Fall 2014 Courses
Jewish Studies, Hebrew, Yiddish
Courses in Other Departments that Count for Minor

JEWSH 107: Living Religions of the West
TR 9:30-10:45
A basic introduction to the major religious traditions of the Near East, Europe, and the Americas, with an emphasis on their development through the modern period and their expressions in contemporary life. Not open to students who have taken REL 109. LEC. Same as REL 107.

JEWSH 124 - Understanding the Bible
MW 11:00-11:50 + Discussion
An introduction to the literature of the Bible, exploring the relationships among the various types of literature present and the function of each type in the history and religious life of the people who produced and used them. Cannot be taken concurrently with REL 311 or REL 315. Not open to students who have taken REL 125.
Eligibility: Goal 3 Arts and Humanities (GE3H), H Humanities (H), HR Philosophy & Religion PC (HR)

JEWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Everyday Life in Modern Israel
TR 11:00-12:15
Given its unique geo-political circumstances as well as its symbolic position, Israel has attracted much attention. This is equally true of media coverage as well as more scholarly treatment of the Israeli-Arab or Israeli-Palestinian conflict. More often than not, Israel is portrayed through the lens of high politics or treated as an exotic anomaly. Whether popular or academic in its orientation, the study of Israeli society has thus tended to neglect Israel as, to paraphrase Hertzl, ‘a society amongst societies’. The course offers a unique opportunity to explore Israeli society and politics from a different angle, one which is paying attention and sheds much needed light on the everydayness and on the production of culture in and through everyday practices.
Meets with JWSH 600 – Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: Everyday Life in Modern Israel

JEWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Modern Jewish History
Tuesday, 2:30-5:00
This course examines the complex encounter between Judaism and modernity by examining the challenges to Jewish life and thought, community and culture, self-understanding and survival from the 17th to the 20th centuries. It looks at religious, cultural, and intellectual expression in the context of social, economic, political, and demographic change in Jewish communities in Europe, the United States and Israel. It also considers the impact of antisemitism and the Holocaust.

JEWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Contemporary Israeli Politics
TR 9:30-10:45
Meets with JWSH 600 – Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: Contemporary Israeli Politics
JWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Enemies of Ancient Israel
MWF 9:00-9:50
An exploration of the social world of the Bible through its antagonists and their cultures. We will examine the so-called bad guys of the Bible using the lenses of history, archaeology, geography, and religion to better understand their cultures and how they are portrayed in the biblical text.
Note: Bad Guys of the Bible

JWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Religious Zionism
TR 4:00-5:15
It is widely known that the Zionist movement was initially composed largely of radical secular activists, in rebellion against what they perceived as traditional Jewish quietism and passivity. Alongside these activists, however, there have always been a smaller number of religious Zionists who took varying attitudes towards their secular partners and towards Zionism itself. This course seeks to examine the growth and changes in religious Zionist thought, focusing primarily on the theological self-descriptions of the participants themselves as they react to historical events. Special attention will be paid to the question of how theological “conservatism” or “radicalism” does or does not lead to political “conservatism” or “radicalism.” We will also place changes in Jewish religious Zionism in context, through an examination of the attitudes of religious Jewish anti-Zionists, as well as Christian Zionists. No prior knowledge is required.

JWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Mysticism and the Supernatural
TR 1:00-2:15
Mystical Experiences and Supernatural Encounters in Jewish Texts and Tradition: Dybbuks and demons, angels and Elijah; from ecstatic enlightenment to succumbing to satan – Jewish texts and tradition are riddled with the arcane, the occult and the mystical. This course will mine the sources for a deep exploration of these aspects of Judaism that are most often obscured by “normative” teachings and practices, yet remain deeply embedded in the customs and beliefs of Jews around the world.

JWSH 300 – Hitler and Nazi Germany
W 6:00-8:30pm
An examination of the rise of Hitler and Nazism, beginning with the breakdown of 19th century culture in the First World War and continuing through the failure of democracy under the Weimar Republic. The course will also discuss the impact of Nazism on Germany and how Nazism led to the Second World War and the Holocaust.

JWSH 327 – Jewish Secular Culture
MW 11:00-12:15
By examining the modern concept of Yiddishkeit (Jewishness), this course explores Jewish secularism as a set of modern intellectual, literary, and cultural practices that redefined the relationship between the secular and religious in literature, music, theatre, art, humor, and foodways. This interdisciplinary course draws on theoretical approaches from history, cultural studies, religious studies, folklore, and linguistics to examine the different secularizing cultural practices of the Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in North America.
KU Core 4.2, H Humanities, HL Literature and the Arts PC

JWSH 336 – Jewish American Literature and Culture
TR 9:30-10:45
An examination of Jewish American literature and culture from the 17th century to the present. Materials may include a broad range of literary genres as well as folklore, music, film, and visual art. (Same as ENGL 336.)
Prerequisite: Prior completion of the KU Core Written Communication requirement. Recommended: Prior completion of one 200-level English course.
JWSH 490 – Independent Study
Intensive reading or research under faculty supervision.

