

Jewish Studies

Committee Chairman: Michael Fishbane, S 205, 702-8234

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Program of Studies

The B.A. concentration in Jewish Studies provides a context in which College students may examine the texts, cultures, languages, and histories of Jews and Judaism over three millennia. The perspective is contextual, comparative, and interdisciplinary. The long and diverse history of Jews and Judaism affords unique opportunities to study modes of continuity and change, interpretation and innovation, and isolation and integration of a world historical civilization. Students are encouraged to develop appropriate skills (in texts, languages, history, and culture) for independent work.

Program Requirements

The concentration requires twelve courses distributed according to the guidelines that follow.

Language. Normally a student is expected to take three courses of Hebrew beyond the College language requirement. If the student's research project requires knowledge of a language other than Hebrew, the student may petition the committee to substitute that language for Hebrew, but not for the College language requirement.

Judaic Civilization. The concentration requires three courses in the Judaic Civilization sequence. This program includes ancient, medieval, and modern components. The temporal limits of these "periods" are determined by the faculty members assuming responsibility for the sequence. The first step of the sequence, covering the history of ancient Israel to the destruction of the Second Jewish Commonwealth, could be replaced by a one-quarter introduction to the Hebrew Bible. Students who meet the general education requirement in civilization studies with another civilization sequence must also complete the Judaic Civilization sequence as part of their concentration requirements. Students who meet the general education requirement in civilization studies with Judaic Civilization are required to take one quarter of another civilization sequence pertinent to the area and period of their major interest in Jewish Studies. This choice is made in consultation with the committee chair.

Other Requirements. Students who take Judaic Civilization as a concentration requirement separate from the general education requirement take six elective courses in Jewish Studies; students who meet the general education requirement with Judaic Civilization take eight electives. These courses would, in part, constitute the specific area of concentration for each student. The specific nature of these courses is determined by the student in consultation with the concentration adviser. A balance between content and method is the goal. Students are encouraged to take at least one method or theory course in the College in the area pertaining to their area of special interest.

It is expected that the general education requirements in the humanities or social sciences be completed before a student enters the program, normally at the end of the second year. A student who has not completed the general education requirements before admission to the program should do so during the first year of the program.

Each student in the program has an adviser who is a member of the program faculty, which is listed in the section that follows. A concentration worksheet is distributed to guide students in organizing their programs.

Summary of Requirements

College Language Requirement		<i>demonstrated competence in Hebrew or other approved language equivalent to one year of college-level study</i>
Concentration	3	HEBR 20100-20200-20300 (second-year Hebrew or other approved language) [†]
	3	JWSC 20000-20100-20200 (if not used to meet general education requirement); or one related civilization course plus two additional courses in Jewish Studies
	<u>6</u>	courses related to Judaic Studies*
	12	

[†] Credit may be granted by examination.

* Courses to be chosen in consultation with the student's adviser in Jewish Studies.

Optional B.A. Paper. Students who choose this option are to meet with their advisers by May 15 of their third year to determine the focus of the research project, and are expected to begin reading and research for the B.A. paper during the summer before their senior year. After further consultation, students are to do guided readings and participate in a (formal or informal) tutorial during the Autumn Quarter of the senior year. Concentration credit is received only for the Winter Quarter tutorial during which the B.A. paper is finally written and revised. The B.A. paper must be received by the primary reader by the end of the fifth week of the Spring Quarter. A B.A. paper is a requirement for consideration for honors.

Honors. Honors are awarded to students who show excellence in their course work, as well as on the B.A. paper. To qualify for honors in Jewish Studies, students must register for JWSC 29900 in addition to the twelve courses required in the general program of study, bringing the total number of courses required to thirteen. They will be required to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher and a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the concentration. An oral defense of the B.A. paper must also be given to three members of the Jewish Studies faculty.

Grading. Students are expected to take all required courses for the concentration for credit. However, those who qualify for academic honors, may take one special study course related to the honors thesis *P/F*, during the second quarter of the senior year. This *P/F* course requires a special

request from the student to the undergraduate faculty adviser during the prior quarter. Requirements for this *P/F* course will be agreed upon by the student and the course adviser.

