

# DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH STUDIES

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## Programs

### Undergraduate

#### Major

- Jewish Studies Major (<https://catalog.tulane.edu/liberal-arts/jewish-studies/jewish-studies-major/>)

#### Minor

- Jewish Studies Minor (<https://catalog.tulane.edu/liberal-arts/jewish-studies/jewish-studies-minor/>)

## Courses

### Jewish Studies (JWST)

#### JWST 1010 Introduction to Jewish Civilization: Foundations (3)

Judaism is a 3,500-year-old tradition that has developed over time as Jewish communities all over the world creatively interacted with the different cultural and historical milieus in which they lived. This course explores the origins of this first of the great Abrahamic faiths. Where does Judaism come from? What is the relationship between Judaism and the Hebrew Bible (also called the Tanakh or Old Testament)? Who holds power in Judaism, and where does this authority originate? How does Judaism understand gender and sexuality, both now and in ancient times? What are the essential texts and teachings of Israelite religion and later Judaism? We will take up these and other questions through study of diverse types of religious literature and historical evidence. No previous knowledge of Judaism or religious studies is required.

#### JWST 1020 Intro to Jewish Civ:Modern Era (3)

This course will introduce the students to the variety of religious expression and understanding in the Jewish tradition in the early modern and modern eras. The focus of the course will begin with biblical texts and then use writings from medieval, early modern, and the modern period to explore how the definitions of Jewishness and conceptions of Jewish belonging change over time. We will also study the social, literary, historical and cultural influences that helped shape the varieties of Jewish traditions across 1,000 years.

#### JWST 1110 Introduction To Judaism (3)

This course provides an overview of Jews and Judaism from religious, historical, and contemporary perspectives, including the study of Jewish practices, rituals, beliefs, and the holiday structure.

#### JWST 1250 Building Jewish Identity (3)

The starting point for our investigation of a distinctively secular Jewish conception of the world will be the fact that roughly on behalf of the American Jewish population possesses a secular non-religious orientation (American Jewish Identity Survey, 2001). How did this non-religious orientation arise amongst what many people consider to be a religious community? We will explore how certain non-religious features, such as shared culture, language, custom, dress, and education played an integral part in the definition of Jews and Judaism from their inception, and the role played by these features in the constitution of variant secular forms of Judaism and secular Jewish orientations in the modern period.

#### JWST 1290 Semester Abroad (1-20)

Semester Abroad. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

#### JWST 1890 Service Learning (0-1)

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

#### JWST 1895 Service Learning (0-1)

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 1940 Transfer Coursework (0-20)**

Transfer Coursework at the 1000 level. Department approval may be required.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 2100 Intro To Hebrew Bible (3)**

In this course we will attempt to understand the Hebrew Bible better by examining samples of each of the major genres represented while at the same time placing each within its historical context. We will also focus upon questions of interpretation. By taking a general survey of the ways in which the Hebrew Bible has been read and interpreted in the past we will begin to understand how these ancient texts continue to live and speak to so many.

**JWST 2390 Semester Abroad (1-20)**

Semester Abroad. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 2700 Jews and American Pop Culture (3)**

Examines contributions Jews have made to American popular culture of the past two-and-a-half centuries. Analyzes the roles American media have played in relation to Jewish and American social, cultural, and political concerns. Unearths and historically contextualizes Jewish sensibilities, aspirations, anxieties, and negotiations in American graphic arts, comedy, music, film, theater, and other popular forms.

**JWST 2710 Race, Class, and Jews (3)**

This course explores the complex interplay between social class, race, and Jewish identity in the contemporary American context. By examining historical, sociological, and cultural perspectives, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of how social class and race intersect with the experiences of American Jews and shape their identities, interactions, and communities.

**JWST 2810 Special Topics (1-3)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 2811 Special Topics (1-3)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies.

**JWST 2812 Special Topics (1-3)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies.

**JWST 2890 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 2940 Transfer Coursework (0-20)**

Transfer Coursework at the 2000 level. Department approval may be required.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3100 Select Topics (1-3)**

This course will cover special offerings in Jewish history, religious thought and literature. It will be taught by various permanent and visiting Jewish Studies instructors. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3101 Special Topics (3)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3102 Select Topics (3)**

Select topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3103 Select Topics (3)**

Select topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3104 Select Topics (3)**

Select Topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3120 Jewish Leadership (3)**

Considering leadership from a Jewish perspective means looking at how Jewish values guide our behavior as leaders. In this course, we will examine how leadership intersects with American Jewish Life. Throughout the course, we will interrogate the idea of Jewish leadership by drawing on Jewish and non-Jewish texts. We will also meet (virtually) with various Jewish leaders who run organizations, lead communities, or work in philanthropy to understand how they approach their work through the lens of Jewish leadership. This course also has an optional service learning component.

