

SPRING 2024			
COURSE	COURSE TITLE	INSTRUCTOR	TIME
ECON 315-0-30	Economic History of Israel	O. Levintal	TTH 11:00 – 12:20
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: The Four Dimensional Jerusalem	H. Seltzer	MW 2:00 – 3:20
HISTORY 395-0-22 (also LEGAL_ST 376-0-23)	Holocaust Trials	B. Frommer	TTH 3:30 – 4:50
HISTORY 395-0-24	Jewish Autobiography	Y. Petrovsky-Shtern	TTH 3:30 – 4:50
JWSH_ST 279-0-1 (also COMP_LIT 270-0-20, GERMAN 246-0-2)	Yiddish, Our Setting Sun: Yiddish Literature and Culture in the 20th Century	H. Seltzer	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-28, MENA 290-4-1)	Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880-1948	M. Hilel	MW 12:30 – 1:50
JWSH_ST 280-4-2 (also HISTORY 200-0-36, MENA 290-4-2)	MENA Jewry: History, Society, Culture	M. Hilel	TTH 2:00 – 3:20
JWSH_ST 390-0-1 (also CIV_ENV 395-0-25, ENVR_POL 390-0-27)	Water in Arid Lands: Technology and Innovation in the Middle East	E. Rekhess & A. Packman	W 4:00 – 7:00
SESP 323-0-20	Trauma and Atrocity: Holocaust Memory, Memorials and Museums	D.M. Cohen	TTH 12:30 – 1:50
RELIGION 230-0-20	Introduction to Judaism: Jewish Texts	S. Schwartz	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 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

Jewish Studies Spring 2024 Course Descriptions

ECONOMICS

ECON 315-0-30: Economic History of Israel

O. Levintal, TTH 11:00am – 12:20pm

This 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

HEBREW 111-3-20: Hebrew I

R. Alexander, MWF 9:30 – 10:40am

Hebrew 111-3 is based on *Hebrew from Scratch*, a comprehensive textbook with grammar and interactive exercises for the beginning adult learner. In this quarter, students will dive deeper into the language with a variety of authentic materials, including music videos, movie trailers, restaurant menus, and more. Students will explore topics like the infinitive form of verbs and new verb forms. Additionally, students will discover the versatility of numbers, learn how to describe age and game results, and work on using verbless sentences, such as "The breakfast is very good" ("ארורת הבוקר מאוד טובה"). Learning more about central places in Israel and themes in Israeli culture, including the kibbutz, will enrich students' cultural understanding. By the end of the first year of Hebrew, students will be able to compose simple, comprehensible sentences about themselves, initiate social interactions, convey personal information about themselves such as their age and their hobbies, and comprehend basic written sentences on familiar topics. New words and structures will be integrated into short texts and lively conversations as part of the class's engaging environment. As always, students will have ample opportunities to practice and expand all skills, using a variety of techniques and ed-tech tools. Prerequisites: Hebrew 111-2 or placement in Hebrew

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' vocabularies and to reinforce and expand their knowledge of Hebrew grammar, as well as to deepen their knowledge of Israeli culture. The 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 songs and clips in Hebrew. In Hebrew 121-3, taught in the Spring quarter, we will expand our knowledge of the past tense as we learn several new past tense verb forms. This variety of forms will allow us to develop our self-expression and will include writing and conversations about childhood memories, as well as practicing dialogues of everyday situations like visiting the doctor. We will learn more prepositions and their conjugations (like שלי, שלך) and additional useful structures like צריך, יכול, אפשר. We will also have a fun unit about family and childhood. To immerse ourselves in Israeli cultural and political sphere, we will have a unit where students will present each week on a weekly picture from Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* and will explore the picture's context. As always, grammar and new vocabulary will be woven into the content in a structured and engaging way. Registration requirement: Hebrew 121-2 or equivalent; or instructor consent.

HEBREW 216-3-20: Hebrew III: The Four Dimensional Jerusalem

H. Seltzer, MW 2:00 – 3:20pm

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 has seen many victories and downfalls. It is the subject of writing for poets and storytellers, Jews and non-Jews alike, and is often the setting for many films and TV series that 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. Prerequisite: Hebrew 121-3, or permission of the instructor.

