

**JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM
2016 SPRING COURSES**

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ENGLISH

ENGL 264 THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE **MWF 9:30**

3 CR.
Deering

My section of English 264 will read selected portions of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Apocrypha. The course will entail a close study of a variety of literary forms and techniques: the structure of historical and biographical narratives (the Garden of Eden, the Exodus from Egypt, the Crucifixion/Resurrection), development of plot and character (in the stories of Abraham, David, Elijah, Jesus), and growth of prophetic and poetic styles and traditions (Isaiah, Micah, Job, Psalms), and the distinctive features of wisdom (proverbs, parables) and apocalyptic literature (Daniel, Revelation). Students will write 10-12 one page papers. There will be no tests or final exam. Students will participate weekly in team discussions of the reading.

HISTORY

HIST 103-1 INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDIEVAL WORLD **TTh 4:30-5:45**

3 CR.
Mitchell

This course is an overview of medieval history in Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the birth of the Renaissance. We explore political, religious, and social changes as well as economic, technological, and cultural developments. We seek to understand the complexity of the medieval past, including an awareness of the experiences of ordinary men and women, as well as the rich and powerful. Topics include: The Birth of Christianity; The Decline of the Roman Empire; The Barbarian Nations; Islam; The Feudal World; The Crusades & Chivalry; Daily Life; The Church, Heresy & Witchcraft; The Black Death; The Renaissance.

HIST 103-2 INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDIEVAL WORLD **MWF 11:30**

3 CR.
TBA

This course is an overview of medieval history in Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the birth of the Renaissance. We explore political, religious, and social changes as well as economic, technological, and cultural developments. We seek to understand the complexity of the medieval past, including an awareness of the experiences of ordinary men and women, as well as the rich and powerful. Topics include: The Birth of Christianity; The Decline of the Roman Empire; The Barbarian Nations; Islam; The Feudal World; The Crusades & Chivalry; Daily Life; The Church, Heresy & Witchcraft; The Black Death; The Renaissance.

HIST 335 NATIONALISM & SOCIALISM IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE **MWF 10:30**

3 CR.
Klein-Pejšová

The lands between Germany and Russia continue to be a laboratory for political ideas and ambitions. From the collapse of dynastic empires following World War One to the expansion of the European Union through today, political and social forces have fostered experimentation with nationalism and socialism, along with forms of fascism, communism, populism and democracy. The catastrophic and transformative power of war on society is crucial to understanding the creation of both the interwar nation-state system based on the premise of national self-determination, and the post-World War Two communist regimes based on Soviet-style socialism. We will pay special attention the the weaknesses of the interwar and postwar regimes, strategies of survival, modernization, and dissent using a variety of primary and secondary sources, including novels, film and music. We will seek to understand the roots of today's headline-making crises, especially in Hungary and Ukraine, against a global backdrop.

JEWISH STUDIES

JWST 330 INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH STUDIES

TTh 12:00 – 1:15

Meets with HIST 302 and POL 493.

3 CR.

Kantor

This course fulfills the College of Liberal Arts Racial and Ethnic Diversity Core Requirement.

The purpose of this course is to critically introduce students to the “Jewish Experience,” from its inception, in the Ancient Near East, to our present time. Using several disciplines—religion, philosophy, history, literature, film, anthropology, sociology—we will explore the ways and manners by which Judaism manifests itself, as well as how we come to study Judaism academically. Thus, on the one hand, we will examine the *internal* (ontology) intricacies and complex textures of the core ideas which have created Judaism from *within*, that is, how a group of people created Judaism, in both reflexive and unreflexive fashion, in reference to their material and historical conditions. In other words, what is Judaism and what does it mean to be Jewish from the Jewish perspective which has always already been in reference to its locality. On the other hand, we will examine how Judaism has been studied *externally*, from *without*, (epistemology) by others, as well as by modern academic disciplines. For this external approach has also shaped and determined the ontological constitution of Judaism. What and how others think of us is *eo ipso*, part and parcel of who we are. We must understand that these internal-external approaches are intimately intertwined. It is first and foremost *practice* that creates and sustains an idea/phenomenon, namely, it is a mutual venture between those who lead their lives by Judaism, Jews who bear it on their backs as it were, and those who react to and study how these people indeed, bear it through their historical consciousness, faith, philosophy, and daily costumes. In addition, this course is intended as a gateway to Jewish Studies major or minor at Purdue University, or for that matter, anywhere else. As a general rule, its scope and methodological approaches will make it both worthwhile and necessary for any undergraduate student who wishes to do more in-depth work in Jewish Studies.

Required texts:

Michael Brenner, *A Short History of the Jews*

Joseph Dan, *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction*

Norman Solomon, *Judaism: A Very Short Introduction*

Yosef Haim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*

Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith: A Study of the Interpenetration of Judaism and Christianity*

More of the syllabus can be viewed at: <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/jewish-studies/courses/jwst330.html>

JWST 590 DIRECTED READINGS IN JEWISH STUDIES

Time and instructor to be arranged

3 CR.

A reading course in aspects of Judaica directed by the instructor in whose particular field of specialization the content of the reading falls. Permission of Instructor required.

LANGUAGES & CULTURES

HEBR 102 MODERN HEBREW II

MTWF 9:30

3 CR.

Kantor

Continuation and extension of the first semester. The course aims to develop fluency in reading, comprehension, and spoken language. Knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is expanded.

HEBR 202 MODERN HEBREW IV

MWF 10:30

3 CR.

Kantor

Extensive practice in reading, speaking, and writing Hebrew, based on a variety of subjects from daily life and literature. Continued study of grammar and reading in the modern language.

