**JEWISH STUDIES MAJOR**

**Program Director:** Hayim Lapin, Ph.D.

The Jewish Studies major provides broad training in Jewish Studies, with specializations in History, Literature and Culture, and Philosophy. Yiddish, Hebrew, and Israel Studies are important subfields. Alongside other Arts and Humanities majors, the JWST program provides training in research, analysis, and writing.

Students may choose among two tracks:

1. General Jewish Studies, 36 credits and no second language requirement
2. Language Enhanced, 39 credits, including six credits at the upper (3xx/4xx) level.

**Note:** Students who complete the language track will fulfill the Global Engagement Requirement of the College of Arts and Humanities.

**Program Objectives**

The Meyerhoff Center and Program for Jewish Studies encourages research and provides instruction about the rich history and culture of the Jewish people from earliest times to the present day. Dedicated to the highest standards of scholarship, the program offers a wide array of courses in Hebrew Language and Literature, Jewish History, Bible, Rabbinics, Jewish Philosophy, and Yiddish Language and Literature. These courses form one of the largest undergraduate Jewish Studies programs in North America. In addition, the Jewish Studies program supports faculty research projects and organizes frequent academic conferences and lectures in order to bring the fruits of scholarship to a wider public. The Jewish Studies program seeks to provide undergraduate majors with an appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies, understanding that Jewish literary texts, Jewish history, and Jewish culture and thought are to a large degree inseparable. Students are expected to master the Hebrew language and acquire facility in reading, understanding, analyzing, and interpreting texts both in Hebrew and in English translation. In addition, students should be able to pursue independent research and to argue coherently and persuasively in writing.

**ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR**

Hebrew proficiency through Intermediate Hebrew I is a prerequisite for the major, but students can declare the major prior to fulfilling this prerequisite and can take Jewish Studies courses while building their Hebrew skills. Many students may choose to prepare for the Hebrew requirement by studying Hebrew on their own or by enrolling in the University’s sequence of beginning and intermediate Hebrew courses.

**PLACEMENT IN COURSES**

The Foreign Language Placement Assessment in Hebrew is used to determine in which Hebrew course students should enroll. For more information, contact hebrew-advis@umd.edu.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

The Jewish Studies program seeks to provide undergraduate majors with an appreciation for the interdisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies (understanding that Jewish literary texts, Jewish history, and Jewish culture and thought are to a large degree inseparable). Students who complete the major should acquire the following knowledge and skills:

1. Understands the chronological development and/or major themes of Jewish history and culture.
2. Examines a historical or interpretive problem in a core field of Jewish Studies.
3. Supports the results of independent research and analysis in written form.
4. For Language Track: Interprets formal written Hebrew with critical comprehension.

**Requirements**

**Required of All Students**

Jewish Studies majors in all tracks take 15 credits of coursework consisting of 12 credits of foundations (usually taken in the first two years of the major) and a capstone seminar (usually taken in the third or fourth year of the major). Up to two Hebrew or Yiddish language courses at any level can count toward the major (other languages with the written permission of JWST advisor).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JWST187</td>
<td>God, Land, Power, and the People: Moral Issues in the Jewish Historical Experience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST171</td>
<td>Is Judaism a Religion?</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST231</td>
<td>Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST233</td>
<td>Why the Jews? Historical and Cultural Investigations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST275</td>
<td>The Jew and the City through the Centuries</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISRL289</td>
<td>New Explorations in Israel Studies (ISRL289: The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict: Fundamental Questions)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST272</td>
<td>Diversify and Multiply: Jewish Culture and the Production of an Identity</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISRL282</td>
<td>Introduction to Israeli Cinema</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST250</td>
<td>Fundamental Concepts of Judaism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST262</td>
<td>Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISRL249</td>
<td>Selected Topics in Israel Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

**Capstone**

3-4 credits

One of the following:

- JWST409 Research Seminar in Jewish Studies
- ISRL448 Seminar in Israel Studies

**Major Track (Select one of the following):**

- General Jewish Studies Track (21 credits; see below)

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**Course**

**Title**

**Credits**

**Foundations**

- One of the following I-Series courses: 3
  - JWST187 God, Land, Power, and the People: Moral Issues in the Jewish Historical Experience
  - JWST171 Is Judaism a Religion?

- Three of the following from at least two areas: 9
  - History
    - JWST231 Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period
    - JWST233 Why the Jews? Historical and Cultural Investigations
    - JWST275 The Jew and the City through the Centuries
  - ISRL289 New Explorations in Israel Studies (ISRL289: The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict: Fundamental Questions)

- Literature and/or Film
  - JWST272 Diversify and Multiply: Jewish Culture and the Production of an Identity
  - ISRL282 Introduction to Israeli Cinema

- Thought, Culture, and/or Religion
  - JWST250 Fundamental Concepts of Judaism
  - JWST262 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
  - ISRL249 Selected Topics in Israel Studies

- Capstone 3-4

- One of the following:
  - JWST409 Research Seminar in Jewish Studies
  - ISRL448 Seminar in Israel Studies

- Major Track (Select one of the following): 21-24

  - General Jewish Studies Track (21 credits; see below)
Jewish Studies Major

Language Enhanced Track (24 credits; see below)

| Total Credits | 36-40 |

## Major Tracks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Jewish Studies Track</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of Emphasis: Four Courses at the 300-400 Level in One of the Core Jewish Studies Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td><strong>Credits</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Language Enhanced Track</strong></td>
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<td>Area of Emphasis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in Hebrew or Yiddish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nine Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in One of the Core Jewish Studies Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies)</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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<td>24</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 Other languages by written permission of the JWST advisor.

## Four Year Plan

Click [here](https://www.arhu.umd.edu/academics/advising/academic-plans/) for roadmaps for four-year plans in the College of Arts and Humanities.

Additional information on developing a four-year academic plan can be found on the following pages:

- [4yearplans.umd.edu](http://4yearplans.umd.edu/)
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy ([https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/](https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/)) section of this catalog