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# The Philip W. Lown School of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies

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The Philip W. Lown School of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies is the center for programs of teaching and research in the areas of Judaic studies, ancient Near Eastern studies, Islamic and modern Middle Eastern studies, and Jewish leadership studies. The school includes the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program, and the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, and the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies. Also housed in the Lown School is the National Center for Jewish Film (NCJF), the premier archives and circulating library of Judaic film and video in the Diaspora. The NCJF collection is a valuable resource for the study and documentation of Jewish history, art, and culture.

The microfilm collection of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives at Brandeis University, housed in the university's library, includes a vast array of primary sources bearing on American Jewish life, and supports the NEJS department's American Jewish history program. For detailed descriptions of the individual centers and institutes associated with the Lown School, please see the section "Research Centers and Institutes" elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

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## Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies

Courses of Study:  
Minors  
Major (BA)  
Combined BA/MA  
Master of Arts  
Doctor of Philosophy

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### Objectives

The Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies (NEJS) bears a proud tradition of scholarly excellence in both of the fields it embraces: the history, languages, and cultures of the ancient Near East and the modern Middle East, and the study of the Jewish people, including their history, religion, literature, and place in civilization.

#### Undergraduate Major

Undergraduate students are welcome to study in the department as majors, as minors, or simply to take individual courses. Majors find that their NEJS background serves them well in preparation for a great variety of graduate and professional careers. Past majors have gone on to law and medicine, academic or diplomatic/professional careers related to the ancient Near East, the modern Middle East, Judaica, the rabbinate, Jewish education, and other professions in the Jewish community.

The undergraduate major in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, divided into two parallel tracks (see below), is designed to combine a broad education in the various disciplines and periods that constitute this field, with a degree of specialization in one specific area. It is the intent of the major also to introduce students to the critical study of Near Eastern and Judaic sources, classical and modern, within the academic context. Majors are strongly encouraged to diversify their courses within the department and to consider related courses in other departments in order to acquaint themselves with the different disciplines and approaches that Near Eastern and Judaic Studies embraces.

(For the major in Islamic and Middle Eastern studies, please see that heading in this *Bulletin*.)

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### Graduate Program in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies

The graduate program in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree, is designed to train scholars and teachers in various areas of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies. A joint PhD program is also offered in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and sociology. On the MA level, the department offers general and specialized programs. Also, a five-year BA/MA program is available to undergraduate majors in the department. A two-year joint MA program is offered in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies & women's and gender studies. In addition, a two-year dual degree program leading to the MA in Jewish professional leadership and the MA in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies is available.

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### How to Become a Major

Students who wish to major in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies meet with the undergraduate advising head and are assigned a faculty adviser in accordance with their individual areas of interest. Together with their adviser, they develop a plan of study designed to fulfill the requirements of the major and to meet their personal interests and needs. With the approval of the department, a limited amount of credit may be awarded for appropriate courses taken at other universities. For further details, please see below.

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### How to Be Admitted to the Graduate Program

The general requirements for admission to the Graduate School, as specified in an earlier section of this *Bulletin*, apply to candidates for admission to this program.

At the graduate level, the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies is divided into three interdisciplinary areas: Bible and ancient Near East, Jewish studies, and the modern Middle East.

**Faculty****David Wright, Chair**

Biblical studies. Languages and literatures of the ancient Near East.

**Tzvi Abusch (on leave 2008–2009)**

Languages and cultures of ancient Mesopotamia. Ancient Near Eastern religions.

**Guy Antebi**

Hebrew language.

**Marc Brettler**

The Bible and its interpretation.

**Bernadette Brooten**

Christian studies.

**Aliza Brosh**

Hebrew language.

**Jonathan Decter, Undergraduate Advising Head**

Sephardic studies.

**Sharon Feiman-Nemser**

Jewish education.

**Sylvia Barack Fishman**

Contemporary Jewry and American Jewish sociology.

**ChaeRan Freeze**

East European Jewish history.

**Sara Hascal**

Hebrew language.

**Ellen Kellman (on leave 2008–2009)**

Yiddish language and literature.

**Reuven Kimelman**

Talmud. Midrash. Liturgy.

**Jon Levisohn (on leave 2008–2009)**

Jewish education.

**Avigdor Levy (on leave 2008–2009)**

Middle Eastern studies.

**Joseph Lumbard**

Classical Islam.

**Kanan Makiya**

Middle Eastern studies.

**Antony Polonsky (on leave 2008–2009)**

East European Jewish history. Holocaust studies.

**Bonit Porath**

Hebrew language.

**Benjamin Ravid**

Medieval and early modern Jewish history.

**Jehuda Reinharz**

Modern Jewish history.

**Vardit Ringvald, Director, Hebrew and Arabic Languages**

Hebrew language.

**Jonathan Sarna**

American Jewish history.

**Eugene Sheppard, Graduate Adviser (on leave fall 2008)**

Modern Jewish history and thought.

**Esther Shorr (on leave spring 2009)**

Hebrew language.

**Ilana Szobel**

Modern Hebrew literature.

**Ilan Troen**

Israel studies.

The following members of other departments are affiliated with the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies:

Joyce Antler (AMST), Alan Avery-Peck (Department of Religious Studies, College of the Holy Cross), Jacob Cohen (AMST), Gordon Fellman (SOC), Gregory Freeze (HIST), Patricia Johnston (CLAS), Edward Kaplan (ROMS), Ann Koloski-Ostrow (CLAS), Wellington Nyangoni (AAAS), Joseph Reimer (HRNS), Shulamit Reinharz (SOC), Sharon Rivo (National Center for Jewish Film), Stephen Whitfield (AMST).

**Requirements for the Minor in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies**

The minor consists of a coherent set of five courses in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, of which two may be cross-listed courses or courses taken at other universities.

**A.** At least one of the five courses must be in "Modern and Contemporary Jewish Studies" (see section C of the Judaic Studies track of the NEJS major below) and one course must be either in "Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies" or in "Early Post-Biblical Judaism, Early Christianity, Classical Islam, Rabbinic, and Medieval Jewish Studies."

**B.** No more than two of the following semester courses may be applied toward the minor: YDSH 10a (Beginning Yiddish), YDSH 20b (Continuing Yiddish), ARBC 10a (Beginning Literary Arabic), and ARBC 20b (Continuing Literary Arabic).

**C.** HBRW 10a (Beginning Hebrew) and HBRW 20b (Intermediate Hebrew) may not count toward fulfillment of the NEJS minor.

**D.** Students are required to declare the minor in NEJS no later than the beginning of the senior year. Each student declaring a minor will be assigned a departmental adviser after conferring with the undergraduate advising head.

**E.** By departmental rule, a maximum of two semester course credits for courses taken at other universities, whether in the United States or abroad, may be accepted toward the minor in NEJS. Students are encouraged to seek advance approval from the department's undergraduate adviser for all courses intended for transfer credit. For courses taken in Israeli universities, one Brandeis semester credit will be given for a three-hour-per-week one-semester course; a two-semester, two-hour-per-week course; or two two-hour, one-semester courses. Nonresident credit for purpose (not numeric course credit) may be granted for summer Ulpan programs at qualifying Israeli university programs, based on the approval of the Director of Hebrew and Arabic Languages in conjunction with the Study Abroad Office.

**Double-Counting**

No more than two courses that count for the IMES or Hebrew major or minor, or the Yiddish and East European Jewish culture minor, may count toward the NEJS minor.

## Requirements for the Minor in Yiddish and East European Jewish Culture

The minor consists of a coherent set of five courses in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies:

- A.** YDSH 40b (Advanced Intermediate Yiddish)
- B.** NEJS 98a (Independent study in Yiddish Literature and Culture [readings in Yiddish])
- C.** NEJS 75a (Introduction to Yiddish Literature in English translation) or NEJS 75b (Classic Yiddish Fiction in English translation)
- D.** Two courses selected from the following: NEJS 75a (Yiddish Literature), NEJS 75b (Classic Yiddish Fiction), NEJS 136a (History and Culture of the Jews of East-Central Europe up to 1914), NEJS 136b (History and Culture of the Jews of East-Central Europe since 1914), NEJS 137b (History of the Jews in Warsaw, Lodz, Vilna, and Odessa), NEJS 141a (Russian Jewish History, 1917 to the Present), NEJS 142a (Modern History of East European Jewry), NEJS 153a (Hasidism as a Religious and Social Movement), NEJS 167a (East European Jewish Immigration to the United States), NEJS 175a (Jewish Women in Eastern Europe), NEJS 98b (Independent study in any aspect of Yiddish Language, Literature, or East European Jewish History and Culture)

No more than two of the courses counted toward the minor in Yiddish and East European Jewish Culture may also be counted toward the NEJS major or minor.

## Requirements for the Major

The department offers two parallel tracks for the major, Judaic Studies; Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

### Judaic Studies Track

**A.** Students must complete NEJS 5a (Foundational Course in Judaic Studies) as early as possible in the major. This course is usually offered every fall. Students may take an exemption exam for NEJS 5a, which is given twice a year, during the first two weeks of each semester. The exam will be given at one time only, in a proctored setting, and its date will be announced at least one month in advance. The version of the exam given in any year will be that of the NEJS faculty member teaching the course that academic year, who will also grade the exam. Students may take the exam no more than twice. Study sheets for each exam are available in the NEJS office. Students who pass the exam (with a B- or higher) will be exempted from NEJS 5a, but will not receive course credit, and will be required to take an additional course instead of NEJS<sup>5a</sup>.

