

# Jewish Studies

AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL MAJOR AND MINOR

Director: *Malino (History)*

Advisory Board: *Geller (Religion), Malino (History), Rosenwald (English)*

The major in Jewish Studies is designed to acquaint students with the many facets of Jewish civilization through an interdisciplinary study of Jewish religion, history, philosophy, art, literature, social and political institutions, and cultural patterns.

## Goals for the Major

Developing an understanding of the breadth and diversity of Jewish civilization through interdisciplinary learning in the arts, humanities, and social sciences

Learning to contextualize Jewish civilization within its broader milieu

Understanding the foundation texts and central ideas and institutions of Judaism

Building specialized knowledge in one area: e.g., among others, Biblical studies; ancient, medieval, early modern or modern Jewish history; European or Eastern Jewry; Hebrew language and literature, Israel studies

Establishing proficiency (equivalent to two years of undergraduate instruction) in Hebrew, either Biblical or modern, or if relevant Yiddish, Arabic or Spanish.

Interpreting primary texts critically, developing writing skills, and learning to identify essential links among disciplines and cultures

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## HEBR 101-102 Elementary Hebrew

*Geller (Religion)*

Introduction to Hebrew with emphasis on its contemporary spoken and written form. Practice in the skills of listening and speaking as well as reading and writing, together with systematic study of Hebrew grammar. Students will master a basic vocabulary of approximately 1,000 words, and become comfortable in the use of the present, past and future tenses, as well as basic verb patterns. *Each semester earns one unit of credit; however, both semesters must be completed satisfactorily to receive credit for either course.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring

Unit: 1.0

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## HEBR 201-202 Intermediate Hebrew

*Staff*

Building on the foundations of 101-102, the third semester will continue to develop skills in modern Hebrew. Students will broaden their knowledge of verb patterns, compound sentence structures and mixed tenses. Special emphasis will be placed on composition and oral reports. The fourth semester will focus on literature through reading and discussion of selected short pieces of prose and poetry. Some examples of classical, rabbinic, and liturgical Hebrew will also be analyzed. Students will be required to write short compositions inspired by their readings. *Each semester earns one unit of credit; however, both semesters must be completed satisfactorily to receive credit for either course.*

Prerequisite: 101-102

Distribution: One unit of Language and Literature for 202

Semester: Fall, Spring

Unit: 1.0

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## JWST 210 Jewish Fiction Around the Globe: Homeland and the Diaspora (in English)

*Staff*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2009-10.** An exploration of contemporary Jewish fiction from diverse Jewish communities around the world including Israel, the U.S., Latin America, Germany, Eastern Europe, and South Africa. An examination of ideas of Homeland and the Diaspora, immigration and exile. Focus on the challenges of representing post-Holocaust Jewish identity in a global context. The authors to be read include Philip Roth, Shai Agnon, Aharon Appelfeld, Eva Hoffman, Ronit Matalon. The course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of global Jewish fiction today and its foundation in Hebraic literary tradition. All texts are in English translation.

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken this course as HEBR [210].

Distribution: Language and Literature or Religion, Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

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## JWST 229 Eastern European Jewish Civilization: Yiddishkeit and Yiddishland

*Staff*

This course introduces students to one of the most important Jewish centers in the Diaspora from 1772 to the present by examining important Jewish cultural, religious, and national movements. Making generous use of poetry and fiction as well as memoir, biography and newly available archival materials, the course explores the politics of imperial Russia, the impact of the Jewish Enlightenment in the Pale of the Settlement and the role of Hasidism, Zionism and Socialism in shaping the world of Eastern European Jews. It also confronts the Shoah and the fate of the Eastern European Jewry trapped between a murderous fascism and a totalitarian communist system. The course ends with a consideration of postwar Jewish life, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and immigration to Israel and the Diaspora.

Prerequisite: None.

As of 8/10/09

### **JWST 230 Contemporary Israeli Culture through Literature, Music, and Film (in English)**

*Staff*

**NOT OFFERED IN 2009-10.** This course will use the lens of cultural studies through selected examples from film, music and literature by various authors to discuss an array of issues defining contemporary Israeli culture. It will examine how Israeli popular culture, secular and religious identity, the legacy of state-building and the Holocaust as well as the encounter with the Other (new immigrants, non-Israelis and non-Jews) are reflected in the text and on the screen. We will look at the changing images and self-representations of Israelis in diverse social and cultural contexts. The course will focus on primary and secondary readings, discussion, music, and films and music videos (with English subtitles).

