

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**Religious Studies 367-01**

Course Outline, Fall 1998

**The Judaism of the  
Talmud and Midrash**

MWF 9:00 - 9:50 p.m.

**Instructor:**

Eliezer Segal

**Teaching Assistant**

[Alison Koddo](#)

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SS 1302

**Office Hours:**

M 10:00 - 11:00 p.m.

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**Textbooks:**

E. E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs*.

H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*

**Course Description:**

The religious institutions produced by the Jewish Rabbis from the first to the seventh centuries C.E. played a decisive role in determining the shape of Judaism for subsequent generations. This course will explore the principal areas of rabbinic activity, including:

1) Aggadah: The distinctive religious ideas and values formulated during that period including

concepts of God, the Torah, Jewish Peoplehood and Messianism, etc.

2) Halakhah: The main institutions of Jewish law as derived from the Written and Oral Torahs; the major works of halakhic literature; the religious dimensions of the Halakhah; the model of the scholar as judge and communal leader.

### Core Competencies:

While learning about Rabbinic Judaism, students will be trained in research skills, which include: learning how to find and collect data (primarily through library research) and how to draw historical conclusions from the evidence, as well as how to evaluate the plausibility of claims and theories proposed by scholars.

Central to this joint objective is the recognition that all reconstructions of ancient religion are based on original documents, or other evidence, that have survived from antiquity. In the case of Rabbinic traditions they have undergone complex processes of redaction, reinterpretation and transmission in oral and, later, in manuscript form.

Students will also be developing the ability to present the results of their research in a logical and coherent manner.

### Weekly Schedule:

Monday and Wednesday classes will normally be devoted to lectures and discussions based on the textbook (E. E. Urbach's, *The Sages*).

In the Friday classes we will read representative passages from different genres of Rabbinic literature. Descriptions of these works are found in Strack-Stemberger's *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*.

### Course Requirements:

	Item	Date Due	% Weight
1.	Research essay stage #1: The preliminary proposal will consist of a descriptive title, abstract, outline and annotated bibliography of the scholarly books, chapters and articles that have been consulted at this stage (Approximately 5 pages).	October 2	15%
2.	Research essay stage #2: The first submitted draft (Recommended length: 4000 words/16 p pages)	November 9	25%
3.	Mid-term test, based on assigned readings	November 23	25%
5.	Research essay stage #3: Final,	December	25%

	polished draft (Recommended length: 4000 words/16 p pages).	9	
6.	Class preparation and participation	continual	10 %

There will not be a Registrar's office scheduled final examination in this course.

Suggestions for paper topics, bibliographies and library orientation will be provided at a later date.

**Some recommended books:**

Alon, G. (1980). The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age. Jerusalem, The Magnes Press.

Aschkenasy, Y. and N. Stichting Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum. Assen, Netherlands, Philadelphia, Van Gorcum ; Fortress Press.

Baron, S. W. (1962). A Social and Religious History of the Jews, Vol, 2. New York and London, Columbia University Press.

Cohen, S. J. D. (1987). From the Maccabees to the Mishnah. Philadelphia, Westminster.

Elon, M. (1975). The Principles of Jewish Law. Jerusalem, Encyclopaedia Judaica.

Ginzberg, L. (1909-39). The Legends of the Jews. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America.

Hartmann, G. and S. Budick, Eds. (1986). Midrash and Literature. New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

Heinemann, J., J. J. Petuchowski, et al. (1975). Literature of the Synagogue. New York, Behrman House.

Kadushin, M. (1952). The Rabbinic Mind. New York, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Schiffman, L. H. (1991). From text to tradition : a history of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism. Hoboken, N.J., Ktav.

Steinsaltz, A. (1976). The Essential Talmud. New York, BasicBooks.

**Grading System:**

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. Following the final examination, a letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme (standardized within the Department of Religious Studies).

		A
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90—100

A-

85—89

B

80—84

B

75—79

B-

70—74

C+	65—69	C	60—64	C-	55—59
D+	50—54	D	45—49	F	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.*



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