The Judaic Studies Program offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the history, religion, social experience, and culture of the Jewish people. By bringing a variety of fields and disciplines to bear on its subject, the program intends to convey to students the complex interaction of forces that create and express Jewish ethnic and religious identity. Students completing the program will have a broad knowledge of the field along with the tools necessary for continued study of Jewish civilization in all its manifestations.

Program Faculty

Jay Geller, PhD  
Samuel Rosenthal Professor of Judaic Studies; Associate Professor, Department of History; Director, Judaic Studies Program

Judith Neulander, PhD  
Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies

Undergraduate Program

Minor

The minor consists of a minimum of five or six courses, according to the following scheme, to be chosen in consultation with the program director.

Required Courses:

A. Introduction to Judaic Studies  
JDST 101  Jews and Judaism  

B. Nine additional credit hours of courses that have a JDST cross-listing. Alternatively, students may take six credit hours of JDST courses plus three credit hours from one course on the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 365E</td>
<td>The Immigrant Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBRW 201</td>
<td>Intermediate Modern Hebrew I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBRW 202</td>
<td>Intermediate Modern Hebrew II</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBRW 301</td>
<td>Advanced Modern Hebrew I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBRW 302</td>
<td>Advanced Modern Hebrew II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBRW 399</td>
<td>Independent Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSTY 257</td>
<td>Immigrants in America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSC 379</td>
<td>Introduction to Middle East Politics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Two semesters of Hebrew (HBRW 101 and HBRW 102).  

Students who place out of the 100-level HBRW courses must take an additional course from B as specified above.

Total Units 23

Courses

JDST 101. Jews and Judaism. 3 Units.  
This course provides an introduction to Jewish religion, culture, history, and life. It does not presuppose any previous study of Judaism or experience with Judaism, and it prepares students for additional coursework in Judaic studies, Jewish history, or religious studies with an emphasis on Judaism. Required for the minor in Judaic Studies. Offered as JDST 101 and RLGN 213. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JDST 173. Introducing Judaism. 3 Units.  
This "topics" course offers an introduction to the academic study of Judaism. Whether approached through a particular theme or as a general historical introduction, each section of this course provides students with a general introduction to the academic study of religion and basic religious literacy in Jewish religious tradition, exploring forms of it in a diversity of cultural contexts around the world. Section topics could include, but are not limited to: Festivals and Holy Days, Women and Gender, Jewish Ethics. Students may repeat the course for credit (up to 6 credits), provided that the two sections are different. Offered as RLGN 173 and JDST 173. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JDST 208. Introduction to Western Religions. 3 Units.  
Basic introduction to the three great monotheistic religions of the Western World: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. All three of these religious traditions trace their roots to the faith of biblical Israel as revealed by a series of prophets including Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Each absorbed the philosophy and science of the Greco-Roman world and went on both to influence and struggle with each other. Many of the religious problems of the contemporary world, from Afghanistan to the Middle East to Yugoslavia, can be traced to tension within and between these religious groups. Offered as RLGN 208 and JDST 208. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JDST 218. Jews in Early Modern Europe. 3 Units.  
This course surveys the history of Jews in Europe and the wider world from the Spanish expulsