other forms of digital history to shed light on these dramatic events from multiple perspectives. Lastly, moving beyond 1948, we will ask how much the past can be left behind as part of a peace agreement of the future.

JWSH_ST 279-0-1 (also COMP_LIT 202-0-23, AMER_ST 310-0-50): Modern Jewish American Literature:

Ethnicity, Assimilation, Performance

D. Mihailescu, TTH 11:00 – 12:20pm

This seminar consists of modern Jewish American literary text analyses in point of their cultural markers, focusing on the relationships between collective and individual memory, mainstream and minority tensions, as well as identity and ethical dilemmas. We intend to focus on the ethnic components of these texts as evidence of cultural assimilation, dissimilation, or performance on the part of the authors who produced them in the U.S. The seminar looks at identity as a contextually-based fluid category, the result of spaces of negotiation. We will compare the representation of Eastern European Jewish experiences in the early twentieth century literature of immigrant authors from the Russian Empire and Romania to the representation of the same early twentieth century experience by contemporary (Jewish) American authors. We will assess how significant moments in the life of early twentieth century Eastern European Jews in America (such as the fugeyev / marching emigration movement from 1900 Romania, the 1903 Kishinev pogrom from the Russian Empire, the original “Bintel Brief/Bundle of Letters” column in The Yiddish Daily Forward or the 1911 Triangle Fire in New York) were represented in early twentieth century literary works and how they are represented in contemporary, twenty-first century literary works. In this sense, we will consider the input of the gender lens and various literary genres (play, reportage poem, graphic narrative, travelogue, photo-word novel) looking back on the early twentieth century. We will analyze literary works by Eastern European Jewish immigrants to the U.S. from the Pale of Settlement and Romania at the turn of the twentieth century (Abraham Cahan, Mary Antin, Anzia Yezierska, M.E. Ravage) and literary works rewriting the early 1900s immigrant experience due to contemporary (Jewish) American authors (Liana Finck, Margot Singer, Leela Corman, Jill Culiner, Barbara Kahn, Aleksandar Hemon, Robert Fink, Julia Alekseyeva). By examining moments of struggle and power imbalance in the relation between mainstream and minority groups, the seminar also explores the fundamental role of literature in mourning and historical reparation.

JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-30, MENA 290-4-21): Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880-1948

M. Hilel, TTH 12:30pm – 1:50pm

This course will explore the history of relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel from the close of the nineteenth century to 1948. According to prevalent assumptions, both inside and outside academia, the relationship between Jews and Arabs in these years was characterized by mutual rivalry, violence, and conflict. This course, however, aims to challenge this approach by looking at a diversity of interactions that went beyond the political rivalry between the two communities. Relying on a 'History from Below' approach, we will analyse shared identities and joint experiences, and discuss a wide range of daily encounters and collaborations which took place between ordinary Jews and Arabs in different spheres such as: mixed cities, the education system, business and labor markets, political organizations, leisure spaces and more. Using primary sources, we will examine the myriad ways in which Jews and Arabs formed personal and even romantic relationships in the background of the escalating national struggle.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELIGION 339-0-20: Modern Judaism, Race, and Racism

E. Rosenblatt, TTH 2:00 – 3:20pm

This course will examine how racial concepts and discourses shape global Jewish cultures across the modern diaspora. By using the Atlantic Ocean as a framing device, we will consider the relationship of modern Judaism to histories of race, slavery, and colonialism. We will consider how different ways of thinking about race can help us reimagine Jewish history, Judaism as a religion, and Jewishness as a form of collective identity. In turn, we'll explore how Jewish culture can widen the lens on interactions between race and religion. How have Jews shaped and been shaped by racial concepts and ideology derived from Europe and its overseas colonies? How have Jews negotiated the shifting politics of race in the light of gendered, class-based, and interreligious conflicts? Are Jews a race? Are Jews white? These are the commonly asked and deceptively brief questions that we will only begin to address, and only through some of the specific and varied contexts in which they are asked; in Europe, the United States, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Africa. We will examine our sources with an eye towards contemporary debates about Jewish identity, thereby raising fascinating and thorny issues that link religion to race in our own time.

RELIGION 339-0-22: Introducing the Talmud

B. Wimpfheimer, MW 9:30 – 10:50pm

The Talmud is arguably the most important book in the Jewish canon. This idiosyncratic work builds on other works in the Jewish canon and is written in a unique patois with a style that makes it as much a puzzle as a legal text. This class will introduce students to the Talmud itself while also talking about its cultural import.

RELIGION 339-0-21: God after the Holocaust
C. Sufrin, MW 11:00 – 12:20pm

Throughout the history of the Jewish religion, times of crisis and collective suffering have given rise to theological innovation and creative shifts in religious expression as Jews sought to understand their tradition in light of their experiences. In the wake of the Holocaust, Jews and others faced a similar need for religious rethinking. In theological terms, they asked: where was God and should we expect God to act in human history? What does this event indicate about God's existence? In human terms, they asked: how do we live as Jews today? How do we live as human beings? Given that the Holocaust occurred in modern Europe and within the context of the Second World War, not only Jews but Christians and others asked many of these same questions and also struggled to articulate answers. Focusing on theological and literary texts, in this course we will explore how Jews and others have reshaped their thinking about God and religion in response to the Holocaust and the experience of suffering in the modern world.

SPANISH

SPANISH 395-0-1: Jewish Argentina (taught in Spanish)
L. Kerr, TTH 9:30 – 10:50am

So, you ask... what's "Jewish" about Argentina? This seems an odd question to ask about a predominantly Catholic Latin American country-- even though its small Jewish population is the largest in Latin America and the third largest in the Americas overall. Yet this seemingly homogeneous nation is more multi-ethnic and multi-cultural than you might suppose. Indeed, the story of the Jewish presence in Argentina is a surprising, and yet surprisingly familiar, story. Our approach to that story will be through literature, film, and critical essays. Primary: *Los gauchos judíos* (1910), a narrative about a Jewish agricultural colony in the early 20th c., by Alberto Gerchunoff, the "founding father" of Jewish-Argentine literature; short stories and essays (1930s-40s) by Jorge Luis Borges (though not Jewish, he has been called a "Jewish writer"); *Preso sin nombre, celda sin número* (1981), a testimonial narrative by Jacobo Timerman about his imprisonment during Argentina's military dictatorship; *El libro de los recuerdos* (1994), a comically reflective novel about a modern Buenos Aires Jewish family, by Ana María Shua; and *Derecho de familia* (2006), the third film in Daniel Burman's semi-autobiographical trilogy about contemporary Jewish life in Buenos Aires. Secondary: essays & documentaries on history, culture, and literature.