

WINTER 2025

COURSE	COURSE TITLE	DISTRO/FD	INSTRUCTOR	TIME/DAY
GERMAN 331-0-1	Shattered Worlds: Representation after the Shoah (course taught in German)	VI	A.Parkinson	TTH 3:30 – 4:50
HEBREW 111-2-20	Hebrew I		R. Alexander	MWF 9:30 – 10:40
HEBREW 121-2-20	Hebrew II		R. Alexander	MWF 11:00 – 12:10
HEBREW 216-2-20	Hebrew III: Parents and Children in Israeli Society	VI	H. Seltzer	MW 2:00 – 3:20
HEBREW 316-2-1	Hebrew IV: Biblical Stories and Poems: Canonical Biblical Texts through the Lens of Modern Hebrew Poetry	VI	H. Seltzer	MW 11:00 – 12:20
JWSH_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-34, MENA 290-4-1)	The Holocaust and Its Memory in Israel	IV	M. Hilel	TTH 11:00 – 12:20
JWSH_ST 280-4-2 (also HISTORY 200-0-36, MENA 290-4-2)	The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Competing Narratives	IV	M. Hilel	TTH 3:30 – 4:50
RELIGION 230-0-20	Introduction to Judaism	V	B. Wimpfheimer	MWF 11:00 – 11:50
RELIGION 330-0-20	Rabbinic Sex Stories	V	S. Schwartz	MW 12:30 – 1:50
RELIGION 339-0-21	Introduction to Talmud	V	B. Wimpfheimer	MW 2:00 – 3:20
SESP 323-0-20	Holocaust Memory, Memorials and Museums		D. M. Cohen	TTH 12:30 – 1:50
SESP 360-0-20	Magic, Monsters, and the Holocaust		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 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 Winter 2025 Course Descriptions

### GERMAN

#### **GERMAN 331-0-1: Shattered Worlds: Representation after the Shoah**

**A.Parkinson, TTH 3:30 – 4:50**

Shattered Worlds--Representation after the Shoah "Shattered Worlds" offers a literary, historical, and filmic introduction to the topic of art and literature after—or, respectively, about—Auschwitz. Readings address questions such as: What is the role of art in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century in view of this so-called breach of civilization? How can we define the relationship between art and politics? How can—or perhaps why should—poetry continue to be written after Auschwitz? Is there such a thing as an "aesthetics of memory" and which forms might this take? Important contributions by a variety of influential authors and artists including T.W. Adorno, Peter Weiss, Ruth Klüger, Alain Resnais, and Billy Wilder will be discussed in their cultural context. We will also consider the relationship of representation and history in relation to art and memory. THIS COURSE IS TAUGHT IN GERMAN!

### 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 111-1-20: 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 (listening comprehension, reading, speaking, and writing) as well as to provide cultural foundations of the Hebrew language. The course is based on "Hebrew From Scratch", a comprehensive textbook with grammar and interactive exercises for the beginning adult learner. In Hebrew 111-2, taught in the Winter Quarter students will learn foundational adjectives, the direct object (unique to Hebrew!), and the infinitive forms of בניין פעל (of verbs like אוהב, אוכל, לומד, כותב, קורא) while also have broadening cultural knowledge about central places and themes in Israeli culture such as houses-museums, navigating websites in Hebrew and more. By the end of the Winter Quarter, students will be able to initiate social interactions using modern Hebrew and ask for basic information such as where is library, where can one buy food, etc.; they will also be able to convey information about themselves (such as what do they like and don't like and regarding daily and weekly routine) to any native speaker of modern Hebrew; New words and structures will be integrated into short texts and lively conversations as part of the class's engaging environment. Students will have ample opportunities to practice and expand all skills, using various techniques and EdTech tools. Prerequisites: Hebrew 111-1 or equivalent/ placement exam.

**HEBREW 121-1-20: Hebrew II**

**H. Seltzer, MWF 11:00am – 12:10pm**

Second-year Hebrew is a three-quarter sequence covering comprehensive grammar structures and extensive vocabulary of modern Hebrew that are weaved into cultural themes of communities in Israel. 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 121-2 taught in the Spring quarter students will continue working with various past tense forms and be able to use them in writing and speaking with appropriate time expressions. Other grammatical topics include compound prepositions such as the preposition ל (as לנו, לך, לי...); Students will also have a chance to discuss various costumes communities around the world have for their weddings and acquire more cultural knowledge on Israeli singers, bands and music in Israel. Students will also have the opportunity to engage in a higher-level reading through weekly work with a graphic novel written in Hebrew. Class consists of exercises, discussions, presentations, and group/ partner work.

