INSTRUCTOR: Beth S. Wenger
OFFICE: 320 College Hall
OFFICE HOURS: Tues. 3:00-4:30
and by appt.
PHONE: 898-5702
E-MAIL: bwenger@sas.upenn.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course offers an intensive survey of the major currents in Jewish culture and society from the early modern period to the present. Focusing upon the different societies in which Jews have lived, the course explores the development of Jewish responses to the political, socio-economic, and cultural challenges of modernity. Topics will include Jewish enlightenment, emancipation, the Holocaust, Jewish politics, religious reform, modern orthodoxy, Zionism, and other forms of Jewish culture.

Curiosity about Jewish history and the desire to explore its drama and complexity are the only prerequisites for this course. No prior knowledge of the subject is assumed. The course will have lectures as well as time for discussion. During class discussions, students will examine readings in depth, and particularly, explore the assigned historical documents that demand close analysis and interpretation. Regular attendance at class sessions is expected and students will be asked to respond and raise questions about the readings; required readings should be completed prior to the class for which they are assigned. Students should be prepared to analyze and discuss the readings and primary documents assigned for each class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN CLASS, INCLUDING ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN DISCUSSIONS OF PRIMARY SOURCES.

2. MIDTERM EXAMINATION: In Class—Thurs., February 28th.

3. FINAL EXAMINATION: Scheduled by Registrar

4. IN-CLASS DEBATES: All students will participate in one of three scheduled in-class debates. Students will assume the role of historic participants in debates about: Jewish emancipation, modern religious movements in Judaism, and Jewish political movements, including varieties of Zionism. Students will work in small groups to prepare for the debates and will divide the various positions that each student will represent. There should be exchange and discussion among the groups in each debate.

5. PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS: This 5-7 page paper should be a close historical analysis of a primary source—a memoir, political or religious tract, autobiography, or collection of documents. A list of suggested sources is available on Canvas under “Primary Source Assignment” at the bottom of the home page. Other research topics will
be permitted with the permission of the instructor. **PAPERS DUE IN CLASS ON APRIL 4.**

**GRADING:**

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Class debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Source Analysis</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**LATE WORK WILL BE PENALIZED WITH A LOWER GRADE**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Penn’s Code of Academic Integrity defines Plagiarism as using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgement. Standards of academic integrity will be strictly enforced.

**BOOKS AVAILABLE AT UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA BOOKSTORE:**


** This book is also available as an e-book through Franklin: https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/catalog/FRANKLIN_9972977423503681

*Books ordered for purchase will also be available at Rosengarten Reserve, Van Pelt Library.

- All other required readings for the course are available through Canvas:
  - Please look for the course under HIST141-401-19A

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Jan. 17**  
Introduction

**Jan. 22**  
Harbingers of Modernity


**Documents:**
Jan. 24 – 29  

Enlightenment and Haskalah


Documents:


Jan. 31 – Feb. 5  

Emancipation in Western Europe and the Reorganization of the Jewish Community

De Lange, *The Illustrated History of the Jewish People*, pp. 210-16.


Documents:


*** Class Debate #1 on Jewish emancipation on JAN. 31.

Feb. 7  

The Social Consequences of Emancipation: Acculturation and Mobility


Documents:
Feb. 12–14  The Emergence of Modern Varieties of Judaism


**Documents:**


Feb. 19  Class Debate #2: Modern religious movements in Judaism

Feb. 21  East European Jewry and Its Traditional Cultures; Hasidism and Its Opponents


**Documents:**


Feb. 26  East European Jewry in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries I


**Documents:**


Feb. 28  Midterm Exam

Mar. 12  East European Jewry in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries II


Documents:

Mar. 14  The Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism


Documents:

Mar. 19 - 21  The Zionist Revolution


Documents:


Mar. 26  Class Debate #3: Jewish political movements, including varieties of Zionism

Mar. 28  The Rise of American Jewry I

Documents:

Apr. 2  The Rise of American Jewry II


Documents:

Apr. 4  European Jewry in the Interwar Years


Documents:

- PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE IN CLASS TODAY.

Apr. 9 - 11  The Holocaust


Documents:


Songs of the Chelm and Bialystok Ghettos (1940s), in Lucy Dawidowicz, *A Holocaust Reader*, pp. 177 -78 (on Canvas).


Apr. 16  Middle Eastern Jewry

SCREENING OF FILM EXCERPTS:  *Forget Baghdad*

Documents:
Apr. 18       The Creation of Israel
Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, Civil Religion in Israel, pp. 81-122.

Documents:

Apr. 23       Visit to Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

Apr. 25:      Post-World War II American Jewry

Documents:
Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, eds., The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 570-72, 581-84, 875-78

Apr. 30       Course Conclusions

Documents:
Mendes-Flohr and Reinharz, eds., The Jew in the Modern World, pp. 889-91 (Tables XVII- XIX), and pp. 866-70.