**B.** Students must complete at least seven other courses in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, at least three of which must be taught by members of the NEJS faculty. *Up to four may be cross-listed courses or courses taken at other universities. Courses used to fulfill the Hebrew requirement (see requirement D below) do not count toward the fulfillment of this requirement.*

**C.** Students must complete at least one of their seven courses in each of the following three chronological periods:

Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies:  
NEJS 8a, 9a, 29a, 101a, 101b, 102a, 104a, 104b, 106a, 106b, 110b, 111a, 111b, 112a, 113a, 113b, 114b, 115a, 115b, 116a, 117b, 118b, 119a, 121b, 122a, 122b, 123b, 184a

Early Post-Biblical Judaism, Early Christianity, Classical Islam, Rabbinic, and Medieval Jewish Studies:  
NEJS 3a, 25a, 55a, 59b, 123b, 125b, 126a, 126b, 127a, 127b, 128a, 128b, 130a, 130b, 139a, 140a, 140b, 144a, 149a, 149b, 151b, 152a, 152b, 155a, 157b, 158a, 166a, 166b, 167b, 172b, 179a, 179b, 180a, 184a, 186a, 188a, 190b, 191a, 196a, 196b, 199a, IMES 104a

Modern and Contemporary Jewish Studies  
NEJS 29a, 35a, 75a, 75b, 133a, 135a, 136a, 136b, 137a, 137b, 138a, 141a, 141b, 142a, 144a, 145a, 146a, 149b, 150b, 151a, 152a, 153a, 153b, 158a, 159a, 160b, 161a, 162a, 162b, 163a, 164a, 164b, 165a, 165b, 166a, 166b, 167a, 170a, 172a, 173b, 174a, 175a, 175b, 176a, 176b, 177a, 178a, 179b, 180b, 181a, 181b, 182a, 184a, 185a, 185b, 187a, 187b, 188b, 189a, 190a, 191b, 192a, 193a, 194a, 195a, 195b, 197b, 198b, 199b, YDSH 10a, 20b, 30a, 40b

**D.** In addition, students must complete the following three Hebrew language requirements:

1. Any fourth-semester Hebrew course except HBRW 41a. Exemptions will be granted only to those students who place out on the basis of the Hebrew placement test administered by the Hebrew program at Brandeis.
2. One course in classical Hebrew from among the following: HBRW 122a, 122b, NEJS 10a, 25a, 110b, 114b, 115a, 117b, 118b, 121b, 122b, 123b, 125b, 126a, 126b, 127b, 172b, 179a, 180a.
3. One course in modern Hebrew literature from among the following: HBRW 123a, 123b, 143a, 143b, 144a, 146a, 164b, 166b, 167b, NEJS 177a, 178a, 180b.

*In no case may courses used to fulfill the Hebrew requirement count toward fulfillment of any other departmental requirement.*

### Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies Track

**A.** Students must complete NEJS 8a (The Bible in Its Near Eastern Context) or NEJS 9a (The World of the Ancient Near East).

**B.** Students must complete at least seven other courses in Bible and ancient Near Eastern studies, at least four of which must be taught by members of the NEJS faculty. Up to three courses may be taken in other departments at Brandeis or at other universities. Courses used to fulfill the language requirement (see requirement D below) do not count toward the fulfillment of this requirement.

**C.** As part of the seven courses, students must complete at least one course in each of the following areas: (1) the Hebrew Bible/Ancient Israel; (2) Mesopotamia and Cuneiform; (3) Christianity or Judaism in late antiquity; (4) an area outside of NEJS that broadens the contextual or methodological horizons of Near Eastern study (e.g., in classics, linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, or literary theory), to be determined in consultation with the student's adviser.

**D.** Students must study two languages of the ancient world, such as Akkadian, Aramaic, Greek, biblical Hebrew, Hittite, Ugaritic, or another approved ancient language. One language, generally Akkadian or Hebrew, must be studied to the fourth-semester level, and another to the second-semester level. In no case may courses used to fulfill this language requirement count toward the fulfillment of any other departmental requirement. Students who choose biblical Hebrew as the main language, after taking (or testing out of) first-year modern Hebrew, must take a course in biblical grammar and a biblical text course. Grammar courses include NEJS 10a, HBRW 122a and b. (NEJS 10a may be taken as a third-semester course.)

### Honors

Satisfactory completion of NEJS 99d (Senior Research) is required of candidates for degrees with honors. Students should start planning and preparing early in their career for their honors thesis and take courses with the faculty members related to that area. The undergraduate advising head should be contacted for assistance in the selection of a senior thesis adviser. Those proposing to seek honors must petition the department no later than September of their senior year.

**Double-Counting**

No more than two courses that count for the IMES or Hebrew major or minor, or the Yiddish and East European Jewish culture minor, may count toward the NEJS major.

**Evaluation of Transfer Credits**

**A.** By departmental rule, a maximum of four semester course credits for courses taken at other universities may be accepted toward the departmental major requirements. Each course transferred from another university must have the approval of the department in order to be acceptable for credit toward the major requirements. This rule applies to courses completed at any other institution, whether in the United States or abroad.

**B.** No more than two courses taken at special programs for *overseas students* may be applied. Students are encouraged to seek advance approval from the department's undergraduate advising head for all courses intended for transfer credit.

**C.** Nonresident credit for purpose (not numeric course credit) may be granted for summer Ulpan programs at qualifying Israeli university programs, based on the approval of the Director of Hebrew and Arabic Languages in conjunction with the Study Abroad Office.

**D.** Students may be offered advanced standing on the basis of studies completed elsewhere. Students with the appropriate background and ability, for example, may place out of Hebrew language requirement. However, those who wish to move into the advanced text courses still need to take the Hebrew placement exam. In addition, students entering Brandeis for the first time, who are non-native speakers of Hebrew, who have studied at yeshivot or comparable institutions, or in other non-college-level programs, and who have demonstrated advanced knowledge in the regular Brandeis Hebrew placement exam, will be granted the opportunity to take an additional advanced placement exam for credit. Upon successful completion of that exam, a student will receive one course credit. This opportunity is available to students only at the time they first enter Brandeis. In addition, students who pass the Jerusalem Exam with a total of 91 or greater and who pass the Brandeis Hebrew placement exam, thereby gaining exemption from the Hebrew language program, will receive one course credit.

**Special Notes Relating to Undergraduates**

The Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies encourages students to participate in internships that integrate academic knowledge and practical experiences. It sponsors credit-bearing internships (NEJS 92a) for junior and senior majors and minors. Internships combine off-campus or on-campus work that provides significant learning in the areas of NEJS with academic study supervised by a departmental faculty sponsor. Students may count one NEJS 92a toward their major or minor. Students doing summer internships may register for course credit in the following fall semester. A minimum of a B+ GPA in NEJS courses is required for eligibility. For additional information, please contact the undergraduate advising head.

NEJS 92a involves as much work as a regular NEJS course. In addition to following the general internship guidelines established elsewhere in this *Bulletin*, NEJS internships must include each of the following:

**A.** Before the end of the add/drop period at the start of each semester, the NEJS faculty member who is supervising the internship must approve the written contract proposed by the student; the blank internship contract at [www.brandeis.edu/registrar/forms](http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/forms) should be used as a basis. This contract should at a minimum outline the following: the number of hours on the site, scheduled meetings with the faculty member supervising the internship, and significant academic readings that enrich and deepen the field experience.

**B.** The student must keep a detailed diary of the internship experience, to be shared with the faculty member.

**C.** The student must complete a substantive research project that synthesizes what has been learned from the internship and links it to appropriate literature.

**D.** The undergraduate advising head must approve, in advance and in writing, every NEJS 92a and b.

Additional information and forms may be found on the NEJS Web site.

**Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies**

Brandeis undergraduates who are NEJS or IMES majors are invited in their senior year to apply for admission to the five year BA/MA. Students must complete all requirements for the BA at the end of the fourth year, including the successful completion of the major in NEJS or IMES.

**Program of Study**

Fourteen courses are required:

**A.** Internal transfer credit: seven Brandeis undergraduate courses (NEJS, IMES, and/or approved cross-listed courses) numbered 100 or above for which grades of B- or higher have been earned.

**B.** Seven courses taken in the fifth year: four approved NEJS courses taught by NEJS faculty and three approved electives. Approved undergraduate language courses may be taken and count toward the required three electives.

**C.** Successful completion of one of the following: a comprehensive examination, a culminating project, or a master's thesis.

**Resident Requirement**

One year of full-time residence (the fifth year) is required subsequent to completing the BA.

**Language Requirement**

All candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in biblical or modern Hebrew or in Arabic.

**Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies & Women's and Gender Studies**

Brandeis undergraduates who are NEJS or IMES majors with either a second major in WMGS or a minor in WMGS are invited in their senior year to apply for admission to the BA/MA joint degree in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies & Women's and Gender Studies. Students must complete all requirements and earn the BA, including the successful completion of the major in NEJS or IMES prior to the start of the one-year master's program.

**Program of Study**

Fourteen courses are required:

**A.** Internal transfer credit: seven Brandeis undergraduate courses (NEJS, IMES, WMGS, and/or approved cross-listed courses) numbered 100 or above for which grades of B– or higher have been earned.

**B.** Seven courses taken in the fifth year: four approved NEJS electives and three WMGS courses approved by the program adviser. Between the BA and the MA, the following WMGS courses must be completed: a course in feminist research methodologies (WMGS 198a, the Feminist Inquiry course offered through the Graduate Consortium in Women’s Studies, or an alternative), WMGS 205a or another course designated as a graduate foundational course in women’s and gender studies, and two elective courses in WMGS, one inside and one outside the NEJS department.

**C.** Successful completion of one of the following: a comprehensive examination, a culminating project or a master’s thesis. If a master’s thesis encompasses both a NEJS and a WMGS component it will satisfy requirement E below.

**D.** Participation in a fall semester noncredit Women’s and Gender Studies Graduate Proseminar.

**E.** Joint MA paper requirement: completion of a master’s research paper of professional quality and length (normally twenty-five to forty pages) on a topic related to the joint degree. The paper will be read by two faculty members, one of whom is a member of the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department, and one of whom is a member of the women’s and gender studies core or affiliate faculty.

**Resident Requirement**

One year of full-time residence (the fifth year) is required subsequent to completing the BA.

**Language Requirement**

All candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in biblical or modern Hebrew or in Arabic.

**Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts****Residence Requirement and Program of Study**

Ordinarily, two years of full-time residence are required at the normal course rate of seven courses each academic year. At least eight of these required courses must be offered by members of the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department. Students may not include courses taken to prepare for the MA language examination (HBRW 102a and b and below, or ARBC 40b and below) among these eight courses, but may include them among the required fourteen courses. Students must obtain prior approval from the MA adviser before taking courses outside of NEJS. Students who enter with graduate credit from other recognized institutions may apply for transfer credit for up to four courses, or, with prior approval of the MA adviser, candidates may receive transfer credit for up to four courses at a university abroad.

**Advising**

Students are assigned advisors from the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department. Students must meet with their adviser(s) regularly and before enrolling in courses to ensure appropriate course coherency.

**Language Requirement**

All candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in biblical or modern Hebrew or Arabic. The Hebrew language requirement may be fulfilled in one of two ways:

1. By enrolling in and receiving a grade of B– or higher in a 40-level or higher Hebrew or Arabic course, or by passing a classical Hebrew text course;
2. By passing the language examination that is offered in April of every year.

**Capstone**

All candidates for the MA are required to complete a culminating assignment. Students must select one of the following culminating assignments:

1. Write an MA thesis.
2. Complete a significant final project.
3. Take an oral examination.

The thesis is typically fifty to one hundred pages and involves original research. A final project might involve creating a curriculum, curating an exhibit including writing a catalogue, and/or creating a Web site. The one-hour oral examination typically tests factual knowledge, analytical skills, and ability to synthesize relevant material. Further details may be found on the NEJS Web site.