Faculty

R. Austen, P. Bohlman, M. Brinker, A. Finkelstein, M. Fishbane, T. Frymer-Kensky, S. Jaffe, J. Kraemer, M. Krupnick, H. Moltz, D. Pardee, M. Postone, J. Sadock, E. Santner, J. Stern

Courses: Jewish Studies (JWSC)

Consult the quarterly Time Schedules for updated information and additional course listings in Hebrew Bible, Hebrew literature and history, and Jewish thought.

20000-20100-20200. Judaic Civilization I, II, III. *It is recommended that students begin with the first course in the sequence. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.* This is a sequential study of periods and communities selected from the history of Judaic civilization, viewed from multiple perspectives (i.e., historical, literary, philosophical, religious, social) and examined in light of the varied ways that civilization is and is not the product of interactions between the Jewish people and surrounding civilizations, nations, and religions. The primary focus is on a close reading of original sources in translation. Specific periods and communities studied may vary from year to year.

20000. Judaic Civilization I: Introduction to Biblical Civilization. (=HUMA 20000, JWSG 31000) This course provides an overall introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), with specific attention to its literary, religious, and ideological contents. The diversity of thought and theology in ancient Israel is explored, along with its notions of text, teaching, and tradition. Revision and reinterpretation is found within the Bible itself. Portions of the earliest post-biblical interpretation (in Philo, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and selected Pseudepigrapha) are also considered. *Autumn.*

20100. Judaic Civilization II: Rabbinic Judaism from the Mishnah to Maimonides. (=HUMA 20100, JWSG 31100) This course is a study of the primary texts in the development of classical and medieval rabbinic Judaism from roughly 70 C.E. to the twelfth century. The course centers on selections (in translation) from the Mishnah and tannaitic Midrash, the Babylonian Talmud, Geonic and Karaite writing, the Judeo-Arabic and Hebrew literature of Andalusia, and Maimonides's legal and philosophical compositions. Topics include different conceptions of the Hebrew Bible and its interpretation; the origins and development of the Oral Law; relations between Judaism and both Christianity and Islam; sectarianism, rationalist, and antirationalist trends in rabbinic thought; and the emergence of secular pursuits in the rabbinic tradition. *Winter.*

20200. Judaic Civilization III. (=HUMA 20200, JWSG 31200) The third quarter of the sequence focuses on Jewish life and creative achievement in America, the Holocaust and testimonies by survivors, and a brief look at modern Jewish theology. *Spring.*

20900. Twentieth-Century Jewish Literature. (=CMLT 25000, EEUR 22400, ISHU 25001) This course centers on the problematic status of a modern Jewish literary canon and an attempt to create a distinctive Jewish literary discourse. This course analyzes major works of twentieth-century prose and poetry to explore what features constitute a secular Jewish literary discourse as a unified literary tradition, despite its diverse ideological, aesthetic, and linguistic manifestations. We read central works of Yiddish literature (Aleichem), Russian Jewish literature (Mandelshtam), Kafka (conceived as a distinctively German-Jewish writer), writers responding to the Holocaust (Celan, Singer), modernist Hebrew literature in relation to Zionism (Bialik) and mysticism (Agnon), early and contemporary Israeli literature (Alterman, Oz), and recent American-Jewish literature (Roth). We also consider the relation of Jewish literature to literary discourse *about* Jews (Mann, Sebald). Texts in English and the original. *M. Grinberg. Autumn.*

22000-22100-22200. Elementary Classical Hebrew I, II, III. (=HEBR 10101-10102-10103, JWSG 30100-30200-30300) The purpose of this three-quarter sequence is to enable the student to read biblical Hebrew prose with a high degree of comprehension. The course is divided into two segments: (1) the first two quarters are devoted to acquiring the essentials of descriptive and historical grammar (including translation to and from Hebrew, oral exercises, and grammatical analysis); and (2) the third quarter is spent examining prose passages from the Hebrew Bible and includes a review of grammar. *The class meets five times a week. S. Creason. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

22300-22400-22500. Intermediate Classical Hebrew I, II, III. (=HEBR 20104-20105-20106, JWSG 30400-30500-30600) *PQ: HEBR 10103 or equivalent.* A continuation of Elementary Classical Hebrew. The first quarter consists of reviewing grammar, and of reading and analyzing further prose texts. In the last two quarters we introduce Hebrew poetry, reading from Psalms, Proverbs, and the prophets. *D. Pardee. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

