JEWISH STUDIES

Director, Associate Professor David Freidenreich
Program Steering Committee: Professors Véronique Plesch (Art), Raffael Scheck (History), and Robert Weisbrot (History); Associate Professors David Freidenreich (Religious Studies) and John Turner (History); Assistant Professors Rachel Isaacs (Jewish Studies) and Damon Mayrl (Sociology); Faculty Fellow Sarah Emanuel (Religious Studies)

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 three- or four-credit course at the 300 or 400 level. Minors may count two two-credit courses or independent studies as the equivalent of a single course toward the requirement of six Jewish studies courses. 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
• 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 Anti-Judaism and Islamophobia in Christian/Western Thought

Course Offerings

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

JS144s  Introduction to the New Testament  Listed as Religious Studies 144.  Four credit hours.  L.  EMANUEL

[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.  FREIDENREICH

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

[JS219]  Violence and Religion through the Centuries  Listed as Religious Studies 219.  Four credit hours.

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

JS223f  Religion in the Modern State of Israel  Listed as Religious Studies 223.  Two credit hours.  FREIDENREICH

[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.

JS226j  Community Organizing and Social Justice  For decades, ordinary citizens have exercised their power on a local and state level using the principles of congregation-based community organizing (CBCO). In this hands-on introduction to the principles of CBCO, students will learn how to organize to build power and create political change. With special attention to the Jewish texts that underlie this work, we will focus on the history of Jewish involvement in social justice movements as a case study for making change. Guest speakers from across the country will share their experiences.  Three credit hours.  ASCH

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


JS298s  Public Speaking for Social Change  Designed as an introduction to the art of public speaking. Its goals are twofold: 1) to analyze the stylistic and structural elements of great religious sermons and speeches 2) to develop the skills required to write effective speeches and deliver them in a professional context. The course will include two sessions a week dedicated to examining text, and a weekly lab to focus writing and delivering speeches. The final project for the course will include the delivery of a public address on a social justice topic at a local community organization in the Waterville area.  Four credit hours.  ISAACS

JS298As  The Jewish Jesus  Listed as Religious Studies 298A.  Four credit hours.  H.  EMANUEL
JS322s  Food and Religious Identity  Listed as Religious Studies 322.  
Four credit hours.  S.  FREIDENREICH

[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.

Four credit hours.  I.

[JS421]  Research Seminar: Debating the Nazi Past  Listed as History 421.  
Four credit hours.  H, W3, I.

JS491f, 492s  Independent Study  One to four credit hours.  FACULTY