Jewish studies Courses at Harvard University

2021-2022 Center for Jewish Studies
FRSEMR 62J Harvard’s Greatest Hits: The Most Important, Rarest, and Most Valuable Books in Houghton Library

Class Number: 17911 Course ID: 207807
Fall 2021
David Stern
Th 3:00pm-5:45pm

Have you ever fantasized of turning the pages of a Gutenberg Bible with your own fingers? Or a medieval illustrated Book of Hours? Or touching a papyrus fragment of Homer? Or a First Folio edition of Shakespeare? Or seeing close-up Copernicus’ diagram of the heliocentric universe? The Houghton Library of Harvard University is one of the world’s greatest repositories of ancient scrolls, papyrus codices, illuminated manuscripts on parchment and paper, early printed books, rare books published since the sixteenth century down until today, and stunning prints and other types of graphic art. In this freshman seminar, we will utilize Houghton’s extraordinary holdings to study first-hand the history of the book in the West as a material artifact from its beginnings in the ancient Near East down to the present day. Each week we will focus upon a cluster of books. Before class, students will be asked to examine selected books in Houghton’s Reading Room as well as online. During class-time, we will study the books again as a group. Visiting experts will demonstrate how to unroll a papyrus codex, the technology involved in creating a codex and printing on a hand-pulled press, and the techniques modern conservators use to preserve manuscripts and books. You will emerge from this seminar with a heightened understanding of what a rich thing a book is, and so much more than just a text. And you will have seen and studied close-up some of the most visually spectacular and culturally significant books in all Western history.

Course Requirements: Course open to Freshman Students Only

*Cover image courtesy of Stephanie Mitchell/Harvard University
FRSEMR 62U ZOMBIES AND SPIRITS, GHOSTS AND GHOULS: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD
Class Number: 13048 Course ID: 212697
Fall 2021
Shaye Cohen
Th 9:45am-11:45am

Virtually all the cultures and religions of the world, from ancient to contemporary times, have teachings and rituals about death. In this seminar we will deal with a subset of this very large topic, namely, the relationship of the living and the dead. The dead are often depicted as still-living in some way and still in communication with us and our world. Are they friendly or hostile? Beneficent or malevolent? Think “undead” and “zombie” versus “saint” and “angel.” In this course we will look at some of the myriad ways that religions and cultures conceive of the relationship of the living with the dead. We the living care for the dying and the dead, and hope that the dead will care for us, but how this works exactly is the subject of much speculation. American secular culture, at least in its cinematic expression, has a vigorous belief in the afterlife, especially in having denizens of the afterlife, in the form of zombies, ghosts, and poltergeists, intrude on the world of the living. In our seminar we will survey this rich set of themes as expressed in literature, art, music, cinema, and philosophy.

Course Requirements: Course open to Freshman Students Only

BIBLICAL AND ANCIENT

ANE 120A INTRODUCTION TO THE HEBREW BIBLE/OLD TESTAMENT 1: PENTATEUCH AND FORMER PROPHETS
Class Number: 14720 Course ID: 118849
Fall 2021
Andrew Teeter
TTh 10:30am-11:45am

A critical introduction to the literature and theology of the Hebrew Bible, considered in light of the historical contexts of its formation and the interpretive contexts of its reception within Judaism and Christianity. The course, the first part of a divisible, year-long sequence, will focus on the major biblical narrative traditions, the Pentateuch and Former Prophets.

Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 1102
Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1102
Class Number: 19803 Course ID: 129085

ANE 197 BIBLE AND EMPIRE
Class Number: 18252 Course ID: 218545
Fall 2021
Julia Rhyder
W 3:00pm-5:45pm

This course explores the importance of empire for the study of the Hebrew Bible and its history of reception. Surveying the major hegemonic expansionist states, or “empires,” that shaped the history of ancient Israel, the course is structured around key themes such as borderlands, migration, warfare, and cultural hybridity. Particular attention is paid to the relevance of postcolonial theory for biblical exegesis, with the aim of strengthening students’ skills in judiciously applying socio-scientific models to the study of ancient texts. We also consider the Bible’s place in more contemporary imperial settings: its use in supporting the interests of imperialism, as well as its mobilization against such interests. All ancient texts will be read in translation.

Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1440
Class Number: 21560 Course ID: 218846

ANE 198 SACRED SPACE AND SACRED TIME IN ANCIENT ISRAEL
Class Number: 18254 Course ID: 218546
Fall 2021
Julia Rhyder
M 3:00pm-5:45pm

Sacred space and sacred time were two axes of religion and culture in antiquity. What purpose did they serve in ancient Israel? This course explores the major shrines and festal celebrations that shaped the history of ancient Israel. It considers the processes by which the Israelite cult was gradually centralized to a small number of temples and priestly families, and how a fixed calendar of annual pilgrimages was promoted across
a growing diaspora. Students gain essential skills in combining biblical evidence, ar-
chaeological data, comparative materials, as well as social theories about space and time
to advance their understanding of ancient Israel and the history of Judaism. Hebrew not
required. The course can count towards the undergraduate Ancient Studies Requirement.

**Jointly Offered with:** Faculty of Arts & Sciences as HEBREW 198
Class Number: 17087 Course ID: 218198
Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1441
Class Number: 21561 Course ID: 218847

**HEBREW 203 IN THE BEGINNING: GENESIS 1–11 IN COMPARATIVE, COMPOSITIONAL, AND POETIC PERSPECTIVE**
Class Number: 21362 Course ID: 218813
Fall 2021
Andrew Teeter
T 3:00pm-5:00pm

A close study of Gen 1–11 in Hebrew with attention to (1) the formation of these compositions and their relationship to literary precursors within the ancient Near East, considered in the context of major critical debates within the current state of the field; and (2) a sustained focus on poetics and compositional artistry (stylistic and structural features, principles of organizational design, literary strategy and argumentation, textual logic, and overall expectations made of readers, both ancient and modern). The course presumes basic proficiency with Biblical Hebrew. Minimum of one year of Hebrew required. Jointly offered in HDS as 1632.

**Jointly Offered with:** Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1632
Class Number: 18637 Course ID: 218683

**HEBREW 236 THE SONG AT THE SEA: SEMINAR**
Class Number: 21355 Course ID: 120897
Fall 2021
Jon Levenson
Th 3:00pm-5:00pm


**Course Notes:** Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 1816.
Class Number: 10041 Course ID: 129141

**Recommended Prep:** An introductory course in the critical study of the Hebrew Bible and a solid command of Hebrew grammar (any period).

**CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL JEWISH LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND CULTURE**

**COMPLIT 252 THE LITERATURES OF MEDIEVAL IBERIA: APPROACHES AND DEBATES IN THEIR COMPARATIVE STUDY**
Class Number: 17774 Course ID: 125848
Fall 2021
Luis Girón-Negrón.
M 9:00am-11:45am

The cultural interactions in premodern Spain between Muslims, Christians and Jews shaped the literary history of Arabic, Hebrew and the Ibero-Romance vernaculars. Our seminar examines selected scholarly debates on the comparative study of these literatures.

**Course Notes:** Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 3726.

**Jointly Offered with:** Harvard Divinity School as HDS 3726
Class Number: 21130 Course ID: 129490

**JEWISHST 148 HOW JEWS READ (AND WRITE)**
Class Number: 18653 Course ID: 218694
Fall 2021
David Stern
M 12:00pm-2:45pm

No activity is more closely associated with Jews than the practice of reading, and no text has been read by Jews more intensively and in more different ways than the Bible. This course will explore the history of Jewish Biblical interpretation from antiquity, beginning with Philo of Alexandria’s allegorical commentaries, to the early modern period, culminating in Spinoza’s *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. And because the practice of reading is intimately connected with the way a text is inscribed—whether in a scroll, a handwritten codex, or a printed book—this course will also treat the history of the Bible as a material text along with its physical features. All readings will be in translation. In addition to Philo and Spinoza, readings will include the Dead Sea Scrolls, Rabbinic midrash, Karaite commentary, and selections from medieval Jewish exegetes as well as examples of Ancient Near Eastern, Greco-Roman, and Christian interpretation which have had an impact on Jewish interpretations. The class will meet for two hours a week. For those students able to read texts in Hebrew, there will be an additional special section which will meet for another hour to an hour and a half per week in which primary texts will be read in the original language. Students who wish to take the additional section should contact the instructor for special instructions about registering.

**Jointly Offered with:** Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1463
Class Number: 21562 Course ID: 218848
This course is about Jewish self-perception of Jewish difference. Jews have long seen themselves, and have long been seen by others, as “different” or distinctive. Whether this is good or bad, advantageous or disadvantageous, is often a point of debate among the Jews themselves and between the Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors. In this course we will study some aspects of this theme, concentrating on the repercussions of the biblical commandment “not to walk in their ways” (Leviticus 18:3, 20:23). All texts read in translation; if there is interest and demand we can also set up a time for reading texts in Hebrew.

**Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 1653**

Class Number: 21563 Course ID: 218849

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**MODERN JEWISH LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND CULTURE**

**HIST 1017 JEWS IN THE MODERN WORLD**
Class Number: 16967 Course ID: 218149
Fall 2021
Derek Penslar
MW 1:30pm-2:45pm

A survey of Jewish history over the past three hundred years. The course presents Jews as members of a world civilization that has constantly interacted with, shaped, and been shaped by other civilizations. We focus on three major geographic centers of modern Jewish life: the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, and North America. Topics to be covered include the impact of modernity on Jewish society, the transformation of Judaism and the formation of secular Jewish culture, continuity, and rupture between older forms of antisemitism and the Holocaust, and modern Jewish political movements.

**Related Sections:** Discussion TBA

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**RELIGION 1255 SELECTED WORKS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY JEWISH THEOLOGY**
Class Number: 20994 Course ID: 119359
Fall 2021
Jon Levenson
TTh 10:30am-11:45am

A close reading of selected works of Jewish theology from the twentieth century, with special attention to the questions of God, Torah, and Israel in light of modernity the challenges and opportunities that it presents with regard to traditional Jewish practice, belief, and identity. Authors read will be drawn mostly from the following: Baeck, Buber, Rosenzweig, Kaplan, Soloveitchik, Heschel, Leibowitz, Fackenheim, and Wyschogrod. Jointly offered with the Divinity School as HDS 3668.

**Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 3668**
Class Number: 10039 Course ID: 105254

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**MOD-HEB 241R ADVANCED SEMINAR IN MODERN HEBREW: ISRAELI CULTURE: CINEMA & LITERATURE**
Class Number: 21156 Course ID: 127670
Fall 2021
Irit Aharony
TTh 12:00pm-1:15pm

This course constitutes the final level of Modern Hebrew language studies. The course offers representative readings and screenings from contemporary Israeli literature and cinema, and it forms bases of discussion on major cultural and linguistic themes through academic readings.

**Course Notes:** Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 4045. Not open to auditors. Discussions, papers, movies, and texts presented only in Hebrew. Course sessions are 1 hour and 15 minutes long, and half an hour of conversation section.

**Recommended Prep:** Modern Hebrew 130b or equivalent.

**Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 4045**
Class Number: 21196 Course ID: 105537
A thorough and rigorous introduction to Biblical Hebrew, with emphasis on grammar in the first term, and translation of biblical prose in the second. Daily preparation and active class participation mandatory. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 4010A

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The course introduces students to the phonology and script as well as the fundamentals of morphology and syntax of Modern Hebrew. Emphasis is placed on developing reading, speaking, comprehension and writing skills, while introducing students to various aspects of contemporary Israeli society and culture. This is an indivisible course. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 4015A

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This course constitutes the third year of the Modern Hebrew language sequence. The course emphasizes the development of advanced proficiency in all skills. Readings include texts of linguistic and cultural complexity that cover contemporary Israeli society and culture. Conducted primarily in Hebrew.

Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 4040

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MOD-HEB 10720A ADVANCED MODERN HEBREW I
Class Number: 10720A Course ID: 122599
Fall 2021
Irit Aharony
MW 12:00pm-1:15pm

This course constitutes the third year of the Modern Hebrew language sequence. The course emphasizes the development of advanced proficiency in all skills. Readings include texts of linguistic and cultural complexity that cover contemporary Israeli society and culture. Conducted primarily in Hebrew.

Jointly Offered with: Harvard Divinity School as HDS 4040
Introduction to Yiddish language, literature, and culture. In the course of the year, students will acquire a thorough grounding in Yiddish grammar and will develop strong foundational reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills. The course will introduce students to the 1000-year history of Yiddish culture in Eastern Europe, the United States, and around the world. Students will learn about the past and present of this culture through exposure to Yiddish literature, music, theater, film, radio, oral history, and the Yiddish internet—an introduction to the dynamic world of Yiddish culture and scholarship that exists today. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Course Notes: For students with little or no knowledge of Yiddish. This course meets for 5 hours per week during the window listed. Yiddish AA/AB is an indivisible year-long course. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Recommended Prep: No prerequisites; knowledge of Yiddish not assumed.

Building on the skills gained in Yiddish AA/AB, students will further develop their Yiddish reading, writing, speaking, and oral comprehension skills. Focus will be on working with a wide variety of textual and cultural materials spanning the Yiddish-speaking world in the modern era. Course materials include selections from Yiddish fiction, poetry, drama, film, music, the press, and historical documents. Students will become familiar with the language’s dialects, writing conventions, and historical development. Course activities will introduce students to the latest developments in online Yiddish publishing and digital humanities scholarship.

