

REL 152: Introduction to Judaism

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Office hours Monday-Wednesday 2:00-3:30
and by appointment
ETC 212 x7324

This course is an introduction to the self-definition of Judaism. This course will analyze Judaism's understanding of itself by examining such central concepts as God, Torah and Israel. This central self-definition will then be tested by means of close readings of selected representative texts, and by investigating the range of Jewish history. In the final Unit we will study the rise of the State of Israel, the Holocaust, and American Jewish movements.

Course Format: Lecture-Conference

Course Time: MWF 1:10-2:00, Psych 102

Course Requirements: Close reading of texts; attendance at conferences; contribution to class discussion; and the following written assignments:

- 2-page papers due 9/3, 9/20, 9/29, 10/29, 11/12. The assignment in these papers will be to select a short passage from among the primary texts read during the respective assignment period; to write a brief explication of that text; and to focus that explication on Jewish self-understanding in the historical period of the text being explicated. These papers do not require footnotes or bibliographies, but should concentrate on developing an argument concerning the text's relation to Jewish self-understanding in its period.
- 5-7-page papers, due 10/15 and 12/8. Assignment sheets for these longer papers will be distributed in conference. A proper system of references, including footnotes and bibliography, are required. You are free to use any style you prefer (MLA, Chicago being the most used) so long as you use it consistently.
- Late papers will be accepted only with a note from the Dean of Students. No exceptions.

Course Texts: In the Bookstore and/or on Library Reserve:

= primary text of the day, to be read closely in conference: NOTE: these texts must be brought to class with you for close reading

A = P.S. Alexander (ed.) *Textual Sources for the Study of Judaism*

G = Nahum Glatzer (ed.) *The Judaic Tradition*

H = Barry Holtz (ed.) *Back to the Sources*

R = Reinharz, Mendes-Flohr (eds.) *The Jew in the Modern World* (2nd Ed.)

and any translation of the Hebrew Bible

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Additional online required readings are listed by URL in two forms, a general background page which includes numerous resources, and a specific page of primary text supplementary to the reading for that day.

NOTE: the electronic version of this syllabus gives you direct access to these URLs. It is posted at <http://academic.reed.edu/religion/courses/rel152/>

Mon. 8/30 What is Judaism? Who is a Jew?

UNIT 1: THE PEOPLE ISRAEL

Wed. 9/1 *The Ancient Near East*

Genesis Chapters 1-11

general URL: "The People Israel" =

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/jewishsbok.html#The%20People%20of%20Israel>

specific URL: the two creation accounts = <http://www-relg-studies.scu.edu/netcours/hb/dh/ccreat.htm>

[paper due] Fri. 9/3 *God and His Revealed Law from Sinai (The Prophet: Torah)*

The Revelation from Sinai, Exodus 19-20

H. 83-105

A. 63-68 (*Mekhilta*)

Mon. 9/6 **Labor Day: no class**

Wed. 9/8 *The People Israel and their Land (The King: Writings)*

1 Chronicles Chapter 17

1 *Chronicles* (all)

general URL: Chronicles 1 online =

<http://www.jsource.org/jsource/Bible/1Chroniclestoc.html>

Fri. 9/10 *Forms of Authority: King, Prophet, Priest (The Priest: Prophets)*

The Book of Amos (all)

specific URL: The Book of Amos with Commentary =

<http://www.bible.gen.nz/amos/frametext.htm>

Mon. 9/13 *Myth and Ritual: The Progress of Time*

Passover Haggadah, A. 75-78, and G 188-191 (compare)

general URLs: online Parnes Haggadah =

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~bparnes/HAGGADAH/seder.html>

Chabad Haggadah =

<http://www.passover.net/scripts/tgij/paper/passoverTemplate.asp?ArticleID=1735>

Wed. 9/15 *Sabbath: Redemption in Time*

A. 84-90

G. 411-419

general URL: an overview of Shabbat observance =

<http://www.us-israel.org/jsource/Judaism/shabbat.html#Nature>

UNIT 2: CLASSICAL JUDAISM

Fri. 9/17 *The Roots of Classical Judaism*

G 194-204 (Hillel)

G. 154-253

general URL: “The Emergence of Judaism” =

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/jewishsbk.html#The%20Emergence%20of%20Judaism>

[paper due] Mon. 9/20 *Rabbinic Judaism*

G 185-188 (The Order of Benedictions)

G 154-253

general URL: Mishnah Berakhot on the Shema

http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/RelS367/Shema_sources.html