**Requirements for the Hornstein–Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Dual MA Program****Hornstein–Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Dual MA Program****Program of Study**

This program prepares future Jewish leaders to understand contemporary issues within the context of Jewish history, culture, and tradition. The program provides the knowledge, research skills, and practical tools necessary to envision and help shape twenty-first-century Jewish life. Graduates of this dual-degree program receive a Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Leadership from the Hornstein Program, and a Master of Arts from the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies.

**Degree Requirements**

The dual degree requires eighty course credits, usually completed in five semesters, including the summer between years one and two. Approximately thirty-two credits are taken as Hornstein courses, thirty-six credits taken as NEJS courses, eight credits as electives and the remaining four credits are earned for the final project.

In the NEJS department, students take nine graduate-level (100-level or higher) NEJS or HBRW courses (thirty-six credits), including at least one pre-modern course. In the Hornstein Program, students take approximately thirty-two Hornstein credits that focus on contemporary issues and professional perspectives. Completing the overall curriculum are four credits for a final project and eight elective credits from outside Hornstein/NEJS which students select with the input of their advisers. These electives may be taken in Heller, IBS, psychology, sociology, cultural production, or other departments or programs.

A series of required cocurricular learning experiences complements the coursework, including a seminar at national Jewish agencies in New York and seminars on and off campus with leaders of the Jewish community. Each student’s program is individualized and is created in conjunction with advisers from Hornstein and NEJS.

**Supervised Professional Field Experience**

Supervised professional field experience forms part of the Hornstein program. It is designed to immerse students in the best professional practices within the Jewish community, to help students refine their practical skills, learn to turn theory into action, and become self-reflective and effective practitioners.

Field experience usually takes place in the summer and/or second year of the program and usually consists of approximately 125–250 hours of work managing a project jointly created by the student, the Hornstein faculty, and the supervisor in the field organization.

**Foster Seminar in Israel on Contemporary Jewish Life**

Students travel to Israel as a required part of the curriculum to examine contemporary issues in Israeli society and its relationship with diaspora communities.

**Language Requirement**

All candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in modern Hebrew at a level comparable to two years of Brandeis training in order to graduate. Students not meeting this requirement upon entrance are required to enroll in courses in Hebrew language during their academic residency. Students may fulfill the Hebrew language requirement by passing (B- or above) a 40-level or higher Hebrew course

**Final Project**

Students must complete a master's project that reflects and integrates their study in this joint program.

**Cocurricular Requirements****Hornstein Leadership Forum**

Meeting regularly throughout the year, this required forum brings innovative Jewish leaders into an intimate setting with Hornstein students for conversations about what makes a Jewish leader. Leaders share their vision for the coming generation of Jewish leadership and pose "real-life" scenarios from their experiences, challenging students to think through with the leader and one another possible responses. Students are involved in the planning and coordination of the seminar.

**Starr Colloquium**

Students spend three days in New York City visiting the national offices of major Jewish organizations to explore aspects of the communal agenda with agency executives.

**Milender Seminar in Jewish Communal Leadership**

Students participate in a three-day seminar about Jewish leadership with an outstanding leader of the Jewish communal world.

**Residence Requirement**

The residence requirement is five semesters of full-time study or the equivalent thereof in part-time study.

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**Requirements for the Joint Degree of Master of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies & Women's and Gender Studies**


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Students interested in the joint two-year terminal MA degree program must first be admitted to the MA degree program in NEJS in the regular manner.

**Program of Study**

Courses must include:

- A.** WMGS 205a or another course designated as a graduate foundational course in women's and gender studies.
- B.** A course in feminist research methodologies (WMGS 198a, the feminist inquiry course offered through the Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies, or an alternate).
- C.** Two elective courses in women's and gender studies—one inside and one outside the NEJS department.
- D.** The remaining courses must be jointly approved by each student's NEJS adviser and by the NEJS women's and gender studies adviser.

**E.** Participation in a fall semester noncredit Women's and Gender Studies Graduate Proseminar.

**F.** Joint MA paper requirement: completion of a master's research paper of professional quality and length (normally twenty to forty pages) on a topic related to the joint degree. The paper will be read by two faculty members, at least one of whom is a member of the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department, and at least one of whom is a member of the women's and gender studies core or affiliate faculty.

**G.** All candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in biblical or modern Hebrew or in Arabic.

**H.** All candidates for the Master of Arts degree are required to pass a comprehensive examination.

**Residence Requirement**

Ordinarily, two years of full-time residence are required at the normal course rate of seven courses each academic year. Students who enter with graduate credit from other recognized institutions may apply for transfer credit for up to four courses, or, with prior approval of the MA adviser, candidates may receive transfer credit for up to four courses at a university abroad.

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**Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**


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**Doctoral Programs**

Students admitted to the NEJS PhD program are admitted to specific programs within the department. These are: Bible and Ancient Near East (BANE), Modern Middle East (MME), and Jewish Studies (JS). Movement from one program to the other is generally discouraged and is dependent upon a student's meeting of the requirements for admission into that program and acceptance by that program's faculty. Movement from one adviser to another within a program is likewise dependent upon the consent of the new adviser.

**Residence Requirement and Program of Study**

Three years of full-time residence are required at the normal rate of at least seven term courses each academic year. Students who enter with graduate credit from other recognized institutions may apply for transfer credit. By rule of the Graduate School, a maximum of one year of credit (seven term courses) may be accepted toward the residence requirement on the recommendation of the departmental adviser in consultation with the student's adviser.

**Teaching Requirement**

As part of the graduate training program in NEJS, all PhD students are required to fulfill five semester-length teaching fellow or research assignments during the first four years of their programs, serving as apprentices to faculty mentors. All incoming NEJS doctoral students are to take the university writing pedagogy seminar in their first year (preferably in their first semester). Students will serve as teaching fellows in at least one university writing course. In addition, the department holds an orientation program for all new students and sponsors colloquia on teaching. Their faculty mentors evaluate students' teaching fellow work each semester. Students' teaching portfolios are in part drawn from these evaluations.

**Consortium**

Students should also discuss with their advisors the desirability of taking courses at member institutions of the Boston Consortium.

**Advising**

Students are assigned advisors from the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies department in the program to which they were admitted. Students must meet with their adviser(s) regularly and before enrolling in courses, to ensure appropriate course coherency. The programs for each graduate area may be found in the departmental office and are posted on the NEJS departmental Web site.

### **Funding and Annual Evaluation**

Scholarships and fellowships are generally renewable for four additional years, based on a favorable annual evaluation by each student's professors by May of each academic year. These evaluations will be shared with the students and will be part of the official file, along with grades. Additionally, university dissertation fellowships are available on a university-wide competitive basis for the final year.

### **Language Requirements**

Students are required to demonstrate competence in primary and secondary research languages, according to the requirements of their specific programs. See departmental Web site for details.

All exams, including the Hebrew and Arabic exams, are composed by the students' advisers. The formats for these exams differ throughout the department, but they are typically three-hour examinations, where a dictionary may be used. Typically, some part of a scholarly article must be translated. The questions and answers for this examination are all in English. Copies of prior examinations are available for students to consult.

Candidates are not normally admitted to the PhD program in Jewish Studies, including modern and American Jewish studies, until they demonstrate reading knowledge of modern Hebrew. Students who require additional work in this area should apply for the MA in NEJS.

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

All candidates for the PhD are required to pass several comprehensive examinations. Specific requirements vary from program to program. Details may be obtained from the department Web site. In the semester in which students plan to take their qualifying examinations, they may sign up for reading courses with the members of the faculty who will participate in those examinations.

### **Dissertation Proposal**

After successfully completing all qualifying examinations and language requirements, students must submit their dissertation proposal to the department faculty by the end of the third year or the beginning of the fourth year (by the beginning of the fifth year for students in the program in Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies), after first obtaining the approval of their dissertation director and the other two members of the dissertation reading committee. Proposals should be up to six pages in length, plus bibliography. They should contain a clear articulation of the topic with rationale, a summary of current research in its area, its intended contribution to scholarship, methodology, sources, structure and table of contents, preliminary bibliography, and any other relevant material. Additional information about the proposal is available on the NEJS department Web site.

### **Dissertation and Defense**

The dissertation, ordinarily between 250 and 400 pages in length, must demonstrate the candidate's thorough mastery of the field and competence in pursuing independent research; it must also constitute an original contribution to knowledge. Two copies of the dissertation are to be deposited in the office of the program chair no later than March 1 of the year in which the candidate expects to earn the degree. The student must successfully defend the dissertation at a final oral examination.

## **Requirements for the Joint Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and Sociology**

### **Program of Study**

Students must complete a total of twenty-one courses. Nine of these courses should be offered by the sociology department (comprising at least four graduate seminars plus the Approaches to Social Research Proseminar, which is required during each semester of course work following matriculation into the joint degree program). At least one of these sociology courses must be in theory. Additionally, at least nine courses must be taken within the NEJS department. The remaining three courses are open to student choice with the approval of the student's advisers.

### **Advising**

Students are assigned advisers from the sociology department and from the NEJS department. Both advisers will work with the student to assure appropriate course coherency. An interdepartmental meeting between both advisers and the student should take place at least once a year.

### **Residence Requirement**

Three years of full-time residence are required at the normal rate of at least seven term courses each academic year. Students who enter with graduate credit from other recognized institutions may apply for transfer credit. By rule of the Graduate School, a maximum of one year of credit may be accepted toward the residence requirement on the recommendation of the chair of the program.

### **Language Requirements**

Candidates are required to establish competence in Hebrew and one modern language (normally French or German but, depending on the area of research, another language may be substituted). Language examinations will be administered by the student's advisers.

### **Research Methods Requirement**

Candidates are required to establish competence in statistics by successful completion of an appropriate Brandeis course in statistics.

### **Consortium**

Students should also discuss with their advisers the desirability of taking courses at member institutions of the Boston Consortium.

### **Comprehensive Examinations and Graduate Accreditation**

Before proposing and writing a doctoral dissertation, students must show competence in two areas of sociology through the graduate accreditation committee (GAC) process, pass a two-part written comprehensive examination in Jewish cultural literacy in the NEJS department, and pass an oral major field examination.

Candidates demonstrate Jewish cultural literacy in a two-part written examination, which has English and Hebrew components, and a follow-up oral examination. The Hebrew examination in primary sources is part of the cultural literacy examination. This examination gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their broad general knowledge of Jewish literature and cultures of the biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and early modern periods. The oral examination provides opportunity for further exploration following the written examination. Following the successful completion of the Jewish cultural literacy examinations, candidates demonstrate their particular field of expertise in contemporary Jewish societies through the oral major field examination.

