JEWISH STUDIES  SPRING 2011  COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**Note: Listed at the end of the course titles are letters and symbols which represent Arts and Sciences breadth and distribution requirements. These are subject to change. Please verify this information with the instructor. Definitions of these letters and symbols are provided on the last page.

JWST 1102  Elementary Modern Hebrew II (also NES 1102)  4 credits
MTWR (sem 101)  9:05-9:55  Shoer, S.  2736
MTWR (sem 102)  10:10-11:00  2740
Letter grades only. Limited to 18 students per section. Prerequisite: JWST 1101 with grade of C- or better or permission of instructor. Intended for beginners. Provides a thorough grounding in reading, writing, grammar, oral comprehension, and speaking. Students who complete the course are able to function in basic situations in a Hebrew-speaking environment.

JWST 2100  Intermediate Modern Hebrew II: Special Topics in Hebrew (also NES 2100) @  4 credits
MTWR  9:05-9:55  Scharf, N.  2715
Provides language proficiency and satisfies Option 1. Prerequisite: JWST 1103 with grade equivalent to C- or above or permission of instructor. Letter grade recommended. Introduces Hebrew literature and Israeli culture through the use of texts and audiovisual materials.

JWST 2125  Mishnaic Hebrew (also NES 2125)  3 credits
TR  2:55-4:10  Herman, G.  14350
In this course we shall learn and experience the rudiments of Mishnaic Hebrew whilst studying a select tractate of the Mishnah. This course is intended for students who have completed a “beginners” course in Biblical Hebrew or the equivalent.

JWST 2350  Antisemitism and Crisis Modernity (also HIST 2350) (HA-AS)  4 credits
M  2:30-4:25  Caron, V.  13828
This course will examine the role of antisemitism in 19th- and 20th-century European ideological, political, and socioeconomic developments. Attention will be paid to the way in which antisemitism illuminates the underside of European history, allowing us to see how anti-Jewish intolerance and prejudice becomes embedded in the worldviews of significant sectors of the European populations, culminating in the Holocaust. Topics will include the Christian roots of antisemitism and the extent to which modern antisemitism marks a break with the medieval past; the politicization of antisemitism by both Left and Right; the role of antisemitism in socioeconomic conflicts linked to the rise of capitalism; Jewish responses to antisemitism; antisemitism in the Nazi and Fascist revolutions; and contemporary interpretations of antisemitism. (EM)

JWST 2501  Kosher and Halal Food Regulations (FDSC 2500) (D)  3 credits
M  7:30-9:25pm  Regenstein, J.M.  14284
Prerequisite: at least sophomore standing. An introduction to the kosher and halal food laws and their application to the American food industry. The distance-learning component examines these laws and how modern religious food supervision functions. Discussion sessions with multiple discussion leaders cover readings in a variety of related diversity topics.

JWST 2644  Introduction to Judaism (also NES 2644, RELST 2644)  3 credits
TR  1:25-2:40  Monroe, L.  13998
This course is designed to acquaint students with the varieties of Judaism from ancient times to the early modern period. A strong emphasis will be placed on ancient Jewish civilization, and how ancient structures shaped later religious, social, and political trends. Particular attention will be devoted to moments of continuity and change in ideas and practices in each major phase of their historical development. Students will learn to analyze material evidence and primary texts in translation, to engage with the questions brought to bear on this material by contemporary scholars, and to generate their own critical questions. This course will also explore the ways Judaism and the Jewish people have been understood through various interpretive lenses, including sociology, religious studies, anthropology, musicology, women’s studies, and film studies. Students will be encouraged to think creatively and to engage in experiential and hands-on investigation of particular issues.
JWST 2650  Ancient Iraq (NES 2650, ARKEO 2650)  3 credits
MWF  1:25-2:15  Owen, D.  14344
Provides an introductory survey of the history, archaeology, and culture of Sumer and Babylonia from the dawn of writing to the rise of Persia.

JWST 2668  Ancient Egyptian Civilization (also NES/ARKEO 2668, HIST 2880) @ # (HA-AS)  3 credits
MWF  1:25-2:15  Monroe, C.  2718
The course surveys the history and culture of pharaonic Egypt from its prehistoric origins down to the early first millennium BCE. Within a chronological framework, the following themes or topics will be considered: the development of the Egyptian state (monarchy, administration, ideology); social organization (class, gender and family, slavery); economic factors; empire and international relations.

JWST 2674  History of the Modern Middle East: 19th–20th Centuries (NES/HIST 2674, GOVT 2747) @ (HA-AS)  4 credits
MW  1:25-2:15  Fahmy, Z.  13978
R (Dis 01)  10:10-11:00  Staff
F (Dis 02)  10:10-11:00  Staff
F (Dis 03)  11:15-12:05  Staff
This course examines major trends in the evolution of the Middle East in the modern era. Focusing on the 19th and 20th centuries, we will consider Middle East history with an emphasis on four themes: imperialism, nationalism, modernization, and Islam. Readings will be supplemented with translated primary sources, which will form the backbone of class discussions.

JWST 2880  Urban Visions (co meets with ENGL 2890)  3 credits
TR  11:40-12:55  Shapiro, E.  14353
In this course students will use writing to imagine cities and the spaces created by cities. We will also study the urban imaginings of others by studying fictional, non-fictional, and visual texts about cities. Students should be prepared to write analytically and imaginatively about both texts and urban spaces. A significant portion of the class will be devoted to studying film and developing a language for writing about film. Students will be expected to attend approximately four out-of-class film screenings. Films may include The Jazz Singer, Roman Holiday, Vertigo, and Annie Hall. We will also study works by such authors as Joan Didion, Mike Davis, John Edgar Wideman, and Raymond Chandler.

