

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**Religious
Studies 365.01**

Course Outline, Winter 1998

**Medieval
Judaism**

Class time: MWF 11:00-11:50

Instructor:

E. Segal

Office:

Social Sciences 1330

Office hours:

W 10:-10:50 or by request

Telephone:

220-5886

E-mail:

elsegal@acs.ucalgary.ca

Internet:

World-Wide Web:

Material related to this course, including class notes, will be posted at:
http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/RelS_365/365_Index.html

Textbooks:

- I. Twersky, *A Maimonides Reader*
- D. Matt, *Zohar - The Book of Enlightenment*

Course Description:

This course will explore the principal streams of Jewish religious thought and activity from the end of the Talmudic era until the European Emancipation. Emphasis will be placed upon the three dominant religious trends:

1. Philosophical rationalism: The encounter between traditional religion and Greek philosophical thought, with special reference to the writings of Moses Maimonides
2. Rabbinic Activity: including the areas of law, exegesis and religious institutions.
3. Kabbalah: The development of Jewish mystical thought, as exemplified in the *Zohar*

Pedagogic Objectives:

In addition to familiarizing the student with the important facts, documents and religious movements of Medieval Judaism, this course will also provide an introduction to the scholarly methodologies that are necessary for the historical study of religion.

Attention will be paid to identifying and characterizing the literary sources that are the basis for our knowledge of medieval religious practices, institutions and ideas. The critical reading of representative primary texts (in translation) will play a central role in the class. Students will learn how to approach these texts from a variety of methodological perspectives, in order to utilize them for a reconstruction of the multifaceted religious lives of medieval Jews.

Course Requirements:

Students will be expected to submit two short reports and a major research paper, one for each of the three areas covered in the course. See instructions below.

1. *Report #1*: Due March 9 1998 - worth 25% of final grade.
2. *Report #2*: Due April 3 1998 - worth 25% of final grade.
3. Major Research Paper: Due April 15 1998 - worth 40% of final grade.
4. Class participation: Worth 10% of final grade.

Some Recommended Books:

- J. Guttman, *Philosophies of Judaism*
- I. Husick, *History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*
- B. Holtz, *Back to the Sources*
- G. Scholem, *Kabbalah*
- G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*
- C. Sirat, *History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages*

A more detailed bibliography and "suggested topics" list will be distributed in class

Paper and Reports:

The paper requirement will consist of the equivalent of approximately ten (double-spaced) typewritten pages on a topic related to one of the three areas covered in the course (see "Course Description" above).

The reports will consist of five pages (possibly a book review or summary of an article) on the two areas not dealt with in the major paper.

Please consult with the instructors with regard to selection of topics.

Grading:

Letter grades will be assigned on the basis of the following scheme:



		A	100 - 90	A-	89 - 85
B+	84 - 80	B	79 - 75	B-	74 - 70
C+	69 - 65	C	64 - 60	C-	59 - 55
D+	54 - 50	D	49 - 45	B-	44 or less

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F on the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that "plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves references to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgment, but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.