Wed. 9/22 *The Genres of Rabbinic Literature*

Pirke Avot, in A. 95-98

H. 129-175

Fri. 9/24 *Mishna and Gemara*

A 59-61 (“Baraita of R. Ishmael”)

A 57-68

H. 129-158

general URL: overview of Oral Torah =

<http://ohr.edu/judaism/survey/survey5.htm>

specific URL: A page from the Babylonian Talmud” =

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/TalmudPage.html#Page>

* charts of the Rabbinic page (reviewed in class)

Mon. 9/27 *Aggadah and Midrash: Non-Legal Components of Rabbinic Literature*

A 81-82 (“Oven of Akhnai”)

A 78-83

H. 177-213

general URL: on Midrash =

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=586&letter=M&search=midrash>

[paper due] Wed. 9/29 *After the Talmud: Philosophy and Theology*

A 105-115

H. 261-305

Fri. 10/1 *Aspects of Uncommon Life: Messianism*

G 488-491 (Maimonides)

G 459-492

general URL: overview of the messianic idea in Judaism =

[http://www.beliefnet.com/frameset_offsite.asp?](http://www.beliefnet.com/frameset_offsite.asp?pageloc=http://www.jewfaq.org/moshiach.htm&query=&script=/story/99/story_9900_1.html)

[pageloc=http://www.jewfaq.org/moshiach.htm&query=&script=/story/99/story_9900_1.html](http://www.jewfaq.org/moshiach.htm&query=&script=/story/99/story_9900_1.html)

[Monday 10/6 is Yom Kippur: no class]

Wed. 10/6 *Aspects of Uncommon Life: Mysticism*

A 116-132

H. 305-361

Fri. 10/8 *Aspects of Common Life: Liturgy as Unifying Factor*

Weekday *Shema* and *Amida*, in A. 68-74

H. 403-431

general URL:

specific URL:

Mon. 10/11 *Halakha in Practice*

Shulkhan Arukh, in A. 90-93

general URL: sample page, commentaries, overview of *Shulkhan Arukh* =

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/TalmudMap/ShA.html>

UNIT 3: MODERN JUDAISM

Wed. 10/13 *Political and Economic Change*

Mendelssohn, in A, 143-146

R 3-53

general URL: overview of life and works of Moses Mendelssohn =

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mendelssohn/>

[longer paper due] Fri. 10/15 *Cultural and Ideological Change*

R 250-253, 258-259 (Maimon, Heine)

G. 441-459, 509-554

R. 54-105

[October 16-24 is Fall break]

Mon. 10/25 *Hasidism*

The Baal Shem Tov, in A. 132-134

H. 361-401

Wed. 10/27 *Hasidism*

Mendel of Kotsk, G 447-452

R 387-394

G. 441-459

general URL: ESSAYS ON HASIDISM by Immy Humes =

http://www.pbs.org/alifeapart/res_essays.html

[paper due] Fri. 10/29 *Dynamics of Emancipation*

G 532-535 (Loe Pinsker)

G 509-554

Mon. 11/1 *19th-Century Patterns of Religious Adjustment in Europe*

R 169-173 (Moses Sofer)

R 154-205 (Western Europe); 394-416 (Eastern Europe)

Wed. 11/3 *Political and Racial Anti-Semitism*

R 331-332 (Marr)

G 590-554

R 299-333

A 171-178

general URL: Antisemitism Research Resources =

<http://ddickerson.igc.org/antisemitism.html>

Fri. 11/5 *Political and Racial Anti-Semitism*

R 363-367 (*Protocols of the Elders of Zion*)

R 334-367

general URL: commentaries and versions of the Protocols, including Mein Kampf:

<http://ddickerson.igc.org/protocols.html>

Mon. 11/8 *Zionism and Communism in Eastern Europe*

R 425-428 (Manya Shohat)

R 417-446

Wed. 11/10 *Rethinking Jewish Faith*

G 567-573 (Buber)

G 554-580, 758-802

general URL: the Martin Buber Homepage =

<http://www.buber.de/en/>

[paper due] Fri. 11/14 *Like Coming Home: America*

R 471-2 (Kohler)

R 447-481

General URL: The American Jewish Experience through the Nineteenth Century =

<http://www.nhc.rtp.nc.us:8080/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/judaism.htm>

Mon. 11/15 *American Jewry in the 20th Century*

G 706-713 (Judge Louis Brandeis)

R 481-528

G. 706-758

general URL: materials on first Jewish Justice of USA Supreme Court =

http://www.hamline.edu/~rkagan/Publications_Louis%20Brandeis.html

Wed. 11/17 *The Rise of Zionism*

A 155-161 (Theodor Herzl)

