JEWSH STUDIES MAJOR

The Major in Jewish Studies provides undergraduates with a framework for the organized and interdisciplinary study of the history, philosophy, and literature of the Jews from antiquity to the present. Jewish Studies draws on a vast literature in a number of languages, especially Hebrew and Aramaic, and includes the Bible, the Talmud, and medieval and modern Hebrew literature. Yiddish language and literature compose an important sub-field. Courses offered by this department may be found under the following acronym(s): JWST, HEBR, ISRL, and RELS.

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 appropriate course by the Hebrew faculty. Students with a strong background may be deemed to have satisfied the Hebrew prerequisites. Please Note: Students can declare the major at any time and take other Jewish Studies courses while they are working to satisfy these prerequisites.

Language Prerequisites

By satisfying the Hebrew language requirements of the major, Jewish Studies majors will fulfill the Global Engagement Requirement of the College of Arts and Humanities. A minimum "C-" is required in all courses offered toward major requirements. An overall GPA of 2.0 or greater in the major is required for graduation.

General Requirements

Majors in Jewish Studies complete three core courses and fulfill an additional four requirements for a total of 19 to 22 credits in General Requirements (credit hours for Hebrew language are flexible, as discussed below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JWST233</td>
<td>Why the Jews? Historical and Cultural</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investigations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST272</td>
<td>Introduction to Jewish Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST250</td>
<td>Fundamental Concepts of Judaism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST262</td>
<td>Introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST304</td>
<td>Critical Approaches to Israeli Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST452</td>
<td>The Golden Age of Jewish Philosophy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST491</td>
<td>Judaism and the Construction of Gender</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JWST492</td>
<td>Sex, Gender, and Jewish Identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>by petition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWST250</td>
<td>Hebrew Language</td>
<td>3-6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Select 3-6 credits of the following:
Jewish Studies Major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEBR212</td>
<td>Intermediate Hebrew II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEBR313</td>
<td>Conversation and Composition I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3xx or 4xx-level course that is taught in Hebrew**

**Hebrew Text course**
Select any course in which texts are read in Hebrew

**Research Seminar**
JWST409 Research Seminar in Jewish Studies

**Area of Specialization/Tracks**
Select an area of specialization:
- Jewish History and Society (JH)
- Jewish Religion and Thought (JR)
- Jewish Literature and Culture (JL)
- Israeli Society, Politics, and Culture (IS)
- Hebrew Language and Texts (HL)

All Jewish Studies courses fall into at least one (and as many as three) of these areas of specializations. Students may petition to have courses count toward a particular area of specialization.

**Electives**
Select two Jewish Studies courses

**Supporting Courses**
Students take nine (9) credits in courses outside Jewish Studies

**Total Credits** 45-49

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1. Any course in which texts are read in Hebrew. Students who have a sufficient background in other Jewish languages (such as Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic, and Yiddish) may fulfill the text course requirement through one of these courses.

2. Research seminars are taught on a variety of topics within the field of Jewish Studies; seminars are general and methodological in their perspective, designed to bring together interests across a variety of subfields of Jewish Studies. Whenever possible, students should take a research seminar that aligns with their chosen area of specialization.

3. In consultation with an advisor, majors select an area of specialization in addition to their general Jewish Studies coursework. Up to six credits of this area of specialization may be at the 1xx or 2xx-level or 3xx or 4xx-level, while the remaining nine credits must be at the 3xx or 4xx-level or above. All Jewish Studies courses fall into at least one (and as many as three) of these areas of specializations. Students may petition to have courses count toward a particular area of specialization.

4. Students take two Jewish Studies courses (6 credits) as electives toward their major. 3 credits must be at the 3xx or 4xx-level.

5. Students take nine (9) credits in courses outside Jewish Studies, of which at least six (6) credits must be at the 3xx-level or above. Supporting courses are determined in consultation with the advisor. They should provide context for the area of specialization.

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Note: A current listing of the Department’s courses and assignment of courses to the above categories may be found on the Jewish Studies website. Students are reminded that, if there is a topic that doesn’t figure in the list of courses, they are welcome to propose an independent study.

Mentoring: Students majoring in Jewish Studies will be assigned a faculty mentor from among the faculty specializing in their area of specialization. Students should consult with their faculty mentor as they plan their course of study.

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**Four Year Plan**
Click here 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
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy (https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/) section of this catalog