**Corequisite(s):** JWST 3890.

**JWST 3130 Jewish Comics and Graphic Novels (3)**

Historically contextualizes and closely examines Jewish contributions to the comics form through theoretical lenses of ethnicity, gender, trauma, and postmodern subjectivity. Explores Jewish aesthetic, textual, and intertextual concerns through the form's evolution from turn-of-the-century newspaper strips to contemporary graphic novels.

**JWST 3140 Selected Readings Hebrew Bible (3)**

In this course we will read specific books from the Hebrew Bible (in translation). The books read will rotate within three topics: Genesis; The Five Scrolls: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther; The Prophets. The aim of this course is to provide the student with the opportunity to read portions of the Hebrew Bible in detail and how they have been read, interpreted, and explained throughout the centuries. The student will also learn to read the texts critically and begin to form his/her own understanding of the text.

**JWST 3150 Second Temple Judaisms (3)**

Starting with the return from Babylonia up until the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E., Judaism was transformed from a local ethnic religious cult to a broad-based, diverse, and often fragmented sectarian religion. Many outside cultures and civilizations, from the ancient Persians to the Imperial Romans, influenced the Jews and Judaism through language, culture, and political contacts. We will study these cultural contracts and conflicts that caused Jews in the Second Commonwealth to develop competing understandings of Judaism.

**JWST 3200 Modern Judaism (3)**

This course will explore Jewish life and thought in the modern world.

**JWST 3210 American Jewish History (3,4)**

The course examines the nature of religion in modern and contemporary times, using Judaism in America as an example. How did the American Jewish community come into being? What is American about it? What is Judaic, that is, carrying forward aspects of classical Judaism? What is the meaning of the ethnic, social, and cultural traits emergent in contemporary Jewish life? Answers to these questions provide a picture of the character of American Judaism and of the complexities of contemporary religious life.

**JWST 3220 Arab/Israeli Conflict (3,4)**

This seminar traces the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the rise of Zionism, through the various Arab-Israeli wars, and up to the recent peace negotiations. Emphasis is on presenting the perspectives of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and placing it in the context of the history of the Middle East as a whole.

**JWST 3240 The Historical Jesus (3)**

This course portrays Jesus in historical terms.

**JWST 3310 Jewish Latin Amer Expressions (3)**

An introduction to the cultural expressions of Jewish communities throughout Latin America.

**JWST 3330 Jewish Music (3)**

Survey of Jewish liturgical music from Biblical times to the present, and of Jewish popular, theatre, and folk music. Emphasis on European, Israeli, Sephardic, and American traditions.

**JWST 3340 Early Amer. Jewish Hist. (3)**

This class focuses on the period from the earliest Jewish settlers in mid-seventeenth century colonial America through the establishment of viable Jewish communities and institutions by the latter part of the nineteenth century. It covers the so-called Sephardic and Germanic periods of American-Jewish history, prior to the wave of Eastern European immigration. Among the themes explored are the tension between Jewish identity and the pressures of assimilation; the transformation of the synagogue; the emergence of Jewish social and cultural institutions; changing religious practices and the rise of Reform Judaism. Events and themes are placed within the broader context of American history.

**JWST 3440 Holocaust In Film & Lit (3,4)**

This course examines the Holocaust from various perspectives, disciplines, and media (including history, literature, and film) to investigate the conditions and limitations of representations of the Holocaust. May be counted toward a major in German only with departmental approval and provided all reading is done in German.

**JWST 3500 Goldn Age Spansh Jewry I (3,4)**

An examination of the cultural, political, and intellectual history of Spanish Jewry from the beginnings of Jewish settlement through the early reconquest. Special attention is given to the contributions of Hasdai ibn Shaprut and Samuel Ha-Nagid.

**JWST 3520 Goldn Age Span Jewry II (3)**

A study of the transition of Spanish Jewry from Moslem rule to Christian rule. The course includes an analysis of the several disputations of this period as well as the impact of the inquisition and expulsion. Special attention is given to the literature and philosophy of Maimonides, Crescas, and Solomon ibn Adret.

**JWST 3530 Jewish Middle Ages (3)**

The medieval period was perhaps the most prolific age for Jewish exploration and interpretation of Jewish religious texts and sources. We will examine a number of these philosophical, mystical, poetic, liturgic, and juridical in order to better appreciate the context and content of medieval concerns and solutions.

**JWST 3540 Jewish Renaissance to Age Reas (3)**

Cromwell's England, Florence, Vilna, Prague, and Spinoza's Amsterdam.

**JWST 3590 Greek Philo & Jewish Tht (3)**

Western culture has a double source, the Bible and Greek philosophy, or Jerusalem and Athens. Are the two traditions harmonious or do they stand in some essential tension with each other? While this was an especially vital challenge to thinkers of the Medieval period, it expresses a fundamental question about the relation between revelation and reason. This course will approach that question by examining the response of some important Jewish thinkers in the encounter with the teachings of Plato and Aristotle.

**JWST 3600 Women In Hebrew Bible (3)**

Women play a significant role in the Bible, one that is often at best misunderstood and at worst ignored. In this class we will examine the biblical stories and their historical context in order to understand the role of women in the biblical period as well as the role of the figures within the biblical text. We will also examine modern interpretations of these texts (including feminist readings and creative fiction based upon the biblical text) to see how modern scholars have understood these ancient texts in modern times.

**JWST 3740 Israel: Culture, Pol, and Hist (3,4)**

This course reviews various aspects of Israeli history, politics, society, and culture.

**JWST 3750 Jewish ID in Modern Literature (3,4)**

In this course we will examine novels, short stories, essays, and other literary works by European Jewish authors and study their literary, cultural and political context. We trace the development of literary forms that provide the basis for a modern Jewish self-consciousness and a sense of cultural identity. We compare the concepts of community and individualism, religious reform, and cultural notions of identity in the writings of authors from Eastern European and Western Europe. We also examine the differences of Jews in Europe in the period before the Holocaust.

**JWST 3890 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Corequisite(s):** JWST 3120.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3891 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 3931 Special Topics (3)**

Special Topic in Jewish Studies.

**JWST 4110 Rabbinic Judaism (3)**

This course will focus on the literature and culture of the Rabbinic period (c. 200-600 C.E.). We will concentrate on reading and analyzing primary texts (Midrash, Mishnah and Talmud) as well as studying the historical context and methodological issues. This course will discuss the various literatures' styles, methods and contents as well as their internal and external cultural influences.

**JWST 4120 Sexuality in Jewish Culture (3,4)**

Examines conceptions of sexuality in Judaism and Jewish literature, art, and culture from antiquity to the present, with greatest emphasis on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Explores historic, aesthetic, and religious questions of ritual purity, embodied power and vulnerability, reproductive values, antisemitism, race and ethnicity, and self-expression.

**JWST 4150 Women, Judaism, Jewish Cul (3)**

Women's roles in Judaism and Jewish life have been defined by the religious precepts and civil laws described in the Bible and interpreted by the rabbis in a patriarchal age. Nevertheless, throughout the ages, women have carved out areas for themselves within the Jewish religious, social, and political systems as well as fulfilled the roles prescribed to them. This course will study the women of Jewish history and how they have participated in, developed and shaped Jewish religious, social, and cultural life.

**JWST 4210 American Jewish Movements (3)**

This course will build upon the themes of American Jewish History, JWST 3210, and seek to understand how American Jews balanced their Jewish identity with their desire to be Americans.

**JWST 4250 Dead Sea Scrolls (3)**

It has been just over 50 years since a group of Bedouin shepherds found several clay jars containing ancient scrolls. The documents include copies of the Hebrew Bible, apocryphal works, and sectarian works written to provide order and meaning to the readers lives. But who wrote the scrolls and who were they writing for? This course will investigate these questions and others by focusing on the texts themselves and the archaeological evidence from the site of Khirbet Qumran. Secondary sources will also be consulted and read critically.

**JWST 4300 Conflict In Cult & Lit (3)**

This course will focus on the literary and cultural response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the beginning of the Zionist settlement to our time. We will ask questions such as how each culture, the Israeli and Palestinian, has represented the other? Has each depiction been a unified cultural portraiture or can we identify multifarious delineations? What constitutes national identity and what role have national, religious, racial and gender perspectives played in the construction of the Israeli and Palestinian identities? How has the various formation of the other contributed to the identity creation of each culture? And finally, can we point out significant historical changes in these representations? We will examination of both Palestinian and Israeli experiences as reflected in various texts including fiction, poetry, philosophical and historical treatises, editorials, caricatures, film and the like, all in English translation. Last but not least, we will try to understand both the stable and the changing parameters of national identity on the background of universal intellectual and political movements such as nationalism, multiculturalism, and globalization.

