Winter 2014 Jewish Studies Course List

For more information about Jewish Studies courses, visit jewishstudies.washington.edu or contact Assistant Director Lauren Spokane at jewishst@uw.edu or 206-543-0138

JSIS A 101 / NEAR E 150 Israel: Dynamic Society/Global Flashpoint Noam Pianko
Team taught by Noam Pianko, Naomi Sokoloff, Joel Migdal, Paul Burstein
MWF 12:30-1:20pm
Credits: 5 I&S

This survey introduces the people, institutions, and culture of Israel in the context of larger global forces. Students will examine domestic, regional, and international elements, both historically and in the contemporary period, that have shaped Israel’s culture, politics, and special role in world affairs. Topics include nationalism, ethnicity, politics, religion, film, literature, and culture.

JSIS C 175/GERMAN 195/C LIT 397 Popular Film and the Holocaust Richard Block
MWF 12:30-1:20pm

Film screenings, Mondays at 2:30 until end of film. (Many films can be viewed by students on their own).
Credits: 5 VLPA

The horror of the Holocaust challenges the very limits of the imagination; the desperation of what the victims experienced is outside the realm of human speech. Moreover, any attempt to record what one experienced or witnessed threatens the constitution of the self. To represent this trauma one must present it otherwise. Were there even a language to represent what occurred, it would subject the witness to the horror of that trauma once again. The Nazis anticipated this dilemma, repeatedly taunting victims by dismissing the possibility that history would bear witness to what occurred in the camps. Their crimes, the Nazis proclaimed, were too horrible to be believed; the victims and their stories would be deposited, as Hannah Arendt noted, in “ever widening holes of oblivion.” Thus arises the absolute necessity, the moral imperative to represent what by definition cannot be represented.

In this course we will examine the strategies various filmmakers have developed to respond to this imperative. We will begin by asking ourselves how one bears witness to the unspeakable, how one captures a history that is too horrible to return to? But we will also turn a critical eye to how Hollywood in particular has exploited the dimensions of this trauma to pump up the volume, so to speak, on formulaic plots and how the conventions of popular film may respond to this imperative in ways that demean and cheapen the suffering of the victims. Likewise, we will question to what extent even documentary films can be understood to be objective, especially since the memories of the survivors and those of the perpetrators are unreliable.


Requirements: two two- to three-page papers analyzing the strategies for representation of selected films; an in-class mid-term and final.
JSIS C 438 / GWSS 438 Jewish Women in Contemporary America Kathie Friedman
TTH 10:30-12:20pm
Credits: 5 I&S

Examines how Jewish women's identities are socially constructed and transformed in contemporary America, using social histories, memoirs, and ethnographies to analyze scholars' approaches to Jewish women's lives. Topics include the role of social class, religion, migration, the Holocaust, and race relations in Jewish women's lives. Offered: jointly with GWSS 438.

JSIS C 449/NEAR E 453 Biblical Prophets Gary Martin
MW 1:30-2:50pm
Credits: 3 VLPA/I&S

Explores the biblical prophets (in translation) within their Near Eastern contexts. Studies them for their historicity, literary and rhetorical sophistication, and ideological agendas. Seeks to uncover the meaning and distinctiveness of Israelite prophecy within the context of the larger Near East. No knowledge of the Bible is required. Offered: jointly with JSIS C 449

JSIS C 489 A Life in Israel Naomi Sokoloff
W 7:00p-9:20p C/NC
Credits: 2 I&S

This C/NC course explores aspects of contemporary life in Israel through film and popular culture. Taught in English. Open to all UW students; no prerequisites.

The class will meet Wednesday evenings 7:00-9:30 p.m. (specific dates TBA) at the UW Hillel building, 4745 17th NE.

**Any student who wishes to write in Hebrew rather than English should contact the instructor about registering for HEBR 490 (Independent Study).