JWSH 491 – Independent Study, Honors
Intensive reading or research under faculty supervision.

JWSH 523 – The Dead Sea Scrolls
MW 12:30-1:45
A study of the archaeological evidence and texts from the Dead Sea area that provide primary evidence for Jewish religious belief and practice in the Greek and Roman periods (ca. 250 B.C.E. - 135 C.E.). (Same as REL 523.) Prerequisite: REL 124 or JWSH 124 or consent of instructor.

JWSH 570 – Studies in Judaism
TR 11:00-12:15
"Political Theology" today describes a wide-ranging field that addresses nearly everything having to do with the connections between religion and politics. It also has a narrower meaning, however, which addresses itself specifically to questions about the nature of political order itself, and asks questions like: Does political order need to base itself on correct religious ideas? Or should it be conceived as separate from religion, as "secular"? Can secularism ever really separate itself from its religious origins? After laying out these questions, which are asked around the world in traditions from Christianity to Islam, and which lie at the basis of modern liberal democracies, this course will analyze their relationship to Judaism in particular. We will ask whether and how the Jewish tradition informs different approaches to these problems, as well as different answers to them.

JWSH 572 – Jewish Folklore
MW 12:30-1:45
Jewish folklore is extraordinarily rich and varied. From folktales to riddles, from legends about the exalted rabbis to irreverent jokes, folklore is central to the Jewish way of life. This course traces the extent to which oral elements appear in traditional Jewish literary texts such as the Bible; read and discuss folktales, and examine minor genres such as proverbs, riddles and jokes. Topics include the supernatural beings of Jewish folklore, dybbuks, seductive female demons, and golems. Students acquire theoretical tools with which to analyze folklore (Jewish or otherwise), read stories, watch movies, and collect samples of folklore from informants.

JWSH 600 – Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: Everyday Life in Modern Israel
TR 1:00-2:15
See course description under JWSH 300. Meets with JWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Everyday Life in Modern Israel

JWSH 600 – Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: Contemporary Israeli Politics
TR 9:30-10:45
See course description under JWSH 300. Meets with JWSH 300 – Topics in Jewish Studies: Contemporary Israeli Politics

JWSH 600 – Advanced Topics in Jewish Studies: Hitler and Nazi Germany
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HEBREW
HEBR 110 – Elementary Israeli Hebrew I
MTWTF 10:00-10:50
A beginning course in modern Israeli Hebrew. Essentials of grammar, syntax and conversational practice; elementary reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam.

HEBR 210 – Intermediate Israeli Hebrew I
MWF 9:00-9:50
Further development of language skills: listening comprehension, oral efficiency, intermediate grammar and syntax, reading and writing. Note: Students with other previous experience in Hebrew must take a placement exam. Prerequisite: HEBR 120.

HEBR 230 – Biblical Hebrew I
MWF 10:00-10:50
This course introduces students to the grammatical structure and vocabulary of biblical Hebrew. It includes basic biblical passages for students to translate into English and analyze.

HEBR 340 – Advanced Israeli Hebrew I
MWF, 11:00-11:50
Advanced study of Modern Hebrew. This course is designed to strengthen linguistic skills, enrich vocabulary, and further the study of grammar and syntax. Not open to native speakers of Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 220 or permission of the instructor. Combined with HEBR 410.

HEBR 410 – Modern Hebrew Literature
MWF, 11:00-11:50
An introduction to Hebrew literature from the nineteenth century to the present day. The course emphasizes the development of basic interpretive skills and the understanding of basic literary movements, genres, and concepts. Not open to native speakers of Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 220 or equivalent. Combined with HEBR 340.

HEBR 490 – Independent Study in Hebrew
Intensive reading or research under faculty supervision. Not open to native speakers of Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 220 or equivalent.

COURSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS
ANTH 465 – Genocide and Ethnocide
TR 11:00-12:15
Study of the killing of peoples and cultures. Case studies, focusing primarily on tribal South America. Examination of the implications of these studies as regards our definition of culture and our evaluation of aid programs, missionary efforts, and international business expansion.

REL 500 – Readings in Non-English Religious Texts
Independent Study. This course provides directed readings for students in either primary or secondary texts related to religious studies utilizing material in languages other than English.