

SPRING 2012: Judaic Studies and Hebrew Courses

AJST 155: Judaism—Traditions and Practices (Tues/Thurs 1:15 – 2:35)

In this course we familiarize ourselves with the significant events, writings, and concepts of Judaism, and examine Jewish religious and cultural traditions and practices from the Rabbinic period to the present. We shall focus on Jewish law and custom related to the annual calendar cycle, as well as life cycle events from cradle (and before) to grave (and after). We will seek to understand the differentiation of beliefs and practices of the various Jewish denominations. We will explore such daily practices such as prayer, kashrut, and consider how modernity continues to effect changes on Judaism. **Rabbi Don Cashman, dcashman@albany.edu**

AJST 244: Zionism, Palestine, and Israel in Historical Perspective (Tues/Thurs 11:45 – 1:05)

This course will examine the history of the Zionist movement from its inception until the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and the history of Israel from 1948 to the present. It covers the development of various Zionist ideologies and organizations as well as their challengers within and outside the Jewish community. It will examine the history of Jewish settlement in Palestine, the founding of the state of Israel, and the country's subsequent development. Course requirements include short written assignments and a paper, midterm and final exams, and class participation. Course mixes lecture and discussion and occasional use of film clips, and may include a guest presentation or two. **Dr. Arthur Brenner, abrenner@albany.edu**

JST/HIS 250: Holocaust in History (Mon/Wed 2:45 – 4:05)

This class is an exploration into the causes, course, & aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust. It begins with a discussion of the rise of totalitarian regimes & situates the Holocaust within the many attempts at genocide that occurred in the twentieth century. The class then traces the development of Nazism, examines European Jewish life during the first half of the century, & discusses Nazi efforts to eliminate the mentally and physically disabled, Jews, Roma & Sinti, Homosexuals, and other unwanted groups from German society. It then explores the radicalization & expansion of the Nazi program within the context of World War II. It pays close attention to the variety of ways that targeted groups responded to this crisis. Finally, it examines a number of survivor accounts & looks at the memorialization, politicization, & sacralization of the Nazi Holocaust. By the end of the class, students will have attained a thorough introduction to the complicated history of the Nazi Holocaust. **Prof. Barry Trachtenberg, btrachtenberg@albany.edu**

AJST 254: The Jews in the Modern World (Tues/Thurs 8:45 – 10:05)

This survey of modern Jewish history from 1700 to the present emphasizes the Jewish encounter with modernity in both Western and Eastern Europe. Themes include the struggle for enlightenment and civil rights; religious reforms in Judaism, the Hasidic movement, reactions to Antisemitism, Jewish nationalist and political movements, the Holocaust, events leading up to the founding of the State of Israel, and Jewish history in the United States. Course requirements include 3 short essays, one longer paper, midterm and final exams, and class participation. Course mixes lecture and discussion and occasional use of film clips. **Dr. Arthur Brenner, abrenner@albany.edu**

JST/HIS 275: Antisemitism in Historical Perspective (Mon/Wed 4:15 – 5:35)

Reports of antisemitism have dramatically increased in recent years, especially as the conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinians has intensified and events in the Middle East escalate far beyond the region's borders and into the rhetoric of globalization and anti-globalization. This course investigates premodern forms of anti-Jewish hatred, the emergence of antisemitism in the modern period, several of the debates on antisemitism in the present day, and how current antisemitic rhetoric is often targeted at groups other than Jews. By the end of the course, students will have gained an understanding of the development of anti-Jewish hatred throughout the ages and the critical tools to understand contemporary debates about antisemitism. **Prof. Barry Trachtenberg, btrachtenberg@albany.edu**

JST 331: Modern Jewish Thought (Mon/Wed 2:45 – 4:05)

In this course, students will engage in a close reading (individually, in small groups, and as a class) of the writings of four seminal 20th century Jewish thinkers: Abraham Joshua Heschel, Judith Plaskow, Ahad Ha-Am, and Joseph Soloveitchik. The methodology will be to explore one written work by each of these seminal thinkers. Their ideas will be explored in light of a range of issues and within their historical and social context. Among the issues will be Jewish individual and collective identity, theology, and relationship to the broader world. **Prof. Robert Gluck, gluckr@albany.edu**

HEB 102: Introductory Hebrew (Mon/Wed/Fri 10:25 – 11:20)

Acquiring the Hebrew language while being able to function in it, using skills including reading, writing, speaking and listening. The methods used in this class will include a wide range of educational techniques; including written and oral exercises, dramatizations and simulations of typical life situations in America and Israel. Via our text book the student will be exposed to different elements from Israeli and Jewish culture, as well as the tools for understanding it better. This course is a continuation of Hebrew 101 course and it builds on the foundations, which were acquired in the prior semester. **Ms. Sarit Moskowitz, saritandmark@hotmail.com**

HEB 202: Intermediate Hebrew (Mon/Wed/Fri 11:30 – 12:20)

This course in Modern Hebrew is for students who have passed Hebrew 201, or have otherwise acquired comparable proficiencies. The class builds upon Hebrew 201 to provide opportunities for the review and development of spoken, written Hebrew, and for study of Hebrew and Israeli culture. Grammar foundations are being expended upon as well as vocabulary. **Ms. Sarit Moskowitz, saritandmark@hotmail.com**

HEB 309: 20th Century Hebrew Literature (Mon/Wed/Fri 12:35 – 1:30)

Breaking the Silence by the Second Generation Israeli Holocaust Survivors.

The emotional ramifications of the Holocaust were not much of a theme in modern Israeli writing until the late 1960's. Where were the voices of the Holocaust survivors? What were the causes for their silence, and what were the forces behind the breaking of this silence? What was the literature on the topic of the Holocaust like in Israel prior to the 60's and how did it change its character, and what caused the change? In this course we will explore the reasons for the silence as well as the reasons for breaking it. We will explore the role of the first and the second generations in changing the character of the literature on this topic. Through short stories, novels, bibliographies, as well as interviews by a number of different modern Israeli writers. In this course we will analyze the role of literature in exposing the trauma of the Holocaust, and examine the extent to which the literature served as an agent of healing. We will further explore the manner in which male and female authors wrote and dealt with the trauma of the Holocaust. The class will examine the authors' backgrounds in order to understand what influenced their writings. We will examine the literary devices used by the writers to present and deal with this emotionally charged topic. The different styles of writing and the various ways in which the narrative was constructed will be explored. **Ms. Sarit Moskowitz, saritandmark@hotmail.com**