A 155-164

R 528-585

general URL: Resources and Articles by Theodor Herzl =

http://www.wzo.org.il/en/resources/expand_author.asp?id=89

Fri. 11/19 *Zionist Thought*

G 687-692 (Chaim Weizmann)

G 659-706

general URL:

specific URL:

Mon. 11/22 *Creation of the State of Israel*

A 166-67 (Law of Return)

A 164-171

R 585-633

specific URL: versions of Law of Return =

<http://www.lectlaw.com/files/int16.htm>

Wed. 11/24 *Before the Holocaust*

R 656-658 (Hitler's speech)

R 634-660

general URL: Nizkor Project resources on Adolf Hitler =

<http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/h/hitler-adolf/>

[November 25-28 is Thanksgiving vacation]

Mon. 11/29 *Shoah*

G 631-641 (Gringaus)

R 660-697

G 608-659

general URL: Yad Vashem Holocaust Study Resources =

http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/about_holocaust/index_about_holocaust.html

Wed. 12/1 *Crisis and Renewal: Problems of Jewish Identity*

G 573-579; R 282-284 (Franz Rosenzweig)

R 250-304

general URL: life and works of Franz Rosenzweig =

<http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/rosenzw/rosenart.html#stardmp>

Fri. 12/3 *Modern American Jewish Movements: Reform,*

Pittsburgh Platform and Columbus Platform, in A. 136-140

R. 183-188

G. 587-592

A. 136-143

specific URL: the San Francisco Platform of 1976 =
<http://ccarnet.org/platforms/centenary.html>

1999 restatement of Reform principles =
<http://www.ccarnet.org/platforms/principles.html>

Mon. 12/6 *Modern American Jewish Movements: Conservative, Reconstructionist*
“The Faith of Catholic Israel” in A. 151-155 (Schechter)

R. 194-197, 499-502
G 594-608

Wed. 12/8 *Jewish Feminism; The Resurgence of Orthodoxy*
R 260-262, 287-288 (Varnhagen, Luxemburg, Pappenheim)
R 197-211, 394-400

general URL: Jewish Women Web Resources =
<http://library.brandeis.edu/judaica/jwomenwebsites.html>

specific URL: Varieties of Orthodox Judaism Image Map =
http://www.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/363_Transp/08_Orthodoxy.html

[Longer paper due] Fri. 12/10

FINAL DISCUSSION: *What is Judaism? Who is a Jew?*

We return to the question raised on the first day of class and pursued throughout the term. Come prepared to submit and defend in conference your definitions of “Judaism” and “Jew.” These will then be challenged against the results of previous conferences (dating back to 1988).

URL: Rabbi Immanuel Schochet’s online book, *Who is a Jew?* =
<http://www.whoisajew.com/>

Two of the most important contemporary developments in world Judaism are said to be the renewal of woman’s roles, and the resurgence of orthodoxy. How do these developments affect our understanding of what of Judaism and who is a Jew? How do they modify our understanding of the modern Jewish thinkers collected by Glatzer in this final set of readings? Your research assignment for this final paper will be to supplement readings above with texts address the issues of contemporary feminism and of contemporary orthodoxy. These may be found in the Judaica journals and/or on the sites listed on our Judaica WWW links page.

Online Resources

For routine reference of all kinds, the (century-old but still valuable) Jewish Encyclopedia is online at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/index.jsp>. Hard copies are also available in the library reference room and in the Religion/Classics

reference room.

The best reference work, the most complete and the most reliable, is the Encyclopedia Judaica, in the reference room.

An extensive but well-chosen set of links related to all manner of Jewish Studies:
<http://www.digital-librarian.com/judaism.html>

Torah in Hebrew and in English:
<http://www.mechon-mamre.org/>

For additional historical background, you may The Internet Jewish History Sourcebook at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/jewishbook.html>

A handy timeline of Jewish History:
<http://philo.ucdavis.edu/zope/home/bruce/RST23/chart.html>

For more advanced studies, you can consult:

Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People: <http://sites.huji.ac.il/archives/>

RAMBI: The Index of Articles on Jewish Studies:
http://libnet1.ac.il/~libnet/rmb/rmb01_14-2.htm

Documents of the Holocaust (Yad Vashem).
http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/about_holocaust/index_about_holocaust.html

Holocaust History Project.
Internet (Public Access): www.holocaust-history.org

Essential Texts of Zionism (The Zionist Library).
Internet (Public Access): <http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/6640/zion/essential.html>

Jewish Women's Archive: <http://www.jwa.org/main.htm>