**JWST 4310 Jewish Youth and Cultural Chng (3)**

This course will analyze the modern Jewish experience by focusing on the seminal role of Jews in their teens and twenties, examining how this group has affected social change.

**JWST 4330 Jew Imm Exp, 1881-Present (3,4)**

This course will examine the transnational migration of Jews to six different continents - North America, South America, Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe - focusing on key components of the migration.

**JWST 4350 Rashi, Halevi, Maimonide (3)**

An exploration of the lives and major works of Judaism's most significant religious writers of the Jewish Middle Ages. Rashi, the prince of Biblical commentators; Judah Halevi, poet laureate of the Jewish people and author of The Kuzari; Moses Maimonides, the supreme Jewish thinker of all ages, and author of The Guide for the Perplexed.

**JWST 4420 Topics Jewish Lit/Histor (3)**

In this course we will study the work of one pathbreaking Jewish intellectual studying both his/her oeuvre and intellectual context. Of particular importance is the relationship of the intellectual's work as part of a dialogue with the works of Jewish and non-Jewish contemporaries. Among our subjects are Heinrich Graetz, Simon Dubnov, Israel Zinberg, Jacob Katz, and Salo Baron. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4500 The History of Zionism (3-4)**

This course aims to teach students about significant historical moments and cultural developments in Zionist history and culture. It will help students acquire knowledge of important approaches to the study of Jewish civilization and the presuppositions underlying them: various analytical techniques employed in the humanities and the social sciences for the study of Jewish civilization, the Jews, and their representation.

**JWST 4560 Internship (1-3)**

Internship. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4570 Internship (1,3)**

Internship. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4610 Bible As Political Theory (3)**

A study of the Bible from the perspective of political theory, which analyzes the similarities and differences between the political perspectives of classical (Greek and Roman) thinkers and those of the Bible.

**JWST 4670 Israeli Jewish & Arab Israeli (3)**

This course explores major themes in Israeli cinema and fiction in the context of the social and historical backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the painful emergence of a new Jewish-Israeli identity in the shadow of the Holocaust and unrelenting warfare. Examining in depth a number of Hebrew and Arabic films, short stories and novels, all in English translation, the course situates them in the evolution of Israeli cinema and fiction. prereq:

JWST 3220 Arab-Israeli Conflict

**JWST 4810 Special Topics In Jwst (3-4)**

This course will cover special offerings in Jewish history, religious thought, and literature. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4811 Special Topics Jewish Studies (3-4)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4812 Special Topics (3,4)**

Special topic in Jewish Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4881 Writing Practicum: JWST 4400 (1)**

Writing practicum attached to JWST 4400.

**JWST 4882 Writing Practicum: JWST 4330 (1)**

Writing practicum attached to JWST 4330. Corequisite(s): JWST 4330.

**Corequisite(s):** JWST 4330.

**JWST 4890 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4892 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4893 Service Learning (0-1)**

Students complete a service activity in the community in conjunction with the content of a three-credit co-requisite course. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4910 Independent Study (1-4)**

Independent Study. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4920 Independent Studies (1-3)**

Independent Studies. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 4990 Honors Thesis (3)**

Honors Thesis.

**JWST 5000 Honors Thesis (4)**

Honors Thesis.

**JWST 5190 Semester Abroad (1-20)**

Semester Abroad. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 5370 Washington Semester (1-20)**

Washington Semester. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 5380 Junior Year Abroad (1-20)**

Junior Year Abroad. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 5390 Junior Year Abroad (1-20)**

Junior Year Abroad. Course may be repeated up to unlimited credit hours.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 5940 Transfer Coursework (0-20)**

Transfer coursework at the 5000 level. Departmental approval required.

**Maximum Hours:** 99

**JWST 6420 Readings In Holocaust (3)**

Examines the origins and development of the Nazi Final Solution; the experience of the victims, perpetrators, rescuers, and bystanders; and the relationship between history and memory.

**JWST 6900 Grad Independent Study (1-3)**

Graduate Independent Study.