The GAC is the sociology department equivalent to comprehensive examinations. Students elect two sociological areas of interest and, with the appropriate faculty member, create a contract delineating requirements for the completion of a portfolio in the specific area. The portfolio can include such items as completed courses, papers, independent readings, or bibliographies. Faculty advisers suggest readings, written work, or independent studies. When the GAC requirement is completed, there will be a comprehensive meeting to discuss the candidate's interests and direction in the field and the upcoming dissertation.

#### Dissertation and Final Oral Examination

A dissertation proposal should be submitted to the dissertation committee soon after the comprehensive examinations and GACs are completed. The dissertation committee should consist of five members: two each from the sociology and the NEJS departments and a fifth member from outside those departments. After approval of the proposal by the dissertation committee, the proposal is submitted to the department faculties for approval. Two copies of the dissertation are to be deposited in the offices of the program chairs no later than March 1 of the year in which the candidate expects to earn the degree. The dissertation committee must approve the dissertation and the student must successfully defend the dissertation at a final oral examination.

### Special Note About Courses

#### Course Subgroupings

Ancient Languages (NEJS 100a–108b)  
 Bible and Ancient Near East (NEJS 109a–122b)  
 Rabbinics (NEJS 123b–127b)  
 Early Christianity (NEJS 128a–130b)  
 Non-American Jewish History (NEJS 131a–153b)  
 Jewish Thought (NEJS 153a–160b)  
 American Jewish History and Sociology (NEJS 161a–168b)  
 Jewish Education (NEJS 169a–171b)  
 Jewish and Hebrew Literature (NEJS 172a–180b)  
 Creative Arts and Near Eastern and Judaic Studies (NEJS 181a–184b)  
 Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (NEJS 185a–199b)  
 Ancient Languages (NEJS 200a–208b)  
 Bible and Ancient Near East (NEJS 209a–222b)  
 Jewish Studies Core Methodology Seminars (NEJS 231a–235b)  
 Jewish History (except the Americas) (NEJS 236a–252b)  
 Jewish Thought (NEJS 253a–260b)  
 Modern Middle East (NEJS 285a–299b)  
 Reading Courses (NEJS 315a–389b)

**Language Courses:** For Arabic, Hebrew, or Yiddish, see separate headings elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

### Courses of Instruction

#### (1–99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

##### NEJS 2a Introduction to the Jewish Experience

[ hum ]

*No prior knowledge of Judaism or Hebrew required. Does not count toward the major in NEJS, but minors are encouraged to take this course.*

Topics to be discussed include: the People of the Book; the rabbinic tradition; the Jewish calendar; the prayer book; life-cycle of the individual; Christianity, Islam, and the Jews; from anti-Judaism to anti-Semitism; Holocaust; the land of Israel and the Jews; Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Judaism; American Jewry; Jewish geography today. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

##### NEJS 3a Introduction to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

[ hum ]

An introduction to the three major religions originating in the Near East: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Areas of focus include historical development, sacred texts, rituals, and interpretive traditions. Ancient, medieval, and modern periods are treated. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Decter

##### NEJS 5a Foundational Course in Judaic Studies

[ hum ]

A survey of the Jewish experience and thought, focusing on the varieties of historical Judaism, including its classical forms, its medieval patterns and transformations, and its modern options. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Kimelman

##### NEJS 8a The Bible in Its Near Eastern Context

[ hum ]

*All texts are read in English.*

A study of the Bible in light of recently discovered Near Eastern texts that have changed how the Bible is interpreted and read. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

##### NEJS 9a The World of the Ancient Near East

[ hum ]

An introduction to the peoples, history, religions, institutions, and culture of ancient Mesopotamia, Syria, Israel, Anatolia, and Egypt from prehistory to 330 BCE. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Wright

##### NEJS 10a Biblical Hebrew Grammar and Texts

[ fl hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 20b or the equivalent as determined by placement examination.*

A review of biblical Hebrew grammar followed by a survey of the major genres of the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Torah, history, prophecy, psalms, wisdom). Texts are read in Hebrew; the course is taught in English. Emphasis on literary and grammatical aspects of the texts. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Brettler or Mr. Rosen

##### NEJS 25a Introduction to Talmud

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 30-level Hebrew course or the equivalent is recommended.*

An introduction to Treatise Sanhedrin, on the subject of judicial procedure and capital punishment. Attention is paid to modes of argument, literary form, and development of the Talmudic text. No previous study of Talmud is presupposed. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Kimelman

##### NEJS 29a Feminist Sexual Ethics in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

[ hum ]

Analyzes a variety of feminist critiques of religious texts and traditions and proposed innovations in theology and religious law. Examines biblical, rabbinic, and Qur'anic texts. Explores relation to U.S. law and to the social, natural, and medical sciences. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Brooten

##### NEJS 35a History of the Jews from 1492 to the Present

[ ss hum ]

*Open to all students.*

Main trends and events in the legal, economic, social, cultural, and religious history of the Jewish people in the context of the general background, with emphasis on major areas of Jewish settlement. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 55a Ethics and the Jewish Political Tradition**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

A study in the structures of authority, power, and leadership in Jewish politics from biblical to modern times that focuses on the change from sovereignty to incorporated community to voluntary association. Issues include the problems of nationalism, the limits of government, the right of revolution, the legitimacy of terrorism, and the ethics of war. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 59b The Philosophy of Jewish Law**

[ hum ]

Investigates the philosophic underpinnings of Jewish law. Issues include tradition and change, interpretive freedom, authority, and the nature of legal consciousness. Ranging from the Talmudic to modern periods, emphasizes the thought of Mendelssohn, Hirsch, Rosenzweig, Soloveitchik, Hartman, and Levinas. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

**NEJS 75a Yiddish Literature: From Myth to Modernism**

[ hum wi ]

*Students with reading knowledge of Yiddish may elect to read the original texts. NEJS graduate students may petition to take this course for graduate credit.*

Introduces students to Yiddish fiction, poetry, and drama created in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Eastern Europe and the Americas. Readings include a sampling of works by classic Yiddish writers, but focus primarily on fiction, poetry, and drama by writers of succeeding generations. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Kellman

**NEJS 75b Classic Yiddish Fiction**

[ hum wi ]

*NEJS graduate students may petition to take this course for graduate credit.*

An introduction to the major works of fiction by the three classic Yiddish writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Taught in English using texts in translation. Students with knowledge of Yiddish may elect to read the original texts. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Kellman

**NEJS 92a Internship and Analysis in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies**

Usually offered every year.

Staff

**NEJS 98a Independent Study**

Usually offered every year.

Staff

**NEJS 98b Independent Study**

Usually offered every year.

Staff

**NEJS 99d Senior Research**

Usually offered every year.

Staff

**(100–199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students****NEJS 101a Elementary Akkadian**

[ hum ]

Introduction to Akkadian grammar and lexicon and cuneiform script. This course is for beginning students of Akkadian. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Abusch and Staff

**NEJS 101b Intermediate Akkadian**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: NEJS 101a or the equivalent.* Review of grammar and reading of old Babylonian historical inscriptions, laws, letters, and literary texts. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Abusch and Staff

**NEJS 102a Elementary Hittite**

[ hum ]

An introduction to the Hittite language, mainly through readings in Hittite royal annals, treaties, rituals, laws, and myths. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 104a Comparative Grammar of Semitic Languages**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisites: HBRW 30a, NEJS 10a, ARBC 30a, or permission of the instructor.*

An introduction to and description of the Semitic languages, the internal relationships within this linguistic family, and the distinctive grammatical and lexical features of the individual languages. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 104b Ezra, Daniel, and Early Aramaic Texts**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisites: HBRW 30a, NEJS 10a, ARBC 30a, or permission of the instructor.*

A study of the language and text of the Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel and of other early Aramaic documents. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 106a Northwest Semitic Inscriptions**

[ hum ]

A study of Phoenician, Hebrew, Edomite, and Moabite inscriptions. Issues of epigraphy, historical grammar, dialectology, and historical reconstruction are examined. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 106b Elementary Ugaritic**

[ hum ]

An introduction to the language with study of various texts. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 110b The Hebrew Bible: Meaning and Context**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisites: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or permission of the instructor.*

A close reading of selected biblical texts. Topics may vary from year to year and the course may be repeated for credit. Recent topics have included readings in the prophets. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Abusch or Mr. Wright

**NEJS 111a The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament**

[ wi hum ]

*Open to all students.*

A survey of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). Biblical books will be examined from various perspectives and compared to other ancient Near Eastern compositions. No knowledge of Hebrew is presumed. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 111b History of Israelite Religion**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisites: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or permission of the instructor.*

Examines the development of Israelite/biblical religious ideas as manifested through a study of the development of the priestly literature of the Torah in relationship to other sources and traditions. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 112a The Book of Genesis**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or permission of the instructor.*

An in-depth study of the Hebrew text of Genesis, with particular attention to the meaning, documentary sources, and Near Eastern background of the accounts of creation and origins of human civilization in chapters one to eleven, and of the patriarchal narratives, especially those about Abraham. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 113a The Bible in Aramaic**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or permission of the instructor.*

A study of the language and text of the Targumim, Qumran Aramaic Paraphrases, and the Syriac Peshitta. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 113b Law in the Bible and the Ancient Near East**

[ hum nw ss ]

*Open to all students.*

A study of laws and legal ideas in biblical and Near Eastern law "codes," treaties, contracts; economic documents and narratives; the development and function of the documents and ideas; the meaning of the laws; and their significance for the various societies. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 114b Biblical Ritual, Cult, and Magic**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or permission of the instructor (section 1 only).*

A study of ritual and cultic texts of the Bible in Hebrew and their rites and phenomena with historical-critical, Near Eastern-environmental, social-scientific, and literary analysis. Usually offered every third year. Section 1 in Hebrew, section 2 in English.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 115a The Book of Deuteronomy**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or a strong knowledge of biblical Hebrew.*

A close examination of the prose and poetry of the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy with special attention to its religious, legal, and compositional features. Traditions found in the Book of Deuteronomy will be compared with their counterparts elsewhere in the Torah. The place of the Book of Deuteronomy in the history of the religion of Israel will be considered. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 115b Women and the Bible**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

The Hebrew Bible, a complex work, reflects a wide range of attitudes toward women. This course examines these attitudes as they are reflected in issues such as the legal status of women, women in myths, women leaders, prostitution, and the gender of ancient Israel's deity. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 116a Ancient Near Eastern Religion and Mythology**

[ hum nw ]

*Open to all students.*

An introduction to the religion, mythology, and thought of the ancient Near East. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 117b Dead Sea Scrolls**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or the equivalent.*