Prerequisites: Hebrew 121-1 or equivalent/ placement exam.

**HEBREW 216-2-1: Hebrew III: Parents and Children in Israeli Society**

**H. Seltzer, MW 2:00 – 3:20pm**

In this class, we will dive into the universal topic of relationships between parents and children as it is reflected in Israeli society. We will examine this topic through the lens of various genres, such as short stories, blogs, films, parental guides, and TV shows, and we may even taste a bit of creative writing. As we discuss the complexities and dilemmas of the relationships we encounter and ask ourselves if there is something like "Israeli parenthood" or "Israeli childhood", we will also pay close attention to the varied language levels and styles, grammar structures, and vocabulary. Registration Requirement: Hebrew 121-3 or instructor's consent.

**HEBREW 316-2-1: Hebrew IV: Hebrew Biblical Stories and Poems: Canonical Biblical Texts through the Lens of Modern Hebrew Poetry**  
**H. Seltzer, MW 11:00 – 12:20pm**

Many define the Hebrew Bible as the best literature ever written. Indeed, the Hebrew Bible inspired numerous canonical novels and poems, not to mention paintings and sculptures, in Western culture. In the case of Hebrew literature, the connection to the Hebrew Bible is even more binding, as the biblical texts informed and inspired Zionist ideology and the revival of Hebrew as a modern language. In this class we will read a selection of biblical stories in their original language, biblical Hebrew, a reading which will enable us to see the immense influence of biblical Hebrew on Modern Hebrew language. We will then read Contemporary Hebrew poems that are based on the stories we have read. We will analyze both the biblical stories, the Hebrew poems, and the connections between them. The poems we will read in class are interpretations of the biblical stories; both the biblical texts and the modern poems are in Hebrew, but beyond the grammatical and periodical difference between the texts and the poems (Biblical Hebrew vs. Modern Hebrew), the poems can be political, ideological, social, or personal critique of or sometimes a dialogue with the biblical story. All course materials will be in Hebrew, as well as class discussions. This class is intended for students who are either heritage speakers of Hebrew or are in a very advanced level of Hebrew. The class level is equal to Hebrew fourth year. Prerequisite: Hebrew 216-3 or consent of the instructor.

**JEWISH STUDIES**

**JWSH\_ST 280-4-1 (also HISTORY 200-0-34/MENA 290-4-1): The Holocaust and Its Memory in Israel**  
**M. Hilel, TTH 11:00 – 12:20**

This course examines the origins, development, course, and consequences of the most comprehensive genocide in history and the ways it has been remembered by Israeli society. The first part of the course will focus on the persecution of Jews during the first half of the 20th century culminating in their genocide between 1939-1945. We will discuss Nazi ideology; the complex interface between the Nazi regime's espousal of racism and the motivation of perpetrators on the ground; the interface between politics and law; the victims' reactions to persecution; conditions of life in the ghettos and camps; the response of the international community; and the aftermath of the war. In the second part of the course, we will examine Israeli society's different and even contradicting attitudes toward the Holocaust. We will probe how the establishment of the State of Israel, the 1950s mass immigration, and the evolving Arab-Israeli conflict shaped Israelis' understanding and memory of the Holocaust.

**JWSH\_ST 280-4-2 (also HISTORY 200-0-36/MENA 290-4-2): The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Competing Narratives**  
**M. Hilel, TTH 3:30 – 4:50**

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict stands as one of the world's most complex, contested, and debated issues, capturing the attention of scholars, politicians, and the public alike. While everyone seems to have an opinion, its deeper history and dynamics often go overlooked. This course delves into the origins of the conflict, tracing key historical milestones and exploring how both Palestinians and Israelis narrate their experiences. By examining contrasting perspectives and heated debates, students will gain a deeper understanding of the evolving local and global dynamics that have shaped the conflict. Taking a historical lens, the course highlights how both sides have understood and interpreted the conflict over time. Alongside academic readings, students will engage with films, posters, documentaries, and guest lectures. They will also participate in historiographical debates and analyze primary sources, sharpening their ability to critically engage with this complex and enduring conflict.