Course Notes: This course meets for 4 hours per week. Please contact the instructor for scheduling and placement.

Recommended Prep: Yiddish AA/AB sequence, or equivalent.
**JEWISH LAW (HARVARD LAW SCHOOL)**

**HLS 2437 ADVANCED TOPICS IN JEWISH LAW: THE LAW OF LITERATURE**
Class Number: 22025 Course ID: 219020
Fall 2021
Noah Feldman
Th 6:45pm-8:45pm

**Prerequisite:** This seminar will be by permission of the instructor, who strongly prefers that students have a background in advanced study of Jewish legal material. To apply please send a short statement of interest including background in Jewish legal studies to nfeldman@law.harvard.edu with a copy to swhalen@law.harvard.edu.

**Exam Type:** No exam.

The group will examine sociological questions of the Yeshiva world as well as theoretical/textual ones regarding what is studied, and how, and by whom.

**Note:** The reading group will meet on the following dates: TBD.

**HLS 3084 TALMUD FOR ALL: FAMILY LAW**
Class Number: 22144 Course ID: 219280
Fall 2021
Daniel Boyarin
Th 4:15pm-6:15pm

**Prerequisite:** None

**Exam Type:** No exam.

In his class we will engage in close reading of sections of the Babylonian Talmud that deal (broadly speaking) in family law. No previous experience or language skills required.

**Note:** This offering is cross-listed with FAS.

**ADDITIONAL COURSES RELEVANT TO JEWISH STUDIES**

**GOV 94OF LAW AND POLITICS IN MULTICULTURAL DEMOCRACIES**
Class Number: 13529 Course ID: 128009
Fall 2021
Ofrit Liviatan
M 3:00pm-5:45pm

Examines the role of law in the governance of cultural diversity drawing on examples from the USA, Western Europe, India, Northern Ireland, and Israel.

Central themes at the intersection of law and politics will be explored, including: the impact of courts on rights protections, law’s function as a venue of conflict resolution, and courts’ relationship with other political institutions. Specific attention will be given to contemporary controversies such as religious symbols and abortion.

**Class Notes:** Students will be admitted to Gov 94 seminars through a departmental organized lottery. The last day to submit your application is Monday, August 23rd by 6 pm. For more information, please visit the following link: https://undergrad.gov.harvard.edu/gov-94-seminars.

**MEDVLSTD 250 AT CROSS PURPOSES: THE CRUSADES IN MATERIAL CULTURE**
Class Number: 17778 Course ID: 109230
Fall 2021
Evridiki Georganteli
Th 12:00pm-2:30pm

Crusading expeditions in the Holy Land, Spain and Eastern Europe from 1096 until the end of the Middle Ages shaped the political, socio-economic and cultural map of Europe and the Middle East. This course explores the multifaceted encounters between crusaders, Byzantines, Jews, Armenians and Muslims through the material traces they left behind: architecture, Byzantine objects dispersed across Western Europe, coins, sculptures, frescoes, and manuscripts from the East and the West.
Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Spring Semester

General Education

GENED 1090 What Is a Book? From the Oral Epic to the Kindle
Class Number: 17610 Course ID: 212857
Spring 2022
David Stern
TTh 1:30pm-2:45pm

You have spent much of your life since kindergarten (and perhaps earlier) reading books; and you will spend much of your time at Harvard continuing to read them. But do you even know what a “book” is? Is it merely a conveyor, a platform, for presenting a text? Can a book have a use other than being read? Does the nature of the material artifact inscribed with words shape or influence the way you understand their meaning? Do people read a scroll differently than they do a book with pages? Or a digital text on a screen? Why does the physical book persist in the digital age? To answer these questions, we will study the many different material forms in which texts have been preserved—from tablets to e-books—and the technologies that have enabled their creation. We will also explore every possible aspect of the object we know as a “book,” from the title page to the index, and from the layout of a page to the use of illustrations and decorations—and what each of these features of the book can tell us about its historical role, how readers have used the book, and what it has meant to them. Books we will look at will range from the Bible to Vesalius, from Homer to Harold and His Purple Crayon. We will make regular use of the manuscripts and rare printed books in Houghton Library, even if remotely. If necessary, simulated contact with books as material objects will be the focus of the course. The capstone project of the course will be the creation of a (short) book by each student and an accompanying paper explaining its place in the history of the book in the West.

