

Jewish Studies (JWSS)

JWSS 1120. Understanding the Bible. (4 Hours)

Introduces students to the Old and New Testaments of the Bible in its social, political, and cultural contexts.

Attribute(s): NUpath Interpreting Culture, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 1285. Jewish Religion and Culture. (4 Hours)

Explores some of the rich variety of Jewish cultural expressions and interpretive traditions, including the Jewish life cycle (birth through death) and the calendar cycle (holidays and daily rituals). Judaism is an ancient, living religious civilization that has evolved continuously over the millennia and around the globe. Offers students an opportunity to become familiar with the major periods of Jewish history and study exemplary formative Jewish texts (from the Bible and its interpreters through rabbinic, legal, and later literatures). Studies the global diversity of Jewish traditions, cultures, and identities, including how Jewish religion and culture have been influenced by the communities in which Jews have lived and live. No prior knowledge of Judaism is necessary or assumed.

Attribute(s): NUpath Interpreting Culture, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 1294. History of the Jews in the Modern World. (4 Hours)

Surveys the history of the Jews in the modern world, with an emphasis on global cultural exchange. Examines Jewish interaction with non-Jewish society from Europe to North Africa, the Middle East, the Soviet Union, Israel, and the United States and explores this relationship's creative and destructive consequences. Focuses on how Jewish society, culture, religious practice, and political definition changed in relation to a variety of processes now associated with modernity, such as urbanization, industrialization, state centralization, and the development of nationalism and secularism.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 1990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

JWSS 2259. Sex, Gender, and Judaism. (4 Hours)

Introduces the representation of sex and gender in Jewish culture and religion. Explores varied representations of masculinity and femininity over time and place within Jewish communities; the role of biblical texts in the construction of Western conceptions of gender and sexuality; and how contemporary feminist, queer, and other sexual identities have influenced Jewish practices. Readings draw from a range of primary sources (memoirs, fiction, religious texts, etc.) and critical literature.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

JWSS 2282. The Holocaust and Comparative Genocide. (4 Hours)

Examines the origins of the Holocaust, perpetrators and victims, and changing efforts to come to terms with this genocide. The Holocaust, the murder of 6 million Jews by Germans in Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II, is one of the crucial events of modern history. Investigates the uniqueness of the Holocaust relative to other acts of ethnic cleansing or genocide, including mass death in the New World and mass murder in Armenia, Bosnia, and Rwanda.

Attribute(s): NUpath Ethical Reasoning, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 2285. America and the Holocaust. (4 Hours)

Examines the American response to the Holocaust, in terms of both contemporaneous knowledge and actions and the lasting impact on policy and culture. Starts with early twentieth-century events, such as the Armenian genocide, that shaped later attitudes. Explores the prewar period, particularly U.S. immigration and isolationist policies. Assesses Americans' knowledge of European events as the extermination campaign unfolded and fights ensued over rescue possibilities. Examines changing depictions of the Holocaust that emerged in the postwar period as a result of critical events such as the Eichmann trial and popular television and film portrayals. Finally, considers how perceptions of the Holocaust have shaped subsequent U.S. responses to genocide. HIST 2285, JRNL 2285, and JWSS 2285 are cross-listed.

Attribute(s): NUpath Ethical Reasoning, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 2430. Digital Histories of Ethnic Boston. (4 Hours)

Integrates history of ethnic groups in Boston with methods from the digital humanities (DH) through a semester-long collaborative student project focused on one particular ethnic group. Combines learning how to use DH technology (as well as its possible misuses) with learning about the history of particular ethnic groups in Boston, such as Jews, the Irish, African-Americans, etc. Uses hands-on approaches to study ethnic migration and history to and within Boston by touring neighborhoods and sites. Examines DH technologies through workshops introducing tools such as Omeka, Story Maps, and Tableau, among other possibilities. Also examines different techniques for data visualization, relationship mapping, network analysis, and text analysis.

Attribute(s): NUpath Analyzing/Using Data

JWSS 2431. Immigration and Identity in the American Jewish Experience. (4 Hours)

Examines Jewish political, social, and cultural history from the arrival of the first group of Jews at New Amsterdam in 1654 to the present. Themes include immigration, adaptation, family life, religion, anti-Semitism, Zionism, the Holocaust, and American-Israeli relations. HIST 2431 and JWSS 2431 are cross-listed.

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Societies/Institutions

JWSS 2610. Contemporary Israeli Literature and Art Abroad. (4 Hours)

Explores contemporary Israeli culture through literature and art. Focuses on the tensions, pains, and pleasures of existence from various Israeli points of view. Takes place in Israel during the summer term, offering students an opportunity to meet with contemporary Israeli writers, visit sites of the literary settings, and explore art galleries and museums. Readings include short stories and poetry by major Israeli and Palestinian writers from 1948 through the present. ENGL 2610 and JWSS 2610 are cross-listed.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Interpreting Culture

JWSS 2990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

JWSS 3678. Bedrooms and Battlefields: Hebrew Bible and the Origins of Sex, Gender, and Ethnicity. (4 Hours)

Considers stories from Hebrew Scripture in English translation, beginning with the Garden of Eden through the Book of Ruth, asking how these foundational narratives establish the categories that have come to define our humanity. Analyzes how the Bible's patterns of representation construct sexual and ethnic identities and naturalize ideas about such social institutions as "the family." ENGL 3678, JWSS 3678, and WMNS 3678 are cross-listed.

Prerequisite(s): ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Interpreting Culture

JWSS 3685. Modern and Contemporary Jewish Literature. (4 Hours)

Surveys Jewish literature from the late modern (1880–1948) and contemporary (1948–present) periods. Considers themes of immigration and cross-cultural influences and issues of religious, ethnic, and gender identity. Emphasizes American and European literatures to begin to define an international Jewish literary canon, including Yiddish poets and playwrights, Russian Jewish writers, and modern writers. ENGL 3685 and JWSS 3685 are cross-listed.

Prerequisite(s): ENGW 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGW 1102 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1111 with a minimum grade of C or ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C

Attribute(s): NUpath Difference/Diversity, NUpath Interpreting Culture

JWSS 3990. Elective. (1-4 Hours)

Offers elective credit for courses taken at other academic institutions. May be repeated without limit.

JWSS 4660. Jewish Studies Module. (1 Hour)

Permits specialized Jewish studies topics to be studied as part of more general courses. May be repeated without limit.

JWSS 4992. Directed Study. (1-4 Hours)

Offers students an opportunity for special readings and research in Jewish studies. May be repeated for up to 8 total credits.