

JS Courses Fall 2024

ENG 356 Readings in Jewish Literature, S. Rachman (3 credits)

M, W 10:20 PM-11:40 PM This course sets out to explore English-language-based Jewish-American writing in global literary-historical contexts. The last decades have seen a virtual explosion of important and interesting works by writers of Jewish backgrounds writing in American and global literary traditions. This writing ranges from sophisticated work from major established literary figures like Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick to newer writers like Nicole Krauss, Dara Horn, and Nathan Englander. It reflects both a flowering of literary creativity and a cultural moment in which the lineaments of Jewish-American culture and tradition are being contested, re-imagined, and redrawn in global and historical terms. During the term we will read six recent works using a variety of shorter texts (stories and essays) as points of reference in the history of Jewish-American culture as it has emerged in the U.S. and in global literary context. We will also have recourse to several landmark films addressing Jewish-American experience and themes.

HEB 101: Elementary Hebrew I, Y. Kedem

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9:10-10:00am (Section 001) &

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 12:40-1:30am (Section 002)

Introduction to spoken and written Hebrew for conversation, reading, and research. Basic grammatical analysis of modern Hebrew.

HEB 201: Second-year Hebrew I, Y. Kedem

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 10:20-11:20am (Section 001)

Intermediate level spoken and written Hebrew for conversation, reading, and research. Advanced grammatical analysis of modern Hebrew.

HST 205: The Ancient Mediterranean and the Medieval World, N. Kaye

Mondays and Wednesdays 10:20-12:10

Major political, cultural, social and economic developments and themes from the ancient civilizations to the late Middle Ages. Mesopotamia and Egypt. Greece and Rome. Charlemagne and the Franks. Normans and Crusaders. Popes and feudal monarchs. Bubonic plagues. The early Renaissance.

HST 317: American Jewish History, K. Fermaglich

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:40-4:00pm (Section 001)

This course will trace the development of the American Jewish community from 1654, when 23 Jewish refugees fled Brazil and landed by mistake in the city that would become New York, to the present, when American Jews have become such a successful and well-integrated ethnic and religious community that bagels, schmucks and Seth Rogen have become familiar parts of popular American culture. Composed of many different groups, including Ashkenazic and Sephardic, Reform, Orthodox and Conservative, Reconstructionist, feminist, atheist, and secular, as well as many different racial and gender identities, including Black, Latino, Asian, gay, lesbian, and transgender, the American Jewish community is not easily typed, and we will devote some of the class to examining battles over what it means to be an American Jew. Focusing on successive waves of immigration, we will also explore the changing ways in

which Jews have been included as integral members of the American nation, as well as the ways that they have been excluded as outsiders.

HST 411: European Jewish History, A. Bouroutis

Section 1: Mon Wed: 1:00-2:20pm

The main focus of your historical exposure will be the diverse and dynamic Jewish communities in Europe. By examining the rich cultural, religious, economic and social history of the various communities you will be introduced in the great transformations of the European continent. What do we know about the Sephardi Jews of the Iberian Peninsula and why they had been exiled from their motherland? Where did they end? How Ashkenazi Jews shaped their identities in the various lands and what do we know about the Greek Romaniote Jews? Since Greece was a quite homogenous society with the vast majority of the population being Orthodox Christians, it's a challenge for you to detect how a different religious group, the Jews, found its way to daily life. Hence, you will research the various ways that Jewish communities shaped both their religious affiliation and their identity through historical time.

HST 481: Spartan Mystique Sec. 001: Seminar in Ancient History, N. Kaye (3 credits)

When did the Judeans become the Jews? What were the Maccabees really fighting for? Was the war with Rome, which resulted in the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, an inevitable consequence of the clash between Judaism and Hellenism? Who was the cruel and chameleon Herod the Great? What was everyday life like in the Galilee of Jesus of Nazareth? These are some of the questions explored in our seminar, which tracks the development of Judaism under the Hellenistic regimes of the Ptolemies, Seleucids, and Hasmoneans, including the millennialism of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Qumran) and the sometimes violent sectarianism of Roman Judaea.

IAH 210: Middle East and the World, V. Weiss

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:20-12:10 (Section 001)

What makes the complexities of Israeli culture unique and universal? How do the tensions between the personal and the political manifest in Jerusalem? In what ways are the connections between place and identities particularly significant in the context of Israel and Jerusalem? The course explores Israel's unique sociopolitical and cultural tapestry. Focusing on modern Israel and Jerusalem, the course introduces some of the ideas and ideologies at the heart of modern Israel, highlighting various aspects of Israeli culture as well as the complexities of Israeli society.

IAH 241G: Film and Culture, V. Weiss

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:40-2:30

Focusing on modern Israel and Jerusalem, the course introduces some of the ideas and ideologies at the heart of modern Israel, highlighting various aspects of Israeli culture as well as the complexities of Israeli society.

ISS 325: War and Revolution, A. Bouroutis

How War and Revolution changed human societies across the globe? What was the impact for social changes and how War and Revolution interacted in the making of modern nation states? The course stretches from the American and the French Revolution to the World Wars, the Cold War and the recent conflicts. How the Orange Revolution of 2004 in Ukraine was succeeded by the Russian invasion and

war? How conflicts affect people and nations creating migration and refugee waves? What kinds of expectations arise during revolutions and how do they really end?