Related Sections: Discussion TBA

GENED 1161 If There Is No God, All Is Permitted: Theism and Moral Reasoning
Class Number: 17622 Course ID: 218237
Spring 2022
Jay Harris
TTh 12:00pm-1:15pm

For centuries in the West, Jewish and Christian thinkers (among others) have asserted that moral judgment is impossible without some concept of the deity. So convincing were they that one important character created by a Russian author of the nineteenth century was led to express the idea (if not exactly the words), “if there is no God, all is permitted.” In more recent times some thinkers have challenged this assumption, and insisted that removing (or reducing) the role of God is indispensable to proper moral discourse. This course will examine the ways in which a concept of God has informed Western moral discourse, trying to help students engage the literature as they confront the basic question, why might one think “if there is no God, all is permitted?” and why might one think if there is a God human moral achievement is diminished or impossible. Further, we will examine ways in which the differing paradigms actually affect the moral conclusions we might generate. Belief in God and denial of God’s existence have each figured prominently in Western moral discourse. Arguments have been advanced that: autonomous human reasoning is incapable of arriving at moral truths without a supreme principle to ground the system (which is sometimes invested with “personality” and called God); that autonomous human reasoning can have no impact on moral behavior due to human failure that only God can "correct"; that autonomous moral reasoning is impossible, and morality can only be understood as the submission to the will of a superior moral being; that a concept of God is necessary to direct and regulate moral reasoning, but the actual confessional versions of theism are metaphysically implausible or impossible; that autonomous human moral reasoning is impossible with God, and thus only a-theism can lead to moral conclusions. This course will engage all these different themes.

Related Sections: Discussion TBA

Biblical and Ancient

ANE 120B Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament 2: Latter Prophets and Writings
Class Number: 13063 Course ID: 126065
Spring 2022
Andrew Teeter
TTh 10:30am-11:45am

A critical introduction to the literature and theology of the Hebrew Bible, considered in light of the historical contexts of its formation and the interpretive contexts of its reception within Judaism and Christianity. The course, the second part of a divisible, year-long sequence, will focus on the Latter Prophets and the Writings.

Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as HDS 1103.
Class Number: 18353 Course ID: 129086
Food and eating profoundly shaped social, religious, economic, and cultural life in antiquity. This course explores the role of dietary practices in establishing social bonds and ethnic boundaries in ancient Israel, while also exploring the importance of food in mediating the Israelites’ relationships with God, animals, and the environment. The course is structured around key themes that concern patterns of eating in ancient Israel, including food prohibitions, sacrifice, royal banquets, commensality, and trade. It is particularly concerned with identifying key historical developments that affected Israelite culinary practice and ideas about food, with a view to understanding how food became closely connected to issues of identity in ancient Judaism. It draws on a range of evidence, from biblical texts to archaeological remains and comparative materials from other Mediterranean societies. Students are also introduced to anthropological approaches to food, diets, and commensality, and learn to reflect critically on how such theoretical lenses might be applied to the study of ancient dietary patterns. All ancient texts will be read in translation.

HDS 1634 BIBLICAL POETRY AND POETICS: FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES AND ADVANCED TOPICS
Class Number: 18349 Course ID: 218684
Spring 2022
Andrew Teeter
T 3:00pm-5:00pm

A systematic introduction to the poetics of biblical poetry, with a focus on foundational theoretical issues, considered in the context of major critical debates within the current state of the field, and combined with sustained close reading of textual examples in Hebrew. The course presumes basic proficiency with Biblical Hebrew. Minimum of one year of Hebrew required.

HDS 1802 THE JOSEPH STORY AND THE BOOK OF ESTHER: SEMINAR
Class Number: 10022 Course ID: 129137
Spring 2022
Jon Levenson
Th 3:00pm-5:00pm

A close critical reading of Genesis 37-50 and the Book of Esther in Hebrew. Emphasis on the literary design and religious message of each work and on the influence of the story of Joseph upon the Book of Esther. Prerequisite: Three years of Hebrew or the equivalent (with a good command of grammar) and a solid acquaintance with the historical-critical study of the Hebrew Bible. Jointly offered in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences as Hebrew 218.