LANGUAGES & CULTURES

HEBR 122 BIBLICAL HEBREW II

TTh 9:00-10:15

3 CR.

Robertson

The second semester of biblical Hebrew will continue the study of reading, vocabulary and grammar, based on selections from the Hebrew Bible.

HEBR 222 BIBLICAL HEBREW IV

TTh 10:30-11:45

3 CR.

Robertson

The fourth semester of biblical Hebrew exposes the student to both narrative and poetic sections of the Bible.

PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 206 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

MWF 1:30

3 CR.

TBA

The course will be divided into three parts. The first part of the course will deal with a question that has loomed large in the philosophical history of western monotheism (Judaism, Christianity and Islam): *is belief in God rational?* The focus here will be on arguments for God's existence (such as the argument from the fact that the universe seems to have been designed), on arguments against God's existence (e.g., the argument that a perfect God wouldn't permit terrible things to happen and yet they happen), and on whether belief in God can be rational if it isn't supported by argument. The second part of the course will focus on the fact that there are many different religions in the world, most of which claim to be the only religion that is right about the most important truths. Our question here will be whether, in the face of this plurality of religions, it can be rational to think that one's *own* religion is right and that other religions incompatible with it are mistaken. The third part of the course will focus on some questions in philosophical theology—questions such as: Can we be free if God foreknows what we will do? Does it make sense to make requests of God in prayer given that, whether we pray or not, a perfect being would know what we want and would do what is best? The course requirements will include several short quizzes, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

PHIL 540 CIVIL RELIGION IN MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: FROM MACHIAVELLI TO HEGEL

3 CR.

M 11:30-2:20

Frank and Yeomans

In this team-taught seminar in political philosophy we shall focus on the role that religion ought to play in the state. Alliances between Church and State and brutal wars enveloped Europe from the Renaissance through the 17th century, and in the wake of this unease political philosophers from Machiavelli and Hobbes on speculated upon what role, if any, religion ought to play in the political sphere. They wondered whether the institutional religious structures are a help or a hindrance in achieving political and social stability. Issues in social and political philosophy, philosophical anthropology, and legal philosophy will be debated.

We shall read and discuss texts by Machiavelli, Hobbes, Spinoza, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Hegel. The period to be covered stretches from the Italian Renaissance to 19th century Prussia.

The seminar will be of interest to graduate students and properly-prepared advanced undergraduates in a variety of disciplines, especially philosophy, history, and political science.

RELIGION

REL 231 RELIGIONS OF THE WEST
MWF 11:30
Meets with PHIL 231

3 CR.
Ryba

The purpose of this course is to provide a systematic survey of those religions variously described, in the West, as ‘Western Religions’ or ‘Religions of the West.’ Immediately, a problem arises because the adjective, ‘Western,’ is questionable. The descriptions ‘Western’ or ‘of the West’ have been understood as designating a problematic geo-cultural location—but also a homogeneous style of religious thought because of their common origins as *Abrahamic* monotheisms. Contemporary scholars of religion, and indigenous believers, often contest this imputed homogeneity and have pointed to the incredible complexity and fluidity of these traditions, characteristics which resist simplistic classification. Well aware of the challenges such descriptions present, we, in this course, will engage in a comparative study of the systems of belief, thought, and practice traditionally termed ‘Western Religions’ by Western scholars of religions. This will be accomplished through a series of readings on these systems’ histories, philosophies and scriptures.

The approach adopted in this course is *phenomenological* and *comparative*. Adopting the *phenomenological method* in the academic study of religion means that we shall try to study these religions objectively and empathetically. Adopting the *comparative method* in the academic study of religion means that we shall try to compare and contrast the features of these religions with the intent of observing similarities, dissimilarities and regularities, where meaningful items of comparison occur. The phenomenological method (properly applied) gives us access to a religion’s rationale; the comparative method (properly applied) gives us access to the rationale of *Religion*.

The systems of belief, thought, and practice which will be studied and compared in this course are: (1) the Judaic tradition (* > 1800 BCE [~1900]), (2) the Christian tradition (* ~ 4 BCE/>~30 CE), and (3) the Islamic tradition (* > 622 CE [AH 1]). This survey and comparison will take place according to a fixed set of categories. The following will be surveyed for each of these traditions: (a) its worldview, (b) its scriptures, (c) its hierology, (d) its cosmology, (e) its anthropology, (f) its soteriology, and (g) its most important schools of thought (or forms of scholasticism). To simplify this comparison, we shall not be considering these structures across all periods of each tradition (and in their full denominational complexity) but only within the span of time which was characteristically formative for later development. This will be called the “classical” period of each.

Prerequisites: None. **Grades based on:** Four *objective* examinations and extra credit assignments.

Required Texts:

1. Solomon Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*
2. Linwood Urban, *A Short History of Christian Thought*
3. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*
4. F. E. Peters, *The Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, Islam*

REL 318 THE BIBLE AND ITS EARLY INTERPRETERS
TTh 3:00-4:15

3 CR.
Robertson

This course will start with observation of the development of early themes in later parts of the Hebrew Bible and proceed to the on-going influence of these themes in Jewish literature outside the Hebrew canon (apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, targums, midrash, Josephus, Philo, and other Hellenistic Jewish authors), as well as in pagan literature of this era and in early Christian literature, particularly the New Testament.

SOCIOLOGY

SOC 310 RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY 3 CR.
MWF 11:30 TBA

Examines racial and ethnic pluralism in America: ways groups have entered our society; their social and cultural characteristics; and their relationships with other groups. Groups include the English, Germans, Irish, Jews, Chinese, Japanese, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans.

SOC 367 RELIGION IN AMERICA 3 CR.
TTh 10:30-11:45 Olson

Examines the social dimensions of religion in American life; religion in American culture; social profiles of America's religious groups, trends in individual religious commitment; and religion's impact on American life.