HISTORY

HISTORY 395-0-22 (LEGAL_ST 376-0-23): Holocaust Trials

B. Frommer, TTH 3:30 – 4:50

After the Second World War the victorious Allied powers and the liberated peoples of Europe engaged in an unprecedented attempt to bring Nazi war criminals and domestic collaborators to justice. Courts throughout the continent tried and punished hundreds of thousands for having worked with and for Germany and the Axis powers. By and large, however, those trials concentrated on crimes of political collaboration and paid little attention to what is now accepted as the Nazis' greatest crime: the genocide of European Jewry. Although courts did punish some architects of the so-called Final Solution, thousands of Europeans who had organized, perpetrated or otherwise contributed to the Holocaust escaped with minimal penalties or no punishment at all. Over the subsequent decades individuals, organizations, and states have sought to redress the failure to seek out and punish those perpetrators at war's end. Lawyers have prosecuted and defended accused war criminals before courts. Historians have documented the development and execution of genocide, while others have sought to deny the very murders themselves. Through the examination of a series of trials, the first half of the course will discuss both the struggle to bring perpetrators to justice and the efforts to obscure the crimes that had been committed. We will consider the prosecution of war crimes and genocide in the context of the development of international law and historical knowledge over the decades from the Second World War to the present day. For the second half of the course students will concentrate on individual research papers based on primary sources (for example, the records of the Nuremberg Tribunal or Eichman Trial).

HISTORY 395-0-24: Jewish Autobiography

Y. Petrovsky-Shtern, TTH 3:30 – 4:50

Autobiography in general and Jewish autobiography in particular presents an unparalleled opportunity to look at history, historical realities, and historical memories (or fantasies!) through the lens of a private individual. Yet the purpose of the autobiography is to tell a story, not history. The autobiography is a quintessential narrative that combines history and memory, authentic details and borrowed narratives, documentary precision and artistic ambition. Autobiography is a historical narrative bordering on the literary. If so, is it possible to use autobiography in historical research? This course opens up a variety of ways to identify and neutralize the literary layer in autobiography to make it a usable historical source. This course takes the participants through five hundred years of Jewish ego-narratives including the autobiographies of rabbis and mystics, schismatics and philosophers, merchants and writers, dissidents and historians, nationalist politicians, cultural assimilationists, and even converts.

JEWISH STUDIES

JWSH_ST 279-0-1 (COMP_LIT 270-0-20/GERMAN 246-0-2): Yiddish, Our Setting Sun: Yiddish Literature and Culture in the 20th Century

H. Seltzer, TTH 2:00 – 3:20

Yiddish, which was developed in the Middle Ages as a Judeo-German language, became the language which most Jews had spoken in Eastern and Western Europe until the Second World War. We will begin the class with learning about the origins of Yiddish and its development into becoming the most widespread Jewish language in Europe. We will then fast forward to the 18th and 19th centuries and the era of secularization among Jewish communities, where Western European Jews saw Yiddish as a degraded language while among Eastern European Jews Yiddish became a language of bursting literary expression and flourishing literature. Persecution, poverty, the dissolution of becoming part of intellectual Europe, and Zionist ideology were all reasons for many young Jewish people to immigrate to the US and Palestine in the first decades of 20th century. While Jewish immigrants in the United States sought connections to Yiddish and clinged to it as a remnant of their old world, Yiddish was rejected in Palestine (and later in Israel) as representing the “old and weak Jew” and threatening the status of Hebrew. We will examine the texts of major Yiddish writers from the beginning of the 20th century in the literary centers of Yiddish at the time; Eastern Europe, United States, and Palestine. An important part in our class will be the geographical move of Yiddish from its “natural” habitat of Eastern Europe to the US and Palestine, and the element of loss and grief which was strongly present in the writing of Yiddish poets and authors, during the upheavals in Europe in the two World Wars, and especially after the Holocaust. Class materials will be comprised of articles and book chapters to provide the historical, cultural, and political context of the eras we will discuss, and of essays, short stories, and poems translated from Yiddish to English. No previous knowledge of Yiddish or of Yiddish culture or history is required. All course materials will be in English, as well as the lectures and class discussions.

JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (HISTORY 200-0-28/MENA 290-4-1): Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel, 1880-1948

M. Hilel, MW 12:30 – 1:50

This course will delve into the intricate social and cultural dynamics between Jews and Arabs in Palestine/The Land of Israel from the late 19th century to 1948. Contrary to prevailing assumptions, which often depict this period as marked solely by mutual rivalry, violence, and conflict, this course aims to challenge this narrative. Through the lens of a Relational History approach, we will explore diverse interactions beyond political rivalry, examining shared identities and joint experiences. We will also examine various daily encounters and collaborations that unfolded between ordinary Jews and Arabs across different public spheres such as mixed cities, the education system, business and the labor market, political organizations, leisure venues, and more. Using primary historical sources, we will analyze the myriad ways in which Jews and Arabs formed personal, and at times even romantic, relationships against the backdrop of the escalating national struggle.

JWSH_ST 280-4-2 (HISTORY 200-0-38/MENA 290-4-2): MENA Jewry: History, Society, Culture
M. Hilel, TTH 2:00 – 3:20

This course delves into the multifaceted experiences of Jewish communities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), spanning from the 18th century to the present day. Looking at their history, cultural developments, societal dynamics, and linguistic transformations, we will examine the diverse cultural worlds where Arabic-speaking Jews lived and thrived. We will also explore the deep and enduring relationships they developed with non-Jews and their instrumental role in shaping local, regional, and national cultures and politics. Their identities and histories, which vary according to their place of origin, will be presented, assessed, and debated in scholarly articles and monographs, political statements, personal testimonies and memoirs, poetry and fiction, as well as music and cinema. Special attention will be given to the interplay between Jewish and Islamic cultures, continuities and ruptures between Jews and their neighboring societies, the impact of geopolitical events, and the formation of Israel within this historical context. By focusing on MENA Jewry, the course offers new perspectives on questions of Zionism and nationalism, colonialism and geography, religion and secularization, and historiography and memory.

JWSH_ST 390-0-1 (CIV_ENV 395-0-25/ENVR_POL 390-0-27): Water in Arid Lands: Technology and Innovation in the Middle East
E. Rekhess and A. Packman, W 4:00 – 7:00pm

This seminar will explore how water availability shapes the development of civilizations and drives innovation in water technologies. The course will investigate historical dimensions of water in drylands in the Middle East, starting from ancient civilizations and the water infrastructures that were essential to the development of societies in arid regions. We will use this historical context as a stepping-stone to understand the more recent history of the Middle East, focusing on challenges faced by states in the Jordan River Basin. We will then examine efforts to develop the water resources needed to support burgeoning populations, such as irrigation projects designed to convert barren desert into cultivated agriculture. This more recent history includes geopolitical conflicts over land and water that continue to this day. We will evaluate regional water resources in the context of current and future climate and geopolitical conflicts, review recent advances in water technologies spurred by these limitations, and explore potential social and technological solutions for long-term water sustainability in the Middle East. We will discuss how water access and control contributes to trans-boundary politics and tensions between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the west Bank and Gaza, along with collaborative solutions developed between Israel and Jordan. Finally, we will discuss opportunities for global translation of innovative water technologies and water-management solutions. Start-up culture and innovation in water technologies for local use, notably in Israel and more recently in other nations of the Middle East, serve as a model for improving water supply in other arid regions. The course will host a symposium on water innovation, featuring national and international experts on water technology, policy, and commercialization.

RELIGION

RELIGION 230-0-20: Introduction to Judaism: Jewish Texts
S. Schwartz, TTH 2:00 – 3:20

This section of Introduction to Judaism will serve as an introduction to Jewish textual sources. The course can 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. 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.

SESP

SESP 323-0-20: Trauma and Atrocity: Holocaust memory, Memorials, and Musems

D. M. Cohen, TTH 12:30 – 1:50

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.