**Students who registered for “Life in Israel” (SISJE 490) in Winter 2012 may enroll in this course again for credit. The films and content will be different in Winter 2013.

JSIS C 489 B / SPAN 394 Special Topics: Ladino for Beginners David Bunis
TTH 3:30-4:50pm
Credits: 3 I&S / VLPA

An introduction to the fundamental elements of Modern Ladino—the traditional language of the Sephardic Jews of the Balkans, North Africa and the Middle East. Through the reading of simple folkloric and literary texts in the traditional Hebrew-based alphabet and in romanization, participants acquire the basics of Modern Ladino grammar, syntax and lexicon, as well as an acquaintance with the history, and social and cultural life of Ladino speakers in the modern era. No prior knowledge of Spanish or Hebrew is necessary.
JSIS C 489 C Special Topics: Sephardim on Jerusalem *David Bunis*
TTH 1:30-2:50pm
Credits: 5 I&S

Jerusalem has always stood at the center of Jewish consciousness. Depictions of the city, its inhabitants and their lifestyle are to be found in sacred sources such as the Bible, Talmud and Jewish liturgy, and also in medieval and modern poetry and song, exegetical, kabbalistic and responsa works, historical and travel literature, the periodical press, and fictional works such as the novel and drama, in Hebrew, in other Jewish languages, and in the major languages of the world. The present course focuses on Jerusalem as portrayed in writings by Sephardic authors of the former Ottoman regions and its successor states, from the sixteenth century through the modern era.

**HEBR 412 Elementary Modern Hebrew *Hadar Khazzam-Horovitz***
MW 9:30am-11:20am, F 9:30-10:20am
Credits: 5 VLPA (restrictions apply)

Modern Israeli Hebrew. Core vocabulary, grammar, conversational text, and oral and written communication. Excerpts from modern Hebrew prose and poetry.
Prerequisite: HEBR 411

**HEBR 420 Hebrew Conversation *Tovi Romano***
TTH 12:20-1:30PM
Credits: 2 VLPA/I&S C/NC

For students who have one year of Hebrew (HEBR 411-412-413) or above. Promoting cultural proficiency as an integral and essential component of language learning, this course provides opportunities to communicate using authentic language derived from current cultural and social life. Students will acquire the necessary vocabulary, patterns and forms in order to communicate successfully in predictable social situations including discussing personal information related to self, family, home, daily activities, interests and needs. Conversations will revolve around topics such as food, shopping, transportation, orientation, accommodation, weather, current events, and other typical travel encounters and real-life communication with native Hebrew speakers.

**HEBR 422 Intermediate Modern Hebrew *Tovi Romano***
TTH 9:30-11:20am, F 10:30-11:20am
Credits: 5 VLPA

Readings of selected texts in modern Hebrew with continuing emphasis on grammar, syntax, composition, and conversation.
Prerequisite: HEBR 421.
HEBR 428 Inscriptions from Biblical Times *Gary Martin*

MWF 10:30-11:50am  
Credits: 5  VLPA

Surveys Northwest Semitic inscriptions that bear significantly on our understanding of Biblical history and ancient Hebrew including the Moabite stone, Israelite ostraca, Siloam engraving, Gezer calendar, Deir Alla (Gilead) inscriptions, the Asherah texts, Ammonite fragments, and Phoenician monuments. Prerequisite: HEBR 402 or HEBR 426.

HEBR 452 - Intro to Hebrew Literature *Sokoloff*

MW 2:30-3:50pm  
Credits: 3  VLPA

Explore the city of Tel Aviv through works by Etgar Keret, Rutu Modan, S. Yizhar, and S.Y. Agnon. This course presents modern Hebrew literary texts and analysis, with continued emphasis on grammar and composition. Review of language skills and dictionary work is included in each unit to reinforce the students’ knowledge of Hebrew. In addition, the class covers fundamentals of narrative theory as students practice close readings of texts.  
*Prerequisite: HEBR 423 or permission of instructor.*