Prerequisites: None  
Distribution: Language and Literature  
Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

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### **HEBR 250 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Two years of Hebrew or permission of the instructor.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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### **HEBR 350 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Three years of Hebrew or permission of the instructor.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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### **JWST 250 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open to first-year students and sophomores.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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### **JWST 250H Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open to first-year students and sophomores.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

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### **JWST 350 Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to juniors and seniors.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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### **JWST 350H Research or Individual Study**

Prerequisite: Open by permission to juniors and seniors.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

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### **JWST 360 Senior Thesis Research**

Prerequisite: By permission of director. See Academic Distinctions.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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### **JWST 370 Senior Thesis**

Prerequisite: 360 and permission of department.  
Distribution: None  
Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

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## **Related Courses**

*For Credit Toward the Major*

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**ANTH 242\*** "Civilization" and "Barbarism" during the Bronze Age, 3500–2000 B.C.E.

**ANTH 247\*** Societies and Cultures of Eurasia

**ARAB 101-102** Elementary Arabic (see Middle Eastern Studies)

**ARAB 201-202** Intermediate Arabic (see Middle Eastern Studies)

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**ARTH 267\*** Cross-Cultural Encounters in the Medieval Mediterranean

**FREN 232\*** Occupation and Resistance:  
The French Memory and Experience of  
World War II (in English)

**HIST 201\*** The Rise of the West?: Europe 1789–2003

**HIST 218** From Ghettos to Nation-States:  
Jews in the Modern World

**HIST 219** The Jews of Spain and the Lands of Islam

**HIST 224** Zionism and Irish Nationalism:  
A Comparative Perspective

**HIST 242** Postwar Europe and the Three Postwar Germanies

**HIST 243** Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Europe

**HIST 326** Seminar. American Jewish History

**HIST 328** Seminar. Anti-Semitism in Historical Perspective

**HIST 343** Seminar. History of Israel

**HIST 367** Seminar. Jewish Identities in the Modern World

**REL 104** Study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

**REL 105** Study of the New Testament

**REL 240** Romans, Jews, and Christians in the Roman Empire

**REL 242** Introduction to Rabbinic Literature

**REL 243** Women in the Biblical World

**REL 244** Jerusalem: The Holy City

**REL 245** The Holocaust and the Nazi State

**REL 246** Jewish Civilization

**REL 248** The Dead Sea Scrolls

**REL 260** Islamic/ate Civilizations

**REL 342** Seminar. Archeology of the Biblical World

**SPAN 252\*** Christians, Jews, and Moslems:  
The Spirit of Spain in Its Literature

**SPAN 267\*** The Writer and Human Rights in Latin America

**SPAN 279** Jewish Women Writers of Latin America

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requires permission of the instructor if the course is to be counted for Jewish Studies

## Requirements for the Major

For the eight-unit major in Jewish Studies, students must take courses pertaining both to the ancient and modern worlds and show proficiency in Hebrew (equivalent to at least two semesters at the second-year level). In certain cases, where students whose area of concentration necessitates another language (such as Arabic, French, Spanish, Yiddish, or Ladino), that language may be substituted for Hebrew in consultation with the student's major advisor. In addition, students are expected to concentrate in some area or aspect of Jewish Studies (such as religion, history, or Hebrew language and literature) by taking four courses above the 100 level, including at least two at the 300 level.

Advanced study of Hebrew may be pursued as a 350 course, and this may be used to fulfill the Language and Literature distribution requirement.

Majors devise their own programs in consultation with the director of the Jewish Studies Program and an appropriate faculty member from the student's area of concentration. Courses with an asterisk (\*) also require the permission of the instructor if the course is to be counted for Jewish Studies.

In addition to Wellesley courses, students are encouraged to take courses at Brandeis University in the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies which may be applicable to the Jewish Studies major. These courses must be approved, in advance, by the corresponding department at Wellesley. See the director of Jewish Studies for further details.

## Requirements for the Minor

A minor in Jewish Studies consists of five units of which at least one must be at the 300 level and no more than one can be at the 100 level. Units must be taken in at least two departments. In consultation with the director of the program in Jewish Studies, students devise their own programs. Also in consultation with the director, students can arrange to take courses for inclusion in the Jewish Studies minor in Brandeis University's Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies.

## **Honors**

The only route to honors in the major is writing a thesis and passing an oral examination. To be admitted to the thesis program, a student must have a grade point average of at least 3.5 in all work in the major field above the 100 level; the program may petition on her behalf if her GPA in the major is between 3.0 and 3.5. See Academic Distinctions.