The Jewish studies minor, coordinated by the Philip and Muriel Berman Center for Jewish Studies (http://cjs.cas.lehigh.edu/), provides students with the opportunity to explore the history, literature, religion, and social institutions of the Jewish people from its inception to the present. The diverse selection of courses highlights the interaction of Judaism with other cultures and societies in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States. Students will discover that courses in Jewish studies enhance their understanding of individual and group identity and the dynamics of religious-cultural pluralism. The program is designed to appeal to students with varied interests in any field of concentration. The flexible requirements of the minor in Jewish Studies make it an ideal complement to any major or minor in Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, or Education. Students should coordinate their minor program in Jewish studies with the director.

The Berman Center for Jewish Studies supplements formal course offerings through an extensive program of lectures, colloquia, films, field trips, and other cultural events. The Center also provides funding for travel to students to help them pursue study abroad experiences or other cultural events. The Center is also an active center for social change, encouraging students to take part in the community and to use Jewish studies as tools for understanding and addressing social issues.

JEWSH STUDIES MINOR

Students pursuing a minor in Jewish studies must fulfill 15 to 16 credit hours.

Four (4) courses from the approved course list or in consultation with the program director.  

Total Credits 15-16

1 A maximum of eight credit hours of Hebrew may be counted

COURSES

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Courses

JST 031 (HIST 031) Empire, War, and Resistance in the Middle East 4 Credits

NEW COURSE PENDING FACULTY APPROVAL -- Over the past 200 years, empires have fought over the control of strategic trade routes and natural resources in the Middle East. Conflicts in Israel-Palestine, Iraq, and Syria emerged with the redrawing of borders. These geo-political changes shed light on how national identities changed but also on how Middle Eastern men and women resisted foreign occupation and domestic dictators alike. Through diverse media such as fiction, photography, and film, this course introduces students to the region’s rich history and legacy.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

JST 070 (REL 070) Antisemitism Past and Present 4 Credits

Jewish is both a textual tradition and a lived religion. Students read basic Jewish texts—Bible, Talmud, Midrash—and study the ways Jews sanctify the life cycle through rites of passage, and the round of the year through the festival cycle.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 073 (REL 073) The Jewish Tradition 4 Credits

Judaism is both a textual tradition and a lived religion. Students read basic Jewish texts—Bible, Talmud, Midrash—and study the ways Jews sanctify the life cycle through rites of passage, and the round of the year through the festival cycle.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 081 (REL 081) Jewish Mysticism 4 Credits

This course will consider the role that anti-Judaism and antisemitism have played in western culture from the ancient period to the present day.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 076 (HIST 076) Middle East in World Affairs Since 1945 4 Credits

Rise of Turkish, Iranian, and Arab nationalism; creation of Israel; decline of British and French power; growth of U.S. and Soviet influence; Middle East as world’s major oil producer.

Attribute/Distribution: SS

JST 080 (IR 080) The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 4 Credits


Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 091 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

Intensive study of a topic of special interest not covered in other courses.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: HU, SS
JST 102 (AAS 102, ENGL 102, REL 102) Promised Lands: Jewish and African American Children's Literature 4 Credits
In the Hebrew Bible, Psalm 137 asks, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" For Jews, blacks, and black Jews, this was and is a poignant question. This course examines how these two rich, often overlapping and interacting groups tell their stories in literature for children and young adults, with a particular focus on the mediation of traumatic pasts. What does it mean to imagine promised lands beyond such pasts—and can they be reached?
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 111 (REL 111) Jewish Scriptures/Old Testament 4 Credits
The religious expression of the Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews as found in the Jewish Scriptures (TANAK/Christian Old Testament). Near Eastern context of Hebrew religion, the Patriarchs, the Exodus, the monarchy, prophecy, Exile and Return. Emphasis on historical, literary, critical problems, and newer socio-historical methods.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 112 (REL 112) The Beginnings of Judaism and Jewish Origins: Jewish Diversity in the Greco-Roman World 4 Credits
The variety of approaches to Judaism in the period following the Babylonian exile through the second century C.E. The literature studied will include Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

