JEWISH STUDIES

College of Liberal & Creative Arts
Dean: Andrew Harris

Department of Jewish Studies
Humanities Building, Room 416
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Department Chair: Fred Astren
Undergraduate Advisors: Astren, Dollinger, Gross, Kaplan, Millet

Program Scope
The Bachelor of Arts in Modern Jewish Studies program is designed to provide an understanding of Jews and Judaism in terms of the interactions of culture, history, and religion. The challenge of modernity faced by Jews and Judaism over the last two hundred years has transformed traditional Jewish societies and generated a great measure of difference and diversity. After a history of more than two millennia, Jews have redefined religion, notions of identity, and social organization in contexts of a dominant culture (in Israel) and a minority culture (elsewhere in the world). The broader dynamics of how ethnic, religious, or racial minorities interact with the majority societies are examined in both these contexts. Courses explore the constants and variety of the Jewish experience in different historical periods and geographical settings and include language study.

Minor in Jewish Studies
The interdisciplinary minor consists of four three-unit core courses and two three-unit elective courses selected on advisement from offerings by a variety of colleges of the University. The purpose of the interdisciplinary Jewish Studies Minor is to acquaint the student with the history, culture, contributions, and religion of the Jewish people as seen through the eyes of modern academic disciplines and with particular reference to contemporary issues and patterns. Students can use the Minor in Jewish Studies to complement their majors and, with advising, to fulfill General Education requirements.

Career Outlook
The Bachelor of Arts in Modern Jewish Studies and the Jewish Studies Minor offer an excellent background for students interested in Judaism as the basis for scholarly or professional pursuits, increasing the depth of understanding of the history, culture, contributions, and religion of the Jewish people within the context of a major discipline of study and prepare students for careers as educators and community professionals.

Jewish Studies Learning Outcomes
1. Students develop interpretive and analytical skills in reading Jewish religious texts.
2. Students develop interpretive and analytical skills in reading Jewish literary texts.
3. Students gain knowledge of the history and cultures of Jews and Judaism in the ancient, medieval, and modern periods in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.
4. Students gain knowledge of the relationships of Jews and Judaism to other peoples, religions, and cultures in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa.
5. Students gain knowledge of the ways that Jews and Judaism illuminate the histories, literatures, religions, and cultures of non-Jews in the world.
6. Students gain knowledge of the ways that non-Jewish histories, literatures, religions, and cultures are necessary to understand Jews and Judaism in the world.
7. Students find, read, understand, and assimilate primary and secondary research materials.

Professors
Astren, Dollinger, Millet, Kaplan

Assistant Professor
Gross

Lecturer
Rosenwald

Major
- Bachelor of Arts in Modern Jewish Studies (bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/jewish-studies/ba-modern-jewish-studies)

Minor
- Minor in Jewish Studies (bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/jewish-studies/minor-jewish-studies)

JS 280 Introduction to Jewish Studies (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
Foundational beliefs, stories, and practices of the Jewish religious tradition; various transformations the tradition has undergone throughout history and into the modern period.
Course Attributes:
- C2: Humanities

JS 301 Judaism, An Introduction (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor.
Explores religious and cultural practices of Judaism in United States by surveying religious practices of Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist Jewish congregations. Relates these practices to Jewish experience and history.
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Social Justice

JS 317 The Holocaust and Genocide (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Upper division standing; ENG 214 or equivalent; or consent of instructor.
Process and conditions which led to the harassment, expulsion, and extermination of the Jews during World War II; new information about the concentration camp system.
(This course is offered as HIST 317 and JS 317. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
JS 350 Jewish Social Responsibility (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

A 2,000 year history of a people commanded to repair the world. From Biblical sources defining the nature of poverty to contemporary philosophical debates on issues as varied as social inequality and care for the environment. [CSL may be available]

Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Social Justice

JS 377 Jerusalem (Units: 3)  
Prerequisites: Upper division standing; ENG 214 or equivalent.

The dynamics of Jerusalem's intellectual, artistic, and social life with emphasis on the great works that symbolize the contribution of that city to human culture.  
(This course is offered as HUM 377 and JS 377. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Global Perspectives

JS 378 Beyond the Bagel (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

Explores "food" in Jewish culture from Bible to current Jewish communities, including Israeli fusion food, and Jewish-American cuisine. By analyzing "authenticity and purity" in Jewish kitchens, students learn literature, folklore of Jewish cooking.