## RELIGION

### **RELIGION230-0-20: Introduction to Judaism**

**B.Wimpfheimer, MWF 11:00 – 11:50**

This course attempts to answer the questions "What is Judaism?" and "Who is a Jew?" by surveying the broad arc of Jewish history, reviewing the practices and beliefs that have defined and continue to define Judaism as a religion, sampling the vast treasure of Jewish literatures, and analyzing the unique social conditions that have made the cultural experience of Jewishness so significant. The class will employ a historical structure to trace the evolutions of Jewish literature, religion, and culture through the ages.

### **RELIGION 330-0-20: Rabbinic Sex Stories**

**S. Schwartz, MW 12:30 – 1:50**

Rabbinic Sex Stories Do rabbis have sex? Is Jewish knowledge erotic? And what is "the Talmud"? This course will explore these questions in relation to the original rabbis of late antiquity (3rd-7th centuries CE) through narratives, myths, and ethnographic accounts about rabbinic sex, gender and sexuality in the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. You will learn to expand the definition of what constitutes "sex" or "desire," "kinship" or "connection," "body" or "text," by examining ancient rabbinic forms of gendered, textual, and bodily transmission. Students will learn to become curious about bodily norms that are quite removed from the worlds that we inhabit no matter one's starting point, and will learn to make connections across the ancient and contemporary. This is a deep-reading, discussion-based course that will provide students with an opportunity to learn how to read rabbinic texts in translation, to generate conversational learning through Jewish textual practices like question-and-response, and partnered study, also known as hevruta, and to deepen your knowledge of contemporary theory in gender/sex and sexuality. We will focus our attention continuously and deeply on a few key rabbinic texts, taking our time to plumb their many layers and the dynamic quality of rabbinic interpretive possibilities. No previous knowledge of Talmud or other Jewish texts required. \*Counts toward Religion, Law, and Politics (RLP) and Religion, Sexuality and Gender (RSG) major concentrations.

### **RELIGION 339-0-21: Introduction to Talmud**

**B.Wimpfheimer, MW 2:00 – 3:20**

The Talmud is one of the most important works of Jewish literature. For the last millennium, Talmud study has been a central part of Jewish religious and cultural practice. Despite the splintering of Judaism into different denominations, Jews the world over are unified by their commitment to studying Talmud. The Talmud is an unusual work of literature, and it has been credited as an influence on codes of law, sermons, modern works of Jewish literature, and even Seinfeld. This course will explain the Talmud's import and durability within Jewish culture while introducing students to the rigors of legal analysis that lie at the heart of most talmudic passages. The course is ideal for those interested in religion, law, logic games and questions of textual interpretation. The course will study the Talmud entirely in English translation; there is neither a language prerequisite nor an expectation of prior experience reading the Talmud.

**SESP**

**SESP 360-0-20: Holocaust Memory, Memorials, and Museums**  
**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.

**SESP 360-0-20: Magic, Monsters, and the Holocaust**  
**D.M. Cohen, TTH 2:00 – 3:20**

How has the Holocaust come to be represented in popular culture? Through feature films and works of fiction created to bring Holocaust history into the public space, we will explore how certain tropes and narrative framings affect our perceptions and collective memories of the Holocaust. We will ask: What lessons from history do popular films and literature attempt to convey? What unintended lessons do they carry? And why is fantasy a common genre in the field of Holocaust film and fiction? We will consider how movies and literature about the Holocaust may affect the public's perceptions of atrocities today, and we will ask questions about the gaps and misconceptions that Holocaust film and fiction can leave in their wake. Our exploration will take a practical approach. We will ask: How can we use Holocaust feature films and works of Holocaust fiction as vehicles for public education? And how can we create effective learning experiences to support the public's engagement with and understanding of such texts? Journal Entries will support student reflection and processing while team Creative Responses to core course texts (feature films and novels) will be used to assess student learning. Toward the end of the quarter, students will work in teams to develop an original Open Project to build on our course themes.