HEBREW 258 THE HISTORY OF GOD: EVIDENCE FROM THE PSALMS
Class Number: 18223 Course ID: 218548
Spring 2022
Julia Rhyder
M 3:00pm-5:45pm

The Israelite deity, with an unpronounceable name, may seem to have no history, having simply existed from the beginning of time. However, closer examination of the biblical evidence reveals a complex story of how a wilderness god associated with storms and warfare gradually emerged as the one God of Israel. This course analyzes key texts of the book of Psalms that, in extolling the qualities of the Israelite deity, reveal different aspects of his character: his nature as a storm god and warrior; his geographical links to the south of Israel, between the Negev and Egypt; his adoption of the traits of a sun god, linked to the domains of law and justice; and his emergence as the head of the heavenly council and creator of the world. The course presumes basic proficiency with Biblical Hebrew. Minimum of one year of Hebrew required.

JEWISHST 149 TOPICS IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS: EXEGESIS AT QUMRAN
Class Number: 15121 Course ID: 126339
Spring 2022
Andrew Teeter
T 3:00pm-5:00pm

This course explores the diverse functions of scripture within the literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls, focusing in particular on the forms and methods of interpretation attested, and considered in light of other varieties of interpretation in early Judaism. Sessions will be devoted to reading, translation and discussion of primary sources in Hebrew, as well as to discussion of relevant secondary literature.
Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 1309.
Recommended Prep: Two years of Biblical Hebrew strongly recommended.

RELIGION 1232 ANCIENT JEWISH WISDOM LITERATURE
Class Number: 18358 Course ID: 122312
Spring 2022
Jon Levenson
TTh 10:30am-11:45am

A close critical reading and interpretation of works thought to derive from the Wisdom tradition of ancient Israel, principally in the Second Temple period. The workings of the world and the ways of God as they appear in works such as Proverbs, Job, Qohelet, Ben Sira, some Psalms, the Wisdom of Solomon, Fourth Maccabees, Pseudo-Phocylides, and the Syriac Menander as well as narratives such as the Joseph story, Esther, and Daniel. Concludes with the early rabbinic Pirqé Avot. Egyptian and Mesopotamian antecedents and parallels briefly considered. Emphasis on matters of worldview and literary form.
Jointly offered with the Divinity School as HDS 1416.
CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL JEWISH LITERATURE, HISTORY, AND CULTURE

COMPLIT 114 MYSTICISM AND LITERATURE
Class Number: 18193 Course ID: 203092
Spring 2022
Luis Girón-Negrón
W 9:00am-11:45am

Examines trends, issues, and debates in the comparative study of mystical literature. Close readings of primary works by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim authors from the Middle Ages through the 16th century. Topics include poetry and mysticism; allegory, symbolism, and Scripture; body and gender; apophasis vs cataphasis; exemplarity and autobiographism; language and experience. Also examines creative engagement of pre-modern mystical literature in selected works by modern authors (Borges, T.S. Eliot) and literary theorists (DeCerteau).

HDS 1834 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF ISRAEL/PALERSTE FROM THE SECOND TEMPLE TO THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD
Class Number: 10165 Course ID: 213510
Spring 2022
Giovanni Bazzana
Th 3:00pm-5:00pm

The course will focus on the history of Israel/Palestine in the span of time of almost a millennium that witnessed the emergence of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Specific attention will be devoted to the changing landscape of the region and, by way of case studies, to archaeological excavations as evidence for cultural, religious, and socio-economic trajectories. The study of history and archaeology will be connected with the current religious and political situation of the region in order to highlight the ways in which the memory of the past shapes the present and is in turn shaped by present ideological concerns. Participation in the course includes participation to a three-weeks trip to Israel/Palestine that will take place in May before graduation and will include a week of excavation on the Magdala site.

HEBREW 131 THE JEWISH LIBRARY: FOUR JEWISH CLASSICS
Class Number: 18861 Course ID: 214616
Spring 2022
David Stern
TBA

Judaism is a famously text-centric religious culture, founded not only on a single book, the Hebrew Bible, but profoundly involved in the study and ritual use of other classic texts like the Babylonian Talmud, the Prayerbook, Biblical commentaries like that of Rashi, and the Passover Haggadah. This course will study the development of these four books and their transformation from texts into books with distinct physical and material features. In the case of each book, the text will be studied historically—“excavated” for its sources and roots, and its subsequent development over the centuries—and holistically, as a canonical document in Jewish tradition. Class time will be devoted primarily to learning to read the primary sources in translation; supplementary secondary readings will provide historical and cultural context. The seminar will also include regular visits to Houghton Library to look at manuscripts, early printed editions, and facsimiles of these books in order to study the changing shapes these books have taken as a key to understanding how they were studied and used, and to consider the relationship of materiality to textuality. While each book will raise its own set of issues, we will repeatedly deal with three basic questions: What makes a “Jewish” text? How do these books represent different aspects of Jewish identity? What can these books tell us about the canonical books of other religious traditions? No previous background in either Judaism or Jewish history is required. All readings in English translation. While this course is not a formal introduction to Judaism, it does aim to introduce students to Judaism and Jewish culture from inside its classic texts.
course will delve into the diversity of this tradition while also exploring its impact on later Yiddish films, from Israeli confrontations with the Holocaust to the rise of the Yiddish YouTube video and contemporary filmic depictions of the Hasidic world.