JS 405 Film and the Holocaust (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor.

The use of film to promote, document, and dramatize the Holocaust. Filmmakers who have sought to give expression to its human scale. Significant works which have helped define the issues.  
(This course is offered as CINE 305 and JS 405. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

JS 414 Arendt and Heidegger (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent or consent of instructor.

Hannah Arendt, a student of Heidegger, is renowned in her own right as philosopher and political theorist. In a comparative study explore the relationship of their ideas, and question the extent to which she was disciple or critic.  
(This course is offered as HUM 434, JS 414, PHIL 434, and PLSI 434. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 415 The Hebrew Bible (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

The Hebrew Bible in English translation from historical, literary, and religious points of view; culture and religion of ancient Israel and the ancient Near East.  
(This course is offered as JS 415 and PHIL 415. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

JS 421 Food Fights: The Politics of American Jewish Consumption, 1654-Present (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

Exploration of the politics of religion, food, and eating among Jews in the US from the late nineteenth century to the present. Focus on American Jewish foodways: cultural, social, historical, political, and economic practices of food production and consumption that have sustained and demarcated Jewish communities.  
(This course is offered as JS 421 and HIST 421. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 425 Judaism: Religion and Text (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.

The manner and process of external/internal influences that move Jewish thought; the matters with which the rabbis and particular Jewish philosophers have concerned themselves.  
(This course is offered as JS 425 and PHIL 552. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

JS 430 Israeli Democracy: Politics, Institutions, and Society (Units: 3)  
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.

Knowledge of Israel's political system, its origins, its formal structure, the way it functions, and its main attributes in comparison to other democratic political systems. Ideology, state and religion, and civil liberties.  
(This course is offered as JS 430, I R 430, and PLSI 430. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:
- UD-D: Social Sciences
- Global Perspectives
JS 437 Holocaust and Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214.
Fiction and non-fiction Holocaust literature by Saul Bellow, T. Borowski, Etty Hillesum, I.B. Singer, and Elie Wiesel. (This course is offered as JS 437, ENG 533, and CWL 437. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Global Perspectives
- Social Justice

JS 441 American Jews and Popular Culture (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
Examination of presentation and participation of Jews in American popular culture of the 20th and 21st centuries. Focused on the representation of Jews and Judaism in film, television, and media. Representation of Jews and Judaism in literature, athletics, food, museums, and consumer culture also addressed. (This course is offered as JS 441, HIST 441 and HUM 441. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 449 American Jewish History (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
American Jewish History from 1654 to the present. Traces social, political, religious and economic history of Jews in colonial America and the United States. Topics: influence of government, immigration, religion, anti-Semitism, regionalism, acculturation. (This course is offered as JS 449 and HIST 449. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- U.S. History
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Am. Ethnic & Racial Minorities
- Social Justice

JS 451 Jewish Literature of the Americas (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Explores literature of the Americas through the lens of Jewish identity and tradition. Texts in translation from Latin America, Canada, and the US reveal how Jewish writers have rethought modernity’s intersection with Jewish traditions. (This course is offered as JS 451, CWL 451, and ENG 451. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Am. Ethnic & Racial Minorities
- Social Justice

JS 467 On the Cultural Frontlines: Contemporary Trends in Israeli Art (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
An examination of contemporary Israeli culture through literature, cinema, and theater. Inner conflicts and shared visions of the Israeli psyche are revealed through the arts and in conversation with Israeli artists. (This course is offered as JS 467, BECA 467, C W 467, and TH A 467. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 480 European Jewish Writers (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or CWL 214 or equivalent.
Survey of the works of modern Jewish writers throughout Europe between the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries; influence of the Jewish Enlightenment on modern Jewish literature. (This course is offered as JS 480 and CWL 480. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Global Perspectives
- Social Justice

JS 485 Modern Israeli Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Survey of the works of modern Israeli writers of fiction, poetry, and drama; conceptual underpinnings of modern Israeli aesthetic projects in literature; how Israel’s multilingual heritage marks the modern writer.