Early Christianity from its beginnings until the end of the second century. Coverage includes the Jewish and Hellenistic matrices of Christianity, traditions about the life of Jesus and his significance, and the variety of belief and practice of early Christians. Emphasis on encountering primary texts.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 121 (REL 121) Sources for the Life of Jesus: the Jewish and Christian Context 4 Credits
Ancient sources that claim to provide information about Jesus of Nazareth. Approaches taken to Jesus' life and career; early Christian interpretations of the significance of Jesus; methodology in assessing evidence for the historical Jesus and his message.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 122 (REL 122) Archaeology and the Bible 4 Credits
In this course we will examine the way that archaeological work can inform the study of the Bible. One important consideration is how archaeological data have been used either to confirm or falsify the biblical texts. We will look at how archaeologists work and how archaeological data and the Bible intersect. We will examine in detail several archaeological sites in order to understand better the difficulties in interpreting the material remains that archaeologists dig up.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 123 (REL 123) Armageddon: Endtime Thinking in Judaism and Christianity 4 Credits
Thinking about how the world will end was an important feature of certain types of ancient Judaism. Early Christianity took over many of these ideas, and they became fundamental to later Christian theologies, including many that continue to be advocated today. This course will look at ancient Jewish and Christian texts that speak about the end of the world and will trace some of them through more contemporary developments in these two religious traditions.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 129 (PHIL 129, REL 129) Jewish Philosophy 4 Credits
Consideration of how major Jewish thinkers from the first to 21st centuries confronted questions at the intersection of religion and philosophy: the existence and nature of God, free will, evil, divine providence, miracles, creation, revelation, and religious obligation.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 138 (REL 138, WGSS 138) Sex, Gender, Jews 4 Credits
How do Jews of all genders tell their stories? What are the varied Jewish approaches to sexuality? How have feminist movements affected Jewish rituals? In this course, we will consider how religion, gender, sexuality, race, and class intersect in the lives of Jews, with a particular focus on North America. Topics will include: Jewish women's memoirs; the voices of LGBTQ Jews; recent innovations in Jewish ritual and leadership; Jewish masculinities; and the gendering of Jewish children's literature, among others.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 151 (HMS 151, PHIL 151, REL 151) Judaism, Medicine, and Bioethics 4 Credits
This class traces the relationship between Jews and medicine from 1100 to 2020. How does Jewish religion and culture cultivate an affinity for the healing arts? How does Jewish law, ethics, and culture inform contemporary bioethics?
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 152 (REL 152) American Judaism 4 Credits
Diverse cultural and social forms through which American Jews express their distinct identity. Is American Jewry an example of assimilation and decline or creative transformation? What, if anything, do American Jews share in common? Compatibility of Judaism with individualism, pluralism, and voluntarism. How have the Holocaust and the State of Israel shaped the self-understanding of American Jewry?
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 154 (HIST 154, REL 154) The Holocaust: History and Meaning 4 Credits
The Nazi Holocaust in its historical, political and religious setting. Emphasis upon the moral, cultural and theological issues raised by the Holocaust.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 156 (REL 156) Judaism and Comic Books 4 Credits
Is Superman Jewish? What are Jewish connections to Christian and Jewish religious texts? How do JewishAmerican Jews share in common? What, if anything, can inform contemporary Jewish life? What, if anything, can inform contemporary bioethics?
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 161 (GS 161, REL 161) Globalization in the Ancient Mediterranean 4 Credits
We often think of globalization as a modern phenomenon. Yet as early as the twelfth century BCE, transportation, trade, political and religious networks tied the Mediterranean basin together. This course will examine in three periods-the Late Bronze Age, the Hellenistic period, and the Roman period-how these networks were organized and how they affected a range of Mediterranean and Near Eastern peoples. We will use some modern approaches to globalization as analytical tools for understanding the ancient world.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 174 (REL 174) Modern Theology 4 Credits
Major 20th century movements within Christian and Jewish theology understood as responses to the problems of modern times.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 175 (GS 175, HIST 175, REL 175) History of Racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia 4 Credits
From the history of slavery in the ancient world to Charlottesville 2017. We will read texts and watch movies that discuss the history of slavery, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia. The historical meeting of worlds goes from "social slavery" in the ancient world to the "blood laws" in medieval Spain; colonialism in the New World, the rise of biological racism in the nineteenth century, and of cultural racism in the twentieth century.
Attribute/Distribution: SS
JST 177 (REL 177, THTR 177) Jews and the Broadway Musical 4
Credits
The history of American musical theater is deeply interwoven with
the history of American Jews. This course examines how Jews
have taken part in musical theater on multiple levels—as composers,
lyricists, producers, and performers, among other roles. It also
examines how Jews are depicted in Broadway musicals, with
particular attention to gender and ethnicity.
Attribute/Distribution: HU

JST 180 Independent Study in Jewish Studies 1-4 Credits
Directed readings or research on a Jewish Studies related topic under
the direction of a Jewish Studies faculty member. May be repeated for
credit up to eight credits. Must have consent of the program director.
Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.
Attribute/Distribution: HU, SS

JST 191 Special Topics 1-4 Credits
Intensive study of a topic of special interest not covered in other
courses.
Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.
Attribute/Distribution: HU, SS

JST 291 Special Topics 1-4 Credits
Intensive study of a topic of special interest not covered in other
courses.
Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.
Attribute/Distribution: HU, SS

JST 391 Special Topics 1-4 Credits
Intensive study of a topic of special interest not covered in other
courses.
Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.
Attribute/Distribution: HU, SS