CLASSICAL (BIBLICAL) AND MODERN HEBREW AND YIDDISH LANGUAGE

CLASS-HEB AB ELEMENTARY CLASSICAL HEBREW II
Class Number: 11238 Course ID: 159881
Spring 2022
Andrew Teeter
TBA

Continuation of Classical Hebrew AA. A thorough and rigorous introduction to Biblical Hebrew, with emphasis on grammar in the first term, and translation of biblical prose in the second. Daily preparation and active class participation mandatory. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 4010B.

CLASS-HEB 120B INTERMEDIATE CLASSICAL HEBREW II
Class Number: 11183 Course ID: 123873
Spring 2022
Andrew Teeter
TBA

Readings in prose and poetic books; review of grammar. Prerequisite: Classical Hebrew 120a or the equivalent. Jointly offered as HDS 4021.

Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 4021.

Advanced reading in selected biblical poetic texts and intensive review of the grammar of Biblical Hebrew.

Recommended Prep: Classical Hebrew 130a or equivalent.

Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 1626.

Class Number: 18375 Course ID: 103802

MOD-HEB BB ELEMENTARY MODERN HEBREW II
Class Number: 11285 Course ID: 159988
Spring 2022
Irit Aharony
TBA

The course introduces students to the phonology and script as well as the fundamentals of morphology and syntax of Modern Hebrew. Emphasis is placed on developing reading, speaking, comprehension and writing skills, while introducing students to various aspects of contemporary Israeli society and culture. This is an indivisible course. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Course Notes: Offered jointly with the Divinity School as HDS 4015B.

Not open to auditors. Cannot be taken pass/fail. This is an indivisible course. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit. In specific cases the instructor will consider approval of enrollment in MOD-HEB BB and MOD-HEB 120A as fulfillment of the one-year language requirement, depending on the student's proficiency level.

MOD-HEB 120B INTERMEDIATE MODERN HEBREW II
Class Number: 10501 Course ID: 111756
Spring 2022
Irit Aharony
TBA

Continuation of Hebrew 120a.

Course Notes: Conducted primarily in Hebrew.

Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 4041.

Class Number: 1832 Course ID: 129549

Not open to auditors.

Recommended Prep: Modern Hebrew 120a.

MOD-HEB 130B ADVANCED MODERN HEBREW II
Class Number: 11110 Course ID: 126531
Spring 2022
Irit Aharony
TBA

This course is a continuation of Hebrew 130a. Texts, films, and other materials expose students to the richness and complexity of the contemporary sociolinguistics of Israeli society.

Course Notes: Conducted in Hebrew. Not open to auditors.

Offered jointly with the Divinity School as 4043.

Class Number: 18234 Course ID: 154511

Recommended Prep: Modern Hebrew 130a, or equivalent level of proficiency.
YIDDISH AB ELEMENTARY YIDDISH II
Class Number: 11232 Course ID: 159871
Spring 2022
Sara Feldman
TBA

Continuation of Yiddish AA. Introduction to Yiddish language, literature, and culture. In the course of the year, students will acquire a thorough grounding in Yiddish grammar and will develop strong foundational reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills. The course will introduce students to the 1000-year history of Yiddish culture in Eastern Europe, the United States, and around the world. Students will learn about the past and present of this culture through exposure to Yiddish literature, music, theater, film, radio, oral history, and the Yiddish internet—an introduction to the dynamic world of Yiddish culture and scholarship that exists today. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Course Notes: For students with little or no knowledge of Yiddish. Additional sections at different times may be added as needed. Yiddish AA/AB is an indivisible year-long course. Students must complete both terms of this course (parts A and B) within the same academic year in order to receive credit.

Recommended Prep: No prerequisites.