Studies in the literature of Qumran texts, with particular attention to the exegetical literature. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 118b The Book of Psalms**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or a strong knowledge of biblical Hebrew.*

Selected readings of biblical psalms. Special attention will be paid to religious ideas, literary forms, and poetics. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 119a The Torah: Composition and Interpretation**

[ hum wi ]

*Prerequisite: NEJS 10a or equivalent.*

Explores Hebrew texts in the Torah or Pentateuch, examining their nature as collections of distinct documents or sources, many of which have a long prehistory, as well as the implications of this compositional model for their interpretation. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 121b Biblical Poetry: Love and Death**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: NEJS 10a, HBRW 122a or b, or a strong knowledge of biblical Hebrew.*

A close reading of biblical poetic texts, with a consideration of what makes these texts poetic. Texts will be chosen primarily from Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Job. Topics will vary from year to year and the course may be repeated for credit. Refer to the *Schedule of Classes* for current topic. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 122a Magic and Witchcraft in the Ancient Near East**

[ hum nw ]

Examines magical literature, rituals, and beliefs in the ancient Near East, especially Mesopotamia. Topics such as demonology, illness, prayer, and exorcism are covered; special attention is paid to witchcraft. This course is organized around the close reading of ancient texts. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 122b Biblical Narrative Texts: The Historical Tradition**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 122a or b, NEJS 10a, or a strong knowledge of biblical Hebrew.*

A close reading of a variety of biblical "historical" texts from Deuteronomy, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. The basic tools for biblical research and the literary study of the Bible will be explored. The newer methods of analyzing biblical "historical" texts will be discussed. Topics vary from year to year and this course may be repeated for credit. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 123b Classical Biblical Commentaries**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: Advanced reading knowledge of Hebrew.*

An intensive study of the French and Spanish schools of Jewish commentators on selected books of the Bible. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Brettler or Mr. Decter

**NEJS 125b Midrashic Literature: Sifre Deuteronomy**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 40-level Hebrew course or the equivalent.*

An analysis of the midrashic method of the Sifre Deuteronomy. Emphasis will be placed on a close reading of the text, with a view to developing in the students the capacity to do independent analysis. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 126a Intermediate Talmud**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 40-level Hebrew course or the equivalent.*

Tractate Sanhedrin, chapter three, which deals with the issue of voluntary and compulsory arbitration and the binding nature of gambling agreements. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 126b Agadic Literature: The Ethics of the Fathers**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 40-level Hebrew course or the equivalent.*

A study of the Mishnah Avot and its classical commentaries. Focuses primarily on literary and historical questions. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 127a Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism**

[ hum ]

A survey course of the Second Temple and rabbinic periods focusing on the Bible, the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the writing of Josephus and Philo, the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 127b The Jewish Liturgy**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 20-level Hebrew course or the equivalent.*

A study of the literature, theology, and history of the daily and Sabbath liturgy. Emphasis will be placed on the interplay between literary structure and ideational content, along with discussion of the philosophical issues involved in prayer. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 128a Introduction to Christianity**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

An introduction to Christian beliefs, liturgy, and history. Surveys the largest world religion: from Ethiopian to Korean Christianity, from black theology to the Christian right. Analyzes Christian debates about God, Christ, and human beings. Studies differences among Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Brooten

**NEJS 128b History of Jewish and Christian Women in the Roman Empire**

[ hum ]

Social, cultural, and religious history of Jewish and Christian women under Roman rule until Constantine ("first century" BCE—"fourth century" CE), using the methods of feminist historiography.

Examination of the inter-relationships between Jewish and Christian women in different parts of the Roman Empire. Focus on women's history, rather than on Jewish and Christian teachings about women.

Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Brooten

**NEJS 130a The New Testament: A Historical Introduction**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

A study of the main parts of the New Testament, with emphasis on the contents of the books and the historical development of early Christianity. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Brooten

**NEJS 130b Ancient Greek-Speaking Judaism and Christianity**

[ hum ]

Reading and interpretation of Greek Jewish and Christian texts that help us to understand the interrelationships between these two groups, as well as what separated them from each other. Greek track available for those with background in Greek. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Brooten

**NEJS 133a Art, Artifacts, and History: The Material Culture of Modern Jews**

[ hum ]

An interpretive, bibliographic, and hands-on study of the material (nontextual) culture of American and European Jews since 1600.

Analyzes how objects, architecture, visual images, bodies, museums, and memorials can help us understand and interpret social, cultural, and religious history. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Smith

**NEJS 135a The Modern Jewish Experience**

[ hum ]

Themes include Enlightenment, Hasidism, emancipation, Jewish identity in the modern world (acculturation and assimilation), development of dominant nationalism in Judaism, Zionism, European Jewry between the world wars, Holocaust, the creation of the State of Israel, and contemporary Jewish life in America, Israel, and Europe. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Freeze or Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 136a History and Culture of the Jews in East-Central Europe to 1914**

[ hum ss ]

Jewish civilization in Poland and Russia from the earliest Jewish settlements until World War I, with emphasis on attempts to create a national culture that was "modern" and "Jewish." Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 136b History and Culture of the Jews in East-Central Europe, 1914 to the Present**

[ hum ]

An examination of the history of the Jews in the countries of East-Central Europe (Poland, the Soviet Union and its successor states, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia) from the outbreak of World War I until the present day. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 137a The Destruction of European Jewry**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

Why did the Jews become the subject of genocidal hatred? A systematic examination of the anti-Jewish genocide planned and executed by Nazi Germany and the Jewish and general responses to it. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 137b A History of the Jews in Warsaw, Lodz, Vilna, and Odessa**

[ hum ss ]

Examines the history of the four largest Jewish communities in the Russian Empire from the earliest settlement through the Holocaust to the present, comparing internal organization, different political and cultural allegiances, and relations with the majority population. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 138a Genocide and Mass Killing in the Twentieth Century**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisites: Basic knowledge of twentieth-century world history is preferable.*

An interdisciplinary seminar examining history and sociology of the internationally punishable crime of genocide, with the focus on theory, prevention, and punishment of genocide. Case studies include Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, Stalin's Russia, the Holocaust, Cambodia, Bosnia, and Rwanda. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 139a Philosophers, Poets, and Mystics: Jewish Intellectuals in the Middle Ages**

[ hum ]

Addresses Jewish culture during the medieval period in the Christian and Islamic worlds. Focus on Ashkenazic and Sephardic intellectual culture. Other topics include communal organization, the influence of Islamic and Christian intellectual culture. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 140a History of the Jews from the Maccabees to 1497**

[ hum ss wi ]

Judea during the Second Commonwealth; Jews in the Roman Empire; origins of anti-Judaism; Jewish religious heritage; Islam and the Jews; the Jewish community; church, state, society, economy, and the Jews; the expulsion from Western Europe. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 140b The Jews in Europe to 1791**

[ hum ]

Considers the following topics: church, crusades, state, economy, society, and the Jews; religious and intellectual life, family and community; England, France, and the Germanic lands; Spain, Spanish exile, and Iberian Diaspora; Renaissance, Reformation, and Counter-Reformation; Eastern Europe and Hasidism; the return to the West; and the Enlightenment and emancipation. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 141a Russian Jewish History, 1917 to the Present**

[ hum ]

Examines Russian Jewish history from 1917 to the present. Focuses on the tsarist legacy, Russian Revolution, the creation of a new socialist society, development of Yiddish culture, the "Great Turn" under Stalin, Holocaust, post war Judaism, anti-Semitism, emigration, and current events. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Freeze

**NEJS 142a Modern History of East European Jewry**

[ hum ]

A comprehensive survey of the history (economic, sociopolitical, and religious) of the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe from the middle of the eighteenth century until World War II, with emphasis placed on the Jews of Poland and Russia. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 144a Jews in the World of Islam**

[ hum nw ]

A social and cultural history of Jewish communities in the Islamic world. Special emphasis is placed on the Jewish communities in the Middle East since 1492. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levy

**NEJS 145a History of the State of Israel**

[ hum ]

Examines the development of the State of Israel from its foundation to the present time. Israel's politics, society, and culture will be thematically analyzed. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Troen

**NEJS 146a World Jewry since the Holocaust**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

Examines the post war Jewish world with special attention to Jewish communities beyond Israel and the United States. Topics include demography, the emergence of new centers, anti-Semitism, identity, and assimilation. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 149a The Jews of Muslim and Christian Spain**

[ hum ]

A survey of Jewish political, intellectual, and social history in the Islamic and Christian spheres from the beginnings of Jewish life in Spain until the expulsion in 1492. Students develop skills in reading historical, literary, and philosophical texts. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 149b Sephardic Jewry: 1492 to the Present**

[ hum ]

A survey of Sephardic Jewry from the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 to the present. Intellectual and communal life throughout diverse communities in the Sephardic Diaspora (Europe, the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, and the Americas) is treated. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 150b History of Poland since 1750**

[ hum ]

*May only count toward the NEJS major or minor with the written permission of the instructor.*

Surveys the history of Poland from the middle of the eighteenth century to the recent changes since 1989. Emphasizes the specific character of the Polish lands as a borderland and as a multi-religious and multi-ethnic area. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 151a Jewish Life in Weimar Berlin, Wartime England, and the Postwar United States**

[ hum ss ]

*Prerequisite: Reading comprehension of modern Hebrew as determined by the instructor.*

An examination of key issues, including rites of passage, life-cycle events in pre-World War I Eastern Europe; the growth of Nazism; Holocaust; Zionism, Palestine Mandate and the State of Israel; Hebrew culture in the Diaspora; and the early days of Brandeis University, based on typed Hebrew letters written between 1919 and 1967. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 151b Ghettos, Gondolas, and Gelato: The Italian Jewish Experience**

[ hum ss ]

Topics include the Jews of classical antiquity, attitude of church and state toward Jews, ghetto, Jewish merchants and moneylenders, Renaissance and the Jews, Marranos and the Inquisition, *raison d'état*, emancipation, Holocaust, and communities today. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 152a From Inquisition to Holocaust**

[ hum ]

Examines the Iberian Inquisition in its religious, social, and economic context as a manifestation of religious anti-Judaism that culminated in the concept of purity of blood. Traces the emergence of modern racial anti-Semitism which culminated in the Holocaust, and contemplates the similarities and differences between it and medieval anti-Judaism. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 152b Anti-Judaism, Anti-Semitism, and Anti-Zionism**

[ hum ss ]

A historical survey of the three major forms of hostility toward the Jews from classical antiquity to the present. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Ravid

**NEJS 153a Hasidism as a Religious and Social Movement**

[ hum ]

