

# JEWISH STUDIES MAJOR

**Program Director:** Maxine Grossman, 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 Program and Center 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, Yiddish Language and Literature, and Cinema Studies. 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 have the opportunity 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 will be able to pursue independent research and to argue coherently and persuasively in writing.

## Admission to the Major

Students will meet with an advisor to review the requirements for the major and create a four-year plan. Advisors engage with students to help them select courses that appeal to their current interests, while introducing them to new and challenging areas of study. Students pursuing the language-enhanced track will have the opportunity to test for Hebrew proficiency through the Foreign Language Placement Assessment in Hebrew. For more information, contact [hebrew-advise@umd.edu](mailto:hebrew-advise@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). A student who completes the Jewish Studies major:

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).

Course	Title	Credits
College Requirements ( <a href="https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/#collegerequirementstext">https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/arts-humanities/#collegerequirementstext</a> )		
<b>Foundations</b>		
One of the two following I-Series courses:		3
JWST187	God, Land, Power, and the People: Moral Issues in the Jewish Historical Experience	
JWST171	Is Judaism a Religion?	
<b>Three of the following from at least two areas:</b>		<b>9</b>
History		
JWST231	Jewish Texts and Cultures of the Second Temple Period	
JWST233	Why the Jews? Historical and Cultural Investigations	
JWST275	Urban Dreams and Nightmares: The Jewish Experience of Cities	
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	
<b>Capstone</b>		<b>3-4</b>
One of the following:		
JWST409	Research Seminar in Jewish Studies	
ISRL448	Seminar in Israel Studies	
<b>Major Track (Select one of the following):</b>		<b>21-24</b>
General Jewish Studies Track (21 credits; see below)		
Language Enhanced Track (24 credits; see below)		
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>36-40</b>

## Major Tracks

Course	Title	Credits
<b>General Jewish Studies Track</b>		
Area of Emphasis: Four Courses at the 300-400 Level in One of the Core Jewish Studies Areas		12
In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies)		9
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>21</b>

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Language Enhanced Track</b>		
Area of Emphasis		15
Six Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in Hebrew or Yiddish <sup>1</sup>		
Nine Credits at 3XX-4XX Level in One of the Core Jewish Studies Areas		
In-Major Electives (Three Courses in Jewish Studies)		9
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>24</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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:

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