Course Requirements: Pre-requisite: YIDDISH AA

YIDDISH BB INTERMEDIATE YIDDISH II
Class Number: 119875
Spring 2022
Sara Feldman
TBA

Continuation of Yiddish BA. Students will further develop their Yiddish reading, writing, speaking, and oral comprehension skills. Focus will be on working with a wide variety of textual and cultural materials spanning the Yiddish-speaking world in the modern era. Course materials include selections from Yiddish fiction, poetry, drama, film, music, the press, and historical documents. Students will become familiar with the language’s dialects, writing conventions, and historical development. Course activities will introduce students to the latest developments in online Yiddish publishing and digital humanities scholarship.

Recommended Prep: Yiddish BA or permission of the instructor.

JEWISH LAW (HARVARD LAW SCHOOL)

HLS 2437 ADVANCED TOPICS IN JEWISH LAW AND LEGAL THEORY
Class Number: 18931 Course ID: 219021
Spring 2022
Noah Feldman
Th 6:45pm-8:45pm

Prerequisite: This seminar will be by permission of the instructor, who strongly prefers that students have a background in advanced study of Jewish legal material. To apply please send a short statement of interest including background in Jewish legal studies to nfieldman@law.harvard.edu with a copy to swhalen@law.harvard.edu.

The group will examine sociological questions of the Yeshiva world as well as theoretical/textual ones regarding what is studied, and how, and by whom.

Note: The reading group will meet on the following dates: TBD

HLS 3084 TALMUD FOR ALL: JEWS AND GENTILES
Class Number: 19069 Course ID: 219286
Spring 2022
Daniel Boyarin
W 1:45pm-3:45pm

Prerequisite: None
Exam Type: No exam.

In his class we will engage in close reading of sections of the Babylonian Talmud that deal (broadly speaking) in relations between Jews and Gentiles. No previous experience or language skills required.

Note: This offering is cross-listed with FAS.

HLS 3086 FROM TORAH TO MITZVOS
Class Number: 19070 Course ID: 219287
Spring 2022
Daniel Boyarin
TW 10:45am-12:15pm

Prerequisite: None
Exam Type: Any Day Take Home
In this course we will be comparing the conceptions of Torah and so-called “Jewish law” in Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Mishna. Much of the focus will be textually oriented.

Note: This offering is cross-listed with FAS.

Additional Courses Relevant to Jewish Studies

ANE 227 Critical Readings on Ancient History
Class Number: 14026 Course ID: 205397
Spring 2022
Gojko Barjamovic
Th 3:00pm-5:45pm

A weekly seminar for graduate students (advanced undergraduates can apply) in which we read and discuss a selection of old and new key monographs (and a few key articles) relevant to the field of Ancient Studies. The seminar targets students in Assyriology, Classics, Divinity, Egyptology, Hebrew Bible and Religion, but others might also find it interesting and relevant. We rehearse skills in critical reading, writing scholarly reviews, debating, and (of course) engage with a massive amount of relevant literature that we would not otherwise find the time to read.

HDS 2247 Advanced Seminar: Historiography of Nazism and Christianity
Class Number: 18344 Course ID: 104036
Spring 2022
Kevin Madigan
M 3:00pm-5:00pm

This advanced colloquium, primarily intended for those aiming to study the subject as doctoral students, begins with consideration of some of the recent major works on the Nazi period by Anglophone scholars (Ian Kershaw, Richard Evans, Saul Friedlander, et al). The second half of the course focuses on the most important recent scholarship on Nazism and Christianity. Pre-requisite: Deep familiarity with modern European history, and at least two courses on Nazism or the Holocaust or European fascism.

Religion 1529 The Holocaust and the Churches, 1933-45
Class Number: 13104 Course ID: 124910
Spring 2022
Kevin Madigan
M 3:00pm-5:00pm

This seminar will approach the Nazi persecution of European Jewry from several disciplinary perspectives. Initially the seminar will explore the topic historically. In these weeks, the seminar will use a variety of historical materials dealing with the history of European anti-Semitism, German history from Bismarck to the accession of Hitler, the evolution of anti-Jewish persecution in the Third Reich, and the history of the Holocaust itself. Sources to be used will include primary sources produced by the German government 1933-1945, by Jewish victims-to-be or survivors, documentary films, and secondary interpretations. The aims of this part of the seminar will be to understand the basic background to and narrative of the Holocaust, to introduce students to the critical use of primary historical sources, and to familiarize them with some of the major historiographical debates. Then the members of the seminar will ponder religious and theological reactions to the Holocaust. The seminar will also consider the historical question of the role played by the Protestant and Catholic churches and theologies in the Holocaust. Throughout the seminar, participants will use various literary and cinematographic sources and test their limits in helping to understand and to represent the Holocaust.