The Jewish Studies Program, in the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies, is an academic program whose core mission is to educate students in the breadth and complexities of Jewish history, religion, politics, and culture and to situate this learning in the larger context of their liberal arts education. Jewish studies courses engage students of all backgrounds in diverse aspects of Jewish civilization and address themes as divergent as identity formation, prejudice, and intercultural relations. Through the minor in Jewish studies, the program offers students an opportunity to take courses in several disciplines of the humanities and social sciences, including religious studies, history, government, French, and music.

As the only program of its kind in Maine, Jewish studies seeks not only to educate Colby students but also to provide public programming to members of the Maine community through its curricular and cocurricular activities. Though a major in Jewish studies is not offered, interested students are encouraged to consult the director about an independent major.

Requirements for the Minor in Jewish Studies

A minimum of six Jewish studies courses, including the two core courses (Religious Studies 181 and 182) and one course at the 300 or 400 level. Jewish Studies 125 does not count toward the minor. Minors may petition to receive credit toward the Jewish studies minor for up to three courses taken at other colleges and universities.

Successful completion of the minor requires a 2.00 average for all requirements above. None of the required courses may be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

Courses listed below are described in the appropriate department sections of this catalogue.

Courses from Other Departments Approved for the Minor in Jewish Studies

French
- 323 Holocaust in French Cinema

Government
- 251 Israelis and Palestinians: Conflict and Accommodation
- 252 Introduction to Politics of the Middle East

History
- 283 Golden Diaspora: Modern American Jewish History
- 421 Research Seminar: Debating the Nazi Past

Music
- 121 Entartete (Degenerate) Musik

Religious Studies
- 120 Personal Writings about God
- 143 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- 152 Israeli Popular Music
- 181 Conceptions of Jews and Judaism
- 182 Jews, Judaism, and the Modern World
- 219 Violence and Religion through the Centuries
- 221 The Jews of Maine
- 322 Food and Religious Identity
- 384 Religious Responses to Ethical Dilemmas
- 387 Jews and Muslims in Christian Thought

Course Offerings

JS097j Kitchen Judaism: Jewish Identity Formation through Cooking  How does food—and more specifically, the act of cooking—shape identity? Meeting in Beth Israel congregation's kitchen in Waterville, we will examine Jewish dietary laws and history before
cooking dishes from a range of geographically diverse Jewish cuisines. Students will read food-related memoir and first-person accounts, and each session will begin with a roundtable conversation and brief lecture. After that, we hit the kitchen! Noncredit. WEISS

[JS120] Personal Writings about God Listed as Religious Studies 120. Four credit hours. W1.

[JS121] Entartete (Degenerate) Musik Listed as Music 121. Three credit hours. A, I. SILVER

[JS125f] Hebrew I The first of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in Modern Hebrew. Through an interactive approach to language learning, students gain communicative proficiency and a greater understanding of Israeli society. Videos, audio, and web materials introduce students to the nuanced and rich connections between Hebrew and Jewish culture in Israel and around the world. Three credit hours. ISAACS

JS126s Hebrew II The second of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in Modern Hebrew. Students will deepen their knowledge of Hebrew grammar and further develop the facilities for written and oral communication in Hebrew. Delves more deeply into Israeli culture through media and literature. Prerequisite: Jewish Studies 125 or equivalent. Three credit hours. ISAACS

[JS127f] Hebrew III The third of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in Modern Hebrew. Students will deepen their knowledge of Hebrew grammar and further develop the facilities for written and oral communication in Hebrew. Delves more deeply into Israeli culture through media and literature. Prerequisite: Jewish Studies 126 or equivalent. Three credit hours. ISAACS

[JS143f] Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Listed as Religious Studies 143. Four credit hours. L. MANDOLFO

[JS152] Israeli Popular Music Listed as Religious Studies 152. Three credit hours. A.

JS181f Conceptions of Jews and Judaism Listed as Religious Studies 181. Four credit hours. H, I. WEXLER

JS182s Jews, Judaism, and the Modern World Listed as Religious Studies 182. Four credit hours. H, I. WEXLER

[JS221] The Jews of Maine Listed as Religious Studies 221. Four credit hours. H.

[JS224] Jewish Theology An introduction to multiple Jewish answers to life’s big questions. We will explore how to live the good life, the role of God in determining our fate, the meaning of suffering in our lives, and the relationship between politics and faith. We will interrogate ideas found in the Hebrew Bible, Jewish liturgy, rabbinic texts, and the works of modern thinkers such as Hermann Cohen, Mordecai Kaplan, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, and Abraham Isaac Kook. Four credit hours.

JS251s Israelis and Palestinians: Conflict and Accommodation Listed as Government 251. Four credit hours. S. DENOEUX

JS252f Introduction to Politics of the Middle East Listed as Government 252. Four credit hours. DENOEUX


JS297f American Jewish Culture Listed as RE297B. Four credit hours. U. WEXLER

[JS322] Food and Religious Identity Listed as Religious Studies 322. Four credit hours. S.

[JS323] Holocaust in French Cinema Listed as French 323. Four credit hours.

[JS384] Religious Responses to Ethical Dilemmas Listed as Religious Studies 384. Four credit hours.


JS398s Jewish Short Stories Listed as Religious Studies 398. Four credit hours. L, I. WEXLER

[JS421f] Research Seminar: Debating the Nazi Past Listed as History 421. Four credit hours. H, W3, I. SCHECK
JS491f, 492s  Independent Study  One to four credit hours.  FACULTY