JWST 3102  Advanced Intermediate Modern Hebrew II: Aspects of Israeli Culture (also NES 3102)  4 credits
TR  11:40-12:55  Scharf, N.  2720
Satisfies Option 1. Limited to 15 students. Prerequisites: for 3101, NES 2100 with grade of C- or above or permission of instructor; for 3102, NES/JWST 3101. Advanced study of the Hebrew language both orally and through the analysis of mostly unedited texts of social, political, and cultural relevance, with less emphasis on the study of grammar. Students are introduced to articles published in Israeli newspapers and magazines, works by authors, and movies. Students develop composition and advanced writing skills by studying language structure, idioms, and various registers of style.

JWST 3105  Intensive Conversational Hebrew (also NES 3105)  2 credits
W  10:10-12:05  Scharf, N.  13967
Letter grade recommended. For Non-Native Speakers Only. Prerequisite: NES 3101, NES 3102 or permission of instructor. This course is intended to continue the development of all aspects of the language. Emphasis, however, will be placed on speaking skills and understanding by using text material relevant to Israeli contemporary society. The instructor will be sensitive to individual student needs.
**How to Understand Understanding? Paul Celan’s Poetry & Interpretation** (also GERST 3430) (LA-AS)  
**TR** 11:40-12:55  
**Glazova, A.**  
**4 credits**

Prerequisites: any German course at 3000–3200 level or by placement exam. Taught in German. Paul Celan, arguably the most widely known poet writing in the German language after WWII, was once characterized by a hostile literary critic as the author of obscure, scandalously “hermetic” texts. Celan, however, insisted that his poems were open rather than hermetic. He believed his poetic task to consist in creating a language of witnessing: a language fit for preserving memories of the collective catastrophe. This language, with its rigorous structure, compact imagery, and surprising inner logic, poses a challenge to understanding, as it is “open for interpretation.” Consequently, Celan’s poems motivated many prominent thinkers and critics to seek new paradigms of interpretation. In this class, we will read Celan’s poetic, prosaic, and theoretical texts in view of their literary, political, and historical significance. We will also read philosophical interpretations of Celan’s texts, such as Jacques Derrida’s “Shibboleth” and Maurice Blanchot’s “The Last to Speak.” Along with these thinkers, we will try, by way of reading Celan, to understand how we “understand” poetic texts. The language of reading, writing, and discussion in this seminar will be German.

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**By the Rivers of Babylon** (also ARKEO/NES/RELST 3505)  
**TR** 2:55-4:10  
**Herman, G.**  
**14034**  
**4 credits**

This course will introduce and explore the history and culture of Babylonian “talmudic” Jewry from the formative Parthian era until the Muslim conquest. Among the sources to be studied: Josephus, the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds, Aramaic incantation bowls, Zoroastrian and eastern Christian sources, as well as archaeological evidence and Sasanian epigraphic sources and images. Topics to be addressed will include communal organization, acculturation and Persian culture among the Jews, religious tolerance and intolerance, Jewish leadership, relations with Palestine. Methodological issues taught will include the use of rabbinic sources for historical analysis, earlier and current approaches to the use of rabbincic material.

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**Middle Eastern Politics** (also NES 3550, GOVT 3313) @ (CA-AS)  
**TR** 11:40-12:55  
**Patel, D.**  
**14077**  
**4 credits**

This course provides an introduction to contemporary Middle Eastern politics. The goal is to provide students with historical background and theoretical tools to answer the following core questions: (1) Why do authoritarian political systems persist in the Middle East more than they do elsewhere? (2) Why have Islamist groups become prominent opposition forces in and across some countries? (3) Why do some Middle Eastern countries suffer from high levels of political violence while others are spared? (4) What accounts for the region’s current economic underdevelopment? (5) Would the adoption of Western-style political institutions improve governance and stability in the region? The course explicitly compares outcomes and explanations within the region, between the region and other world areas, and over time.

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**Biblical Archaeology** (also NES/RELST/ARKEO 3588)  
**TR** 10:10-11:25  
**Monroe, L.**  
**11930**  
**4 credits**

A Writing in the Majors course. The purpose of the course is to place the Bible within the context of a larger ancient world that can be explored by systematic excavation of physical remains. Students will become familiar with archaeological excavations and finds from ancient Syria-Palestine from 10,000 bce to 586 bce. We will explore this archaeological evidence on its own terms, taking into consideration factors such as archaeological method and the interpretive frameworks in which the excavators themselves work, as well as the implications of this body of evidence for understanding the complexity and diversity of biblical Israel.

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**Sumerian Language and Culture II** (also NES/ARKEO 3662) @ # (LA-AS)  
**MW** 8:40-9:55  
**Owen, D.**  
**13964**  
**4 credits**

A continuation of NES 3661, the course will continue the intensive introduction to Sumerian language and grammar with additional readings in Sumerian literature in translation. Particular emphasis will be placed on the reading and interpretation of original texts from the Cornell collection and their use in the reconstruction of Mesopotamian history and culture in the third millennium bce.
How is it that religion can be both a cause of and cure for suffering? In what ways might different religious ideologies be understood as responses to suffering? Such questions are the big issues at stake in this course, which focuses very specifically on three ideologies that emerged in early Christianity: apocalypticism, “gnosticism,” and asceticism. Although we might normally think of persecution and martyrdom as fundamental to early Christianity, ideologies that emphasized the coming end of the world, those that emphasized the divine element within humans, and those that disciplined the body through celibacy, fasting, and other practices came to shape diverse responses to pain, alienation, and suffering in early Christianity. Our readings will focus on some of the writings in the New Testament, the “gnostic” literatures, and monastic texts as well as theoretical writings on the problem of suffering and religion.