MC 335: Israeli Politics, Cultures, and Society, A. Tal

Tue Thu 9:10 AM-12:00 PM

Analysis of Israeli politics and society. Relationship between society and: social and ethnic cleavages, culture and politics, political institutions and parties, and democracy and the Jewish nature of the state. Israel's foreign policy and its influence of foreign policy on shifting national-ism and political contestations.

MC 450: International Environmental Policy A. Tal (3 credits)

Tue Thu 12:40 PM-3:30 PM

The environment in the Middle East reflects the impacts of millennia of continued human activities, with degraded soils, biodiversity loss and contaminated water resources. In a trial-and-error process since its inception, Israel has pursued an ambitious program of ecological restoration through afforestation, aggressive water management and environmental conservation. Yet, the country's population has grown by over 800% creating health hazards and damage to natural resources. This course evaluates the effectiveness of different environmental policies in Israel and involving its neighbor from a variety of perspectives. It also assesses potential regional ecological cooperation as part of a Middle Eastern peace process.

MC 387: Jews and Antisemitism, A. Simon

Mondays and Wednesdays 10:20-11:40am

This class serves as a historical evaluation of antisemitism and an analysis of antisemitism. Throughout the semester, we will explore definitions, forms, and examples of antisemitism, as well as discuss Jewish responses to it. Focusing on a few case studies from early Christianity to today, we will analyze the old forms of antisemitism that focus on images of Jews as parasitic outsiders, and we will examine how that antisemitism has changed, as well as avenues of continuity. Overall, we will seek to understand why antisemitism is, indeed, "the longest hatred" and how we can address this problem moving forward. To this end, students will read both secondary and primary sources. We will contribute to a blog on current antisemitic events started by students in MC 387 several years ago, "Blogging Antisemitism." Students will also research in the extensive Radicalism collection at MSU's library.

MC 492: Senior Seminar in International Relations: Peacebuilding and Peacemaking, Y. Aronoff (5 credits)

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:40-2:30

This seminar will concentrate on peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts to resolve long-standing conflicts. Various factors, including grassroots peacebuilding organizations and movements, leaders, peace negotiations and frameworks, and mediation and facilitation by regional and international actors will be examined. In addition, public opinion, and the influence of domestic politics on different actors will be examined. The primary case study will be past efforts to negotiate Israeli-Palestinian peace, grassroots peacebuilding efforts, and prospects for future efforts.

This course has three main objectives:

- 1) To hone your research, analytical, and writing skills by conducting a substantial research project of your own.
- 2) To explore the varied factors that can contribute to making progress in efforts to resolve long-standing conflicts through peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts.
- 3) To improve your critical thinking, reading, and speaking abilities. Particular attention will be given to developing argumentation skills, both orally and in writing, through written assignments, oral presentations, and in class discussions and simulations.

MC 498: “Senior Seminar in Social Relations: The Holocaust in American Memory,” Dr. Amy Simon (5 credits)

Mondays and Wednesdays 12:40-2:30 pm, 334B Case Hall

American social relations and policy. Analysis of the Holocaust and comparative genocides. During the course of this class, we will discuss questions such as: How does the Holocaust live on in American remembrance? Why should the United States be so invested in the memory of a European genocide? What kinds of stories do Americans tell about the Holocaust?

REL 150: Exploring Biblical Literature, C. Frilingos (3 credits)

Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-2:20pm (Section 001)

A critical survey of biblical texts, including the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and writings found in the Apocrypha/Deuterocanon, that combines historical and literary analysis with attention to the ancient religious context of this literature.

REL 411: Modern Jewish Thought, L. Yares (3 credits)

MW 2:40 PM-4:00 PM

The modern world in which we live grants us freedoms and opportunities that would have been unimaginable to those living in previous generations. But for representatives of religious traditions like Judaism, modernity has also been a source of significant challenges – even crises – that would likewise have been unimaginable in pre-modern times. This course will explore the myriad forms of Jewish philosophy, mysticism, and political thought that have emerged out of the struggles between reason and faith, between autonomy and religious authority, and between secular and religious values, that mark the modern religious experience. We will ask: What paths have been opened up by Jewish philosophers or mystics living in the modern world that lead to the knowledge and experience of divinity which they seek? What aspects and events of the modern world have most challenged and transformed the faith and the identity of modern Jewish thinkers? Is it possible to find meaning in the ideas and practices of Judaism if one no longer accepts the laws of the Bible and Talmud as divinely authoritative? As we explore such questions over the course of the semester, we will discover how Jewish thinkers in modernity have redefined the meaning of Judaism.

UGS 201: Historical and Contemporary Antisemitism, M. Shipley (1 credit)

online asynchronous, featuring short video lectures by Professor Yael Aronoff, Professor Kirsten Fermaglich, Professor Chris Frilingos, Professor Mary Juzwick, Professor Amy Simon, and Professor Laura Yares

This seminar will afford students from across the university the opportunity to learn about the historical roots and contexts of contemporary antisemitism, to define antisemitism, and to identify key tropes in the history of antisemitism. Antisemitism is at historic levels in the United States, and some students have also experienced it on our campus. This course will help students recognize antisemitism, and understand its historical roots.