23000-23100-23200. Medieval Jewish History I, II, III. (=HUMA 23000-23100-23200, JWSG 38100-38200-38300, NEHC 20411-20412-20413) *PQ: Consent of instructor. This sequence does not meet the general education requirement in civilization studies.* This three-quarter sequence deals with the history of the Jews over a wide geographical and historical range. First-quarter work is concerned with the rise of early rabbinic Judaism and development of the Jewish communities in Palestine and the Eastern and Western diasporas during the first several centuries C.E. Topics include the legal status of the Jews in the Roman world, the rise of rabbinic Judaism, the rabbinic literature of Palestine in that context, the spread of rabbinic Judaism, the rise and decline of competing centers of Jewish hegemony, the introduction of Hebrew language and culture beyond the confines of their original home, and the impact of the birth of Islam on the political and cultural status of the Jews. An attempt is made to evaluate the main characteristics of Jewish belief and social concepts in the formative periods of Judaism as it developed beyond its original geographical boundaries. Second-quarter work is concerned with the Jews under Islam, both in Eastern and Western Caliphates. Third-quarter work is concerned with the Jews of Western Europe from the eleventh through the fifteenth century. *N. Golb. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

23400. World of Biblical Prophets. (=HUMA 23400, JWSG 33400, NCDV 28000) This course offers an in-depth analysis of the biblical prophets. Each prophet is set in historical time and within a particular societal context. Against this background, a profile of the man is drawn. What was he like as social reformer and religious thinker? What did he say “no” to in society and “no” to in organized worship? And to what did he say “yes?” How was his message received and what influence did it have in its day? Is the individual prophet merely a historical figure or a curiosity of antiquity, or does he speak to us in our age? *H. Moltz. Autumn.*

23500. The Radicalism of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes*. (=FNDL 24600, HUMA 23500, NCDV 27700) Both *Job* and *Ecclesiastes* dispute a central doctrine of the Hebrew Bible, namely, the doctrine of retributive justice. Each book argues that a person’s fate is not a consequence of his or her religious-moral acts and thus the piety, whatever else it is, must be disinterested. In brief, the authors of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes*, each in his own way, not only “de-mythologize” but “de-moralize” the world. Theological and philosophical implications are discussed. Texts in English. *H. Moltz. Spring.*

25000-25100-25200. Introductory Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=HEBR 10501-10502-10503, JWSG 35000-35100-35200, LGLN 20100-20200-20300/30100-30200-30300) This course introduces students to reading, writing, and speaking modern Hebrew. All four language skills are emphasized: comprehension of written and oral materials; reading of nondiacritical text; writing of directed sentences, paragraphs, and compositions; and speaking. Students learn the Hebrew root pattern system and the seven basic verb conjugations in both the past and present tenses, as well as simple future. At the end of the year, students can conduct short conversations in Hebrew, read materials designed to their level, and write short essays. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

25300-25400-25500. Intermediate Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=HEBR 20501-20502-20503, JWSG 35300-35400-35500, LGLN 20400-20500-20600/30400-30500-30600) *PQ: HEBR 10503 or equivalent.* The course is devised for students who have previously taken either modern or biblical Hebrew courses. The main objective is to provide students with the skills necessary to approach modern Hebrew prose, both fiction and nonfiction. In order to achieve this task, students are provided with a systematic examination of the complete verb structure. Many syntactic structures are introduced, including simple clauses, and coordinate and compound sentences. At this level, students not only write and speak extensively, but are also required to analyze grammatically and contextually all of the material assigned. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

25600-25700-25800. Advanced Modern Hebrew I, II, III. (=HEBR 30501-30502-30503, JWSG 35600-35700-35800, LGLN 23000-23100-23200/3300-33100-33200) *PQ: HEBR 20503 or equivalent.* This course assumes that students have full mastery of the grammatical and lexical content at the intermediate level. However, there is a shift from a reliance on the cognitive approach to an emphasis on the expansion of various grammatical and vocabulary-related subjects. Students are introduced to sophisticated and more complex syntactic constructions, and instructed how

to transform simple sentences into more complicated ones. The exercises address the creative effort on the part of the student, and the reading segments are longer and more challenging in both style and content. The language of the texts reflects the literary written medium rather than the more informal spoken style, which often dominates the introductory and intermediate texts. *A. Finkelstein. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29700. Reading and Research Course. *PQ: Consent of instructor and committee chairman. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29900. B.A. Paper Preparation Course. *PQ: Consent of instructor and committee chairman. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Required of honors candidates. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*