The rise of East European Hasidism in the eighteenth century and its success. Key teachings, motifs, and religious ideals of the movement and its leadership. Changes as Hasidism struggled with modernity and destruction in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

**NEJS 153b Abraham Joshua Heschel: Spirituality and Action**

[ hum ]

Abraham Heschel's Hasidic spirituality and militant social action provide a meeting ground for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Studies his writings on prayer, mysticism, religious education, the prophets, the Holocaust, Israel, interfaith relations, civil rights, and the Vietnam war. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Kaplan

**NEJS 155a The Philosophy of Moses Maimonides**

[ hum ]

An examination of Maimonides's *Guide of the Perplexed*, *Mishneh Torah*, and other relevant works focusing on the ways in which his philosophy emerged out of the engagement between the demands of revealed religion and philosophic rationalism. Issues include biblical interpretation, the nature of God, creation of the world, prophecy, miracles, providence, the conditions of exile and redemption, and the rational justifications for the laws. We will also take into account competing interpretations of his philosophy ranging from medieval Maimonidean controversies to their modern counterparts. All required readings are in English. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 157b Medieval Jewish Philosophy**

[ hum ]

Surveys the history of medieval Jewish philosophy from Saadia Gaon to Spinoza. Topics include reason and revelation, divine attribute theory, cosmogony, providence, epistemology, ultimate human felicity, and the influence of philosophy in biblical exegesis, Halakhah, and poetry. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 158a Divided Minds: Jewish Intellectuals in America**

[ hum ]

Jewish intellectuals in the United States have exerted tremendous influence on the changing landscape of American culture and society over the last century. Explores the political, cultural, and religious contours of this diverse and controversial group. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 159a Major Trends in Modern Jewish Philosophy**

[ hum ]

Surveys the contours of modern Jewish philosophy by engaging some of its most important themes and voices. Competing Jewish inflections of and responses to rationalism, romanticism, idealism, existentialism, and nihilism. This provides the conceptual road signs of the course as we traverse the winding byways of Jewish philosophy from Baruch Spinoza to Emanuel Levinas. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 160b German-Jewish Thought**

[ hum ]

Traces the development of German thought from the late eighteenth to the twentieth century. Engages a number of seminal thinkers and their understandings of the challenges posed by the shaping forces of the modern German-Jewish experience: enlightenment, Jewish Reform movement, liberalism, and capitalism, among others. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 161a American Jewish Life**

[ hum ss ]

*Open to all students.*

A focused sociological analysis of contemporary American Jewish life with special emphasis on the diverse forms of Jewish ethno-religious identity formation. Topics include the social construction of race and ethnicity; Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Judaism; the interplay of American and Jewish values; and the relationship of Jews to the general society and other ethnic groups. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 161b Representations of the City in Literature, Art, and Architecture**

[ hum nw ]

The city is an artifact housing a community of anonymous persons, one that has carried great creative and destructive potential across the ages. Works of the imagination—in literature, theology, and architecture—expose unquantifiable dimensions of that potential. Examines ten such works with a view to what the city has been, is today, and can become. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Makiya

**NEJS 162a American Judaism**

[ hum ss wi ]

American Judaism from the earliest settlement to the present, with particular emphasis on the various streams of American Judaism. Judaism's place in American religion and comparisons to Judaism in other countries. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 162b It Couldn't Happen Here: Three American Anti-Semitic Episodes**

[ hum ]

A close examination of three American anti-Semitic episodes: U.S. Grant's expulsion of the Jews during the Civil War, the Leo Frank case, and the publication of Henry Ford's *The International Jew*. What do these episodes teach us about anti-Semitic prejudice, about Jews, and about America as a whole? Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 163a Jewish-Christian Relations in America**

[ hum ss ]

A topical approach to the history of Jewish-Christian relations in America from the colonial period to the present. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 164a Judaism Confronts America**

[ hum ]

Examines, through a close reading of selected primary sources, central issues and tensions in American Jewish life, paying attention to their historical background and to issues of Jewish law. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 164b The Sociology of the American Jewish Community**

[ hum ss ]

*Open to all students.*

A survey exploring transformations in modern American Jewish societies, including American Jewish families, organizations, and behavior patterns in the second half of the twentieth century. Draws primarily on social science texts, statistical studies, and memoirs; also makes use of a broad spectrum of source materials, examining evidence from journalism, fiction, film, and other artifacts of popular culture. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 165a Analyzing the American Jewish Community**

[ hum qr ss ]

*Prerequisites: NEJS 161a, 162a, 164a, or 164b.*

Explores the use of quantitative and qualitative research techniques in recent analyses of American Jewish life. Students engage in hands-on statistical research projects, learning what kinds of information can be gathered through survey research and through a variety of qualitative research techniques. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 165b Changing Roles of Women in American Jewish Societies**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

The lives of American Jews, and especially American Jewish women, have been radically transformed by demographic changes and by American Jewish feminism. These dramatic transformations affect secular and Jewish education for women, personal options and the formation of Jewish families, a growing participation of women in public Jewish life, and a new awareness of women's issues. Usually offered every fourth year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 166a Carnal Israel: Exploring Jewish Sexuality from Talmudic Times to the Present**

[ hum ]

Explores the construction of Jewish sexuality from Talmudic times to the present. Themes include rabbinic views of sex, niddah, illicit relations, masculinity, medieval erotic poetry, Ashkenazi and Sephardic sexual practices, and sexual symbolism in mystic literature; the discourse on sex, race, and nationalism in Europe; debates about masculinity, sexual orientation, and stereotypes in America and Israel. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Freeze

**NEJS 166b "Divided Souls": Jewish Conversion and Identity in Historical Perspective**

[ hum ]

Examines the dynamics of conversion to and from Judaism from the rabbinic period to the present. Themes include the construction of identity, the place of the convert in the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds, intermarriage and family, as well as social and legal dilemmas. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Freeze

**NEJS 167a East European Jewish Immigration to the United States**

[ hum ss ]

*Open to all students.*

A historical survey of East European Jewish immigration to the United States (1881–1924). Regular readings will be supplemented by primary sources, immigrant fiction, and films. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 167b Jewish Women and Gender in Europe**

[ hum ]

Examines Jewish women's experiences from antiquity to World War II through the lens of gender. Themes include the construction of gender roles and hierarchies in the family, religion, economic life, and the public arena; sexuality and reproduction; sociability and education—primarily in Europe. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Freeze

**NEJS 170a Studying Sacred Texts**

[ hum ]

*Most suitable for juniors, seniors, and graduate students.*

What does it mean to study a sacred text? What are the problems with doing so? What is sacred about a sacred text? How is studying (or teaching) a sacred text similar to and different from studying other texts? Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levisohn

**NEJS 172a Women in American Jewish Literature**

[ hum ]

Examines portrayals of women in American Jewish literature from a hybrid viewpoint. Using close textual analysis, explores changing American Jewish mores and values and the changing role of women as revealed by portrayals of women in American Jewish fiction. The development of critical reading skills enhances our understanding of the author's intent. The fiction and memoirs read are approached as literature and as a form of social history. Usually offered every fourth year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 172b Classical Hebrew Texts in Context**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: A 40-level Hebrew course or the equivalent.*

A reading of selected classical Hebrew texts from biblical, classical rabbinic, and medieval periods. The goal is competency in understanding the Hebrew texts within their historical context. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 173b American Jewish Writers in the Twentieth Century**

[ hum ]

American Jewish fiction in the twentieth century presents a panorama of Jewish life from immigration through contemporary times. Short stories, novels, and memoirs illuminate how changing educational and occupational opportunities, transformations in family life, shifting relationships between the genders, and conflict between Jewish and American value systems have played themselves out in lives of Jewish Americans. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 174a Reading Israel from the Margins: An Exploration of the Self in Modern Hebrew Literature**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 141a, 143a, 144a, 146a or permission of the instructor.*

An exploration of poetics and identity in modern Hebrew literature. By offering a feminist and psychoanalytic reading of various Hebrew texts, this seminar explores questions of self, identity, visibility, and marginality in the Israeli context. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Szobel

**NEJS 174b Line of Resistance: Israeli Women Writers on War and Peace**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 141a, 143a, 144a, 146a, or permission of the instructor. Course is taught in Hebrew.*

An exploration of nationalism and gender in Modern Hebrew literature. By discussing various Hebrew texts and Israeli works of art and film, this course explores women's relationship to Zionism, war, peace, the state, politics, and processes of cultural production. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Szobel

**NEJS 175a Jewish Women in Eastern Europe: Tradition and Transformation**

[ hum ]

Examines women's roles in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Eastern European Jewish culture, with a focus on transformation in gender relations, education, and religious practices. Readings are drawn from Yiddish prose, poetry, and women's memoirs, with secondary sources in cultural history.

Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Kellman

**NEJS 175b Responses to the Holocaust in Literature**

[ hum ]

The Holocaust has generated a rich and varied body of literary representations of this crucial event in modern history. This course studies significant examples of such representations, dwelling on their historical, cultural, and psychological aspects. The aesthetic and moral problems of representation are raised in each case. Authors examined include Wiesel, Levi, Appelfeld, Spiegelman, Celan, and Pagis. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

**NEJS 176a Seminar in American Jewish Fiction: Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick**

[ hum wi ]

*Best suited for students with strong reading skills and graduate students.*

Focusing in depth on the works of two major American Jewish writers, Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick, and paying close attention to their development as artists and to the evolution of their explorations of Jewish themes, this course will offer students the opportunity to delve into each author's oeuvre. Usually offered every fourth year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 176b Modern Hebrew Literature in Its Historical Contexts**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: Any 100-level Hebrew course or permission of the instructor.*

A literary analysis of significant modern Hebrew literary texts read in their historical contexts. Examines how literary texts embody the cultural currents of modern Jewish life, in the Diaspora and in Israel. Texts and discussion in Hebrew.

Usually offered every year.