JS 497 Topics in Israel Studies (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
In-depth exploration of one or more specific topics in Israel Studies with disciplinary approaches that may span the humanities, social sciences, and arts. Topics to be specified in the Class Schedule. May be repeated for a total of 9 units as topics vary. [Formerly JS 477]

JS 501 Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
Beliefs, practices, social organization, and history of the three monotheistic religious traditions; importance of these traditions for European and Middle Eastern civilizations. (This course is offered as JS 501, PHIL 501, and HUM 501. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Global Perspectives

JS 530 Yiddish Literature, History, and Society (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Examination of Yiddish literature, history, culture, and society in Europe, America, and Israel through Yiddish fiction, poetry, and theater, as well as journalism, political writing, philosophy, and religion.

JS 540 Anti-Semitism (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Survey of the historical, political, cultural, and religious contexts and manifestations of anti-Semitism. Examines its different forms and trajectories and evaluates its effects on both Jews and non-Jews and Jewish and non-Jewish societies.
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Global Perspectives
- Social Justice
JS 546 20th Century American Jewish Women Writers (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Exploration through novels, short fiction, and memoir the connections American women forge and the tensions they experience via encounters with self, family, Judaism, American society, and world history. (This course is offered as JS 546, ENG 546, and WGS 546. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
  • UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
  • Am. Ethnic & Racial Minorities
  • Global Perspectives

JS 548 The Jewish Sixties: A Journey Through The Social Protest Movements of the 1960s (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: English 214 or equivalent.
Explores the Jewish Sixties through the thematic lens of religion, history, and sociology. Divides the Sixties into two historical epochs: 1954-1964 and 1965-1980. In the first period examines consensus-based race relations with attention to the modern struggle for racial equality as well as leftist critics of Cold War America. The second era explores the radicalization of social reform efforts with careful attention to the rise of the New Left, Vietnam protests and counterculture. (This course is offered as JS 548 and HIST 416. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 560 The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent.
Examination of causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict; beginnings in the late nineteenth century; Jewish-Palestinian confrontation during the British Mandate (1917-1948); Arab-Israeli wars since 1948; Israeli-Palestinian confrontation since 1948; attempts to end the confrontation since 1967. (This course is offered as JS 560 and IR 530. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
  • UD-D: Social Sciences
  • Global Perspectives

JS 632 Jewish History I: Beginnings to 1650 (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Jewish history from the sixth century B.C.E. to the rise of European modernity. Politics, culture, and religion under empires of Persia, Hellenism, and Rome, and in medieval diasporas of Europe and lands of Islam. (This course is offered as JS 632 and HIST 632. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
  • UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
  • Global Perspectives

JS 633 Jewish History II: 1650 to Present (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent or consent of instructor.
Jewish history from 1650 to present. Central theme is the encounter of traditional ethnic and religious minority with modernity. Topics: emancipation, antisemitism, immigration, Zionism, Israel, America, Holocaust. (This course is offered as JS 633 and HIST 633. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)
Course Attributes:
  • UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
  • Global Perspectives

JS 699 Independent Study (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisite: Upper division standing or consent of instructor.
Individual supervision of intensive independent work on a particular problem or subject in Jewish studies chosen by the student. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.

JS 741 The Holocaust and Postwar Germany Taught in English (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Graduate standing in German, History, or Jewish Studies, or consent of instructor.
The Holocaust in Postwar Germany as seen in exemplary works of literature, historical documents and Nuremberg trials. (Plus-minus letter grade only) [Taught in English] (This course is offered as GER 741, HIST 741, and JS 741. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

JS 800 Internship (Units: 3)
Prerequisites for JS 800: Admission to certificate program and consultation with program director.
Prerequisite for JS 600: Consultation with program director.
Supervised work in the setting of a Jewish communal organization or an institution serving Jewish clients. [CSL may be available]
(JS 800/JS 600 is a paired course offering. May be repeated for a total of 6 units at one level. Students who have completed the course at one level may not take or repeat the course at another level.)

JS 899 Independent Study (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisite: Consent of supervising faculty member. Enrollment is by petition. Open only to graduate students who have demonstrated the ability to do independent work.
Study is planned, developed, and completed under the direction of a member of the program faculty. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.