Staff

**NEJS 177a Representing the Holocaust in Hebrew Literature**

[ hum ]

A broad survey of Holocaust writings in Modern Hebrew literature. Examines the psychological, social, moral, and aesthetic challenges involved in representing the Holocaust in Israeli context through literary texts, theoretical research, works of art, and film. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Szobel

**NEJS 178a When a Man Loves a Woman: Love, Power, and Gender in Modern Hebrew Literature**

[ hum ]

*Taught in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HBRW 141a, 143a, 144a, or 146a or permission of the instructor.*

Explores questions of romance, gender, marriage, and jealousy in the Israeli context by offering a feminist and psychoanalytic reading of Hebrew texts, works of art, and film. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Szobel

**NEJS 179a Jewish Literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: HBRW 40a, NEJS 10a, or equivalent.*

An introduction to the Hebrew literature of Spain, Germany, and Italy during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Focus on Sephardic literature and on the continuities and discontinuities of Hebrew belles-lettres, giving attention to the impact of Arabic and European literature on Jewish authors. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 179b Sephardic Literature**

[ hum ]

An exploration of the literatures of Judeo-Spanish peoples from "Golden Age" Spain and the Sephardic Diaspora (including the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, Western Europe, the Americas). Readings are in English or in English translation from the Hebrew, Spanish, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), and Portuguese. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 180a Love and Passion in Medieval Jewish Literature and Thought**

[ hum ]

An exploration of the love theme in Jewish poetry, fiction, exegesis, and philosophical literature, from the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Jewish texts from Palestine, Spain (Sefarad), France, and Italy are compared with texts in Arabic, Spanish, French, and Italian. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Decter

**NEJS 180b (Re) Imagining Israel: Narrative, Identity, and Zionism in Hebrew Literature**

[ hum ]

Main trends and myths in modern Hebrew literature. By reading both hegemonic and peripheral Hebrew texts, the course examines various aspects of Zionist/national discourse and will present a multilayered picture of Israeli culture through different voices and mediums. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Szobel

**NEJS 181a Jews on Screen**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

Survey course focusing on moving images of Jews and Jewish life in fiction and factual films. Includes early Russian and American silents, home movies of European Jews, Yiddish feature films, Israeli cinema, independent films, and Hollywood classics. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Rivo

**NEJS 181b Film and the Holocaust**

[ hum ]

*Open to all students.*

Examines the medium of film, propaganda, documentary, and narrative fiction relevant to the history of the Holocaust. The use of film to shape, justify, document, interpret, and imagine the Holocaust. Beginning with the films produced by the Third Reich, the course includes films produced immediately after the events, as well as contemporary feature films. The focus will be how the film medium, as a medium, works to (re)present meaning(s). Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Rivo

**NEJS 182a Jewish Life in Film and Fiction**

[ hum ]

Film and fiction are windows through which we can view transformations in American Jewish life. This course concentrates on cinematic and literary depictions of religious, socioeconomic, and cultural change over the past half-century. It does this through films and fiction, which reflect and help to shape shifting definitions of the American Jew. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 184a Introduction to Jewish Museum Studies**

[ hum ]

Using readings, case studies, field trips, and class discussions, this course gives students introductory theoretical, historical, bibliographic, and hands-on skills for interpreting and producing exhibitions, museums, and historic sites in American, Europe, and Israel. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Smith

**NEJS 185a Topics in Israeli Social History**

[ hum ]

Focuses on key topics in the shaping of the Israeli experience, including Zionist colonization; absorption of immigrants; shaping Jewish identity, personal and national, in a secular sense; and homeland/Diaspora relations. Comparative perspectives are employed. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Troen

**NEJS 185b The Making of the Modern Middle East**

[ hum nw ss ]

*Open to all students.*

Discusses the processes that led to the emergence of the modern Middle East: disintegration of Islamic society, European colonialism, reform and reaction, and the rise of nationalism and the modern states. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 186a Introduction to the Qur'an**

[ hum nw wi ]

Traces the history of the Qur'an as text, its exegesis, and its role in inter-religious polemics, law, theology, and politics. Examines the role of the Qur'an in modern Islamic movements. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Lombard

**NEJS 187a Political Islam**

[ hum nw ]

Traces the recent reemergence of Islam by examining its position in modern Middle Eastern socioeconomic and political life. Uses Egypt, Syria, Algeria, Afghanistan, and Iran as major test cases for assessing the success of political Islam. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 187b Shi'ism and Political Protest in the Middle East**

[ hum nw ]

Who are the Shi'i Muslims? Addresses this question by focusing on the Shi'i communities of Iran, Iraq, the Persian Gulf, and Lebanon. Examines the social, cultural, and religious life of these communities, as well as their political development in modern times. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 188a The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1800**

[ hum nw ss ]

A historical survey of the Middle East from the establishment of the Ottoman Empire as the area's predominant power to 1800. Topics include Ottoman institutions and their transformation, and the Ottoman Empire as a world power. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levy

**NEJS 188b The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1800-1923**

[ hum nw ]

Examines the historical processes that led to the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of new nation-states in the Balkans and the Middle East: nationalism, European imperialism, and Ottoman reform and its ultimate failure. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levy

**NEJS 189a The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

[ hum ss ]

Consideration of Arab-Jewish relations, attitudes, and interactions from 1880 to the present. Emphasis on social factors and intellectual currents and their impact on politics. Examines the conflict within its international setting. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

**NEJS 190a Describing Cruelty**

[ hum wi ]

Grapples with the difficult subject of cruelty. Focus is on political or public cruelty in the non-Western world. The method is comparative and involves critical examination of the intellectual, visual, and literary works that engage in the phenomenon. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Makiya

**NEJS 190b Islamic Philosophy**

[ hum ]

An examination of the development and teachings of the Islamic philosophical tradition, covering its development from the Greek philosophical tradition and in response to Islamic teachings, and the relationship between Islamic philosophy and theology up to the Safavid period. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Lombard

**NEJS 191a Introduction to Islamic Theology**

[ hum ]

An introduction to Islamic theology and intellectual tradition. After studying the formative period of the Prophet Mohammad's life, students examine the development of law, doctrines, beliefs, philosophy, and the diversity of thought in Islamic tradition. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 191b Messianism and the State of Israel**

[ hum ]

Messianism is an important component in Jewish history. This course examines the messianic idea as a religious, political, and sociological phenomenon in modern Jewish history. Examining how the messianic narrative entered Jewish political discourse enables a critical discussion of its role in Zionist activities as an example of continuity or discontinuity with an older tradition. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Inbari

**NEJS 192a War and Peace in Israeli Thought and Praxis**

[ hum ]

Despite initial visions of a conflict-free process of settling Palestine, issues of war and peace became central to the Zionist experience. Course examines how Zionism, as an intellectual movement and a polity, has understood the conflict and coped with it. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Troen

**NEJS 193a Societies in Conflict: Exploring the Middle East through Authentic Materials**

[ hum nw ]

*Prerequisites: A 30-level Hebrew and a 30-level Arabic course.*

An upper-level language course to help advanced learners of Hebrew and Arabic to deepen their understanding of the relationship between conflicting societies, Arab and Israeli, through implementation of their knowledge of the languages. Materials include excerpts from literature, film, and other media. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Ringvald and Staff

**NEJS 193b Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective**

[ hum ]

Examines the phenomena of religious radicalism in comparative perspective—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Focuses on the religious players in the Middle East conflict, with special attention to the role of Jerusalem as a focus for religious extremism. Special two-time offering, spring 2008 and 2009.

Mr. Inbari

**NEJS 194a Civil Society in the Middle East**

[ hum nw ]

Examines the concept of civil society and how it applies to the Middle East. Compares the Middle East to other world regions. Usually offered every fourth year.

Staff

**NEJS 194b Sufi Teachings**

[ hum ]

*Prerequisite: IMES 104a or NEJS 186a or a course on Islam.*

An examination of the teaching and practices of the Sufi tradition. Explores the foundations of Sufism, its relation to other aspects of Islam and the development of Sufi teachings in both poetry and prose. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Lombard

**NEJS 195a Military and Politics in the Middle East**

[ hum nw ]

Examines civil-military relations in the Middle East, including the Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and Israel.

Compares the Middle East to other world regions. Usually offered every fourth year.

Staff

**NEJS 195b War and Reconstruction in Iraq**

[ hum nw ]

Examines the aftermath of the 2003 war in Iraq. Issues of origin, legitimacy, and the nature of the outgoing regime are looked at against the backdrop of enormous social upheaval and the politics of occupation, democratization, constitutionalism, sectarianism, remembrance, and insurgency. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Makiya

**NEJS 196a Marriage, Divorce, and Sexual Ethics in Islamic Law**

[ hum nw ]

Using law to understand Islamic gender discourses and Muslim women's lives, the class addresses broad areas where law and gender intersect jurisprudential method and classical doctrines; women's use of courts to settle disputes; and contemporary debates over legal reforms. Usually offered every fourth year.

Staff

**NEJS 197b Political Cultures of the Middle East**

[ wi nw hum ]

Explores the way in which people make assumptions about power, authority, and justice. Focuses on Israel, Turkey, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Iraq, explaining the nature of political power in these states. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Makiya

**NEJS 198b Modern Islamic Thought: The Eighteenth Century through the Contemporary Era**

[ hum ]

An analysis of major trends in Islamic thought—Sunni, Shi, and Sufi—beginning with eighteenth-century revival and reform and carrying through to the contemporary era, covering themes such as women and gender, democracy, pluralism, liberation, and jihad. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 199b Contemporary Islamic Thought and Practice**

[ hum ]

An overview of the major issues and trends in contemporary Islamic thought and practice. Explores themes including scriptural interpretation, worship and devotion, Islamic law, human rights, social justice, visions of religious leadership, democracy, extremism, representations of Islam, and globalization and transnational networks. Case studies of the United States and Europe, examining moderate and extremist voices, are used as the future of Islam is considered. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**(200 and above) Primarily for Graduate Students****NEJS 200a Akkadian Literary Texts I**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 101b or permission of the instructor.*

Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 200b Akkadian Literary Texts II**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 200a or permission of the instructor.*

Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 202a Akkadian Mythological/Religious Texts I**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 101b or permission of the instructor.*

Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 202b Akkadian Mythological/Religious Texts II**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 202a or permission of the instructor.*

Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Abusch

**NEJS 206a Intermediate Ugaritic**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 106b.*

A review of grammar and continued reading in various Ugaritic texts. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Wright

**NEJS 208a Biblical Hebrew Composition**

*Prerequisite: An advanced knowledge of biblical Hebrew.*

An advanced course in biblical Hebrew grammar. The grammar of biblical Hebrew will be reviewed and extended through translation of English prose and poetry into biblical Hebrew. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 210a Exodus: A Study in Method**  
*Prerequisite: A strong reading knowledge of biblical Hebrew and previous exposure to the critical study of the Hebrew Bible.*

An examination of the Hebrew text of Exodus in relation to the methodologies of modern biblical scholarship. Particular attention to source criticism, form criticism, and the text in its ancient environment. Usually offered every fourth year.

Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 210b Studing the Hebrew Bible**

*Open to students in the MAT program (Jewish Day School) and Hornstein students only.*

Focuses on the work of reading Biblical texts. Students will learn different orientations to Bible study, including literary criticism and source criticism, and apply them to Biblical texts that contain central Jewish ideas. Usually offered every year in the summer.

Ms. Tanchel

**NEJS 231a Current Trends in Jewish Studies**

Examines works in Jewish studies that reflect the shifting currents in a variety of disciplines. The approach is generally thematic and chronological, ranging from historiographic treatises to provocative monographs and articles in literature, history, sociology, and religion. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 232a Research and Archival Methods in Modern Jewish History**

A critical examination of research methodologies in the study of modern and American Jewish history, with special attention to primary sources and new historical approaches. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 233a Gender and Jewish Studies**

Uses gender as a prism to enhance understanding of topics in Judaic studies such as Jewish history and classical Jewish texts, psychology, sexuality and gender role definition, literature and film, contemporary cultures, and religion. Undergraduates may enroll by permission of the instructor. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. Fishman

**NEJS 234a Major Themes in Jewish Studies: Jews and their Neighbors**

Traces the major theme of "Jews and their neighbors" in Jewish life from biblical times to the present while utilizing sources and methods to developed students' analytical skills and acquaint them with different historical eras and approaches. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 235b Philosophy of Jewish Education**

What should Jewish education be? What are its legitimate goals? What are the competing visions of an educated Jew, and how do these influence educational practice? How is Jewish education similar to and different from other kinds of religious education? Addresses these and other questions from a philosophical perspective, through the close reading and analysis of theoretical texts. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levisohn

**NEJS 236a Seminar on Modern Jewish History and Historiography**

*Strongly recommended for all graduate students in Judaic studies.*

Aims to introduce students to the emergence of history as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century and to provide some acquaintance with the classics of historical scholarship. It will also examine the emergence of Jewish historiography and analyze critically the works of the major Jewish historians. In addition, it will assess the contributions of the "new" historians to historical understanding and see how far their insights can aid in the study of key problems in Jewish history.

Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Polonsky

**NEJS 253a Zionism and Its Critics: Contested Visions of Jewish Nationalism**

The modern articulation of collective Jewish experience in terms of a nation has taken on a variety of competing forms. Places the development of Jewish nationalist visions into historical context and studies the different strands of cultural, religious, and political Zionism, as well as several non-Zionist forms such as Bundism and autonomism. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 285a Social History of the Middle East**

Explores the major social transformations that have marked Middle Eastern history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The discussion covers such topics as tribal settlement, the village community, land reform, the Islamic city, urbanization, modernization and modernity, the family, the concept of "class," and the position of women. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 285b Conflict and Controversies in Israeli History**

From early scenarios to contemporary debates, Zionist society has experienced solidarity and discord. Explores tensions caused by ethnic diversity, religious/secular friction, Arab/Jewish rivalry, and the dilemma of defining a state that is at once Jewish and democratic. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Troen

**NEJS 287a Seminar on Nationalism and Religion in the Middle East**

Examines major issues in the development of nationalism and its interaction with religion in the Arab countries, Israel, Turkey, and Iran in the twentieth century. Topics vary from year to year. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levy

**NEJS 289a Seminar: States and Minorities in the Middle East**

Examines major issues in the relations between the state and ethnic and religious minorities in the Arab countries, Israel, Turkey, and Iran in the twentieth century. Topics vary from year to year. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Levy

**NEJS 291a History and Memory in the Middle East**

*Prerequisite: NEJS 185a or the equivalent.* Explores some of the ways in which Middle Eastern writers (Arabs and Israelis) have treated major episodes and foundation myths in the twentieth century. Our focus will be on the development of collective memories and the appearance of revisionist studies that challenge earlier accounts of history. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

**NEJS 293a The Question of Palestine**

An analysis of the relations between the Arab and the Jewish national communities in Palestine/Eretz Israel since the Balfour Declaration (1917), their protracted violent conflict and periodical political negotiations, as well as the involvement of the Arab states and the Great Powers. Usually offered every fourth year.

Staff

**NEJS 298a Master's Project**

Specific sections for individual faculty members as requested.

Staff

**NEJS 299a Master's Thesis**

Specific sections for individual faculty members as requested.

Staff

**NEJS 299b Master's Thesis**

Specific sections for individual faculty members as requested.

Staff

**NEJS 315a Readings in Contemporary Israeli Society**

Staff

**NEJS 316a Readings in Arabic Language and Literature**

Staff

**NEJS 317a Readings in Assyriology**

Mr. Abusch

- NEJS 318a Readings in Sumerian**  
Mr. Abusch
- NEJS 320a Readings in Jewish Bibliography**  
Staff
- NEJS 321a Readings in Medieval Jewish Philosophy**  
Staff
- NEJS 322a Readings in Modern Intellectual History**  
Mr. Sheppard
- NEJS 326a Biblical Literature**  
Mr. Brettler
- NEJS 328a Readings in Ancient Near Eastern Languages**  
Mr. Abusch
- NEJS 329a Readings in Ancient Near Eastern Religions and Cultures**  
Mr. Abusch
- NEJS 330a Readings in Israeli History**  
Ms. Freeze
- NEJS 331a Readings in Yiddish Literature**  
Ms. Kellman
- NEJS 332a Readings in American Jewish History**  
Mr. Sarna
- NEJS 333a Readings in the History of the Jews in Europe to 1800**  
Mr. Ravid
- NEJS 334a Readings: History of American Jewish Institutions**  
Staff
- NEJS 335a Readings in East European Jewish History**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 336b Readings in American-Jewish Cultural Studies**  
Mr. Whitfield
- NEJS 337a Readings in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature**  
Mr. Kimelman
- NEJS 338a Readings in History of Judaism**  
Mr. Kimelman
- NEJS 339a Readings in Ottoman History and Civilization**  
Mr. Levy
- NEJS 340a Readings in Modern Middle Eastern History**  
Mr. Levy
- NEJS 341a Readings in Holocaust History**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 342a Readings in the Dead Sea Scrolls**  
Mr. Brettler
- NEJS 343a Readings in Bible and the Ancient Near East**  
Mr. Wright
- NEJS 345a Readings in Bible and Ancient Near East Studies**  
Mr. Brettler and Mr. Wright
- NEJS 346a Readings in Biblical Hebrew and Related Studies**  
Mr. Brettler
- NEJS 347a Readings in the History of Spanish Jewry and the Iberian Diaspora in Europe**  
Mr. Ravid
- NEJS 348a Readings in the History of the Sephardim in the Near East**  
Mr. Levy
- NEJS 349a Readings in the Sephardi Experience in the New World**  
Mr. Sarna
- NEJS 350a Readings in Modern Middle Eastern Historiography**  
Staff
- NEJS 351a Readings in Visual Culture and Religion**  
Ms. Smith
- NEJS 352a Readings in the History of American Jewish Education**  
Mr. Sarna
- NEJS 356a Readings in American Jewish Museum Studies**  
Mr. Sarna or Ms. Smith
- NEJS 357a Readings in the History of Middle Eastern Jewry**  
Mr. Levy
- NEJS 360b Readings in Contemporary Jewish Literature and Life**  
Ms. Fishman
- NEJS 361a Readings in Jewish Sociology**  
Ms. Fishman
- NEJS 362a Readings in Polish History 1764–1914**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 362b NEJS 362b Readings in Polish-Jewish Relations**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 363a Readings in the History of Eastern Europe 1750–1947**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 363b Readings in the History of East-Central Europe**  
Mr. Polonsky
- NEJS 364a Yiddish Readings: Works of Chaim Grade and Isaac Bashevis Singer**  
Ms. Kellman
- NEJS 364b Yiddish Readings in Post-Holocaust History**  
Ms. Kellman
- NEJS 365a Yiddish Readings: Modernist Prose Fiction**  
Ms. Kellman
- NEJS 366a Doctoral and Postdoctoral Seminar on Early Judaism and Christianity**  
Ms. Brooten and Mr. Kimelman
- NEJS 367a Readings in Modern Hebrew Literature and Modern Jewish Culture**  
Staff
- NEJS 368b American-Jewish Women's Literature**  
Ms. Antler
- NEJS 369a Readings in New Testament**  
Ms. Brooten
- NEJS 370b Readings in Language and Art**  
Ms. Ringvald
- NEJS 372b Readings in United States Religion**  
Mr. Sarna
- NEJS 373a Readings in Russian Jewish History**  
Ms. Freeze
- NEJS 374a Readings in Hebrew Curriculum Design**  
Ms. Ringvald
- NEJS 376a Readings in Jewish Culture**  
Ms. Fishman
- NEJS 379a Hebrew Language and Culture**  
Staff
- NEJS 379b Readings in Al-Ghazali**  
Mr. Lumbard
- NEJS 380a Readings in German-Jewish History**  
Mr. Sheppard
- NEJS 381b Monuments and Cities**  
Mr. Makiya
- NEJS 382a Readings in Jewish Education**  
Ms. Feiman-Nemser and Mr. Levisohn

**NEJS 383a Readings in Medieval Islam**  
Mr. Lumbard

**NEJS 384a Readings in Medieval Jewish Philosophy**  
Mr. Decter

**NEJS 385a Readings in Liturgy**  
Mr. Kimelman

**NEJS 386a Readings in Research in Jewish Education**  
Ms. Feiman-Nemser and Mr. Levisohn

**NEJS 387a Readings in Hittite**  
Mr. Wright

**NEJS 388a Readings in Black-Jewish Relations**  
Mr. Sarna

**NEJS 389a Readings in Bible Interpretation**  
Mr. Brettler

**NEJS 390a Readings in Medieval Judaism**  
Mr. Decter

**NEJS 391a Readings in Sephardic Studies**  
Mr. Decter

**NEJS 392a Readings in Arab Nationalism**  
Staff

**NEJS 393a Readings in American Jewish Literature**  
Staff

**NEJS 394a Yiddish Readings in Holocaust History**  
Ms. Kellman

**NEJS 394b Readings in Modern Yiddish Literature**  
Ms. Kellman

**NEJS 396a Jewish Experience and Thought**  
Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 396b Readings in Israel Studies**  
Mr. Troen

**NEJS 397a Readings in Jewish Women's Memoirs**  
Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 397b Readings on Middle Eastern Memory**  
Mr. Makiya

**NEJS 398a History of Zionist Thought**  
Mr. Sheppard

**NEJS 401d Dissertation Colloquium**  
Independent research for the PhD. Specific sections for individual faculty members as requested.  
Staff

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## Cross-Listed Courses

**AMST 121a**  
The American Jewish Woman: 1890–1990s

**ANTH 118b**  
Peoples and Societies of the Middle East

**ANTH 149a**  
Archaeology of Egypt and Canaan in Ancient Times

**BISC 2b**  
Genes, Culture, History: A Case Study

**FA 153a**  
Israeli Art

**F ECS 147a**  
Jewish Identities in France since 1945

**GECS 155a**  
Modern German Jewish History

**IMES 104a**  
Islam: Civilization and Institutions

**WMGS 140a**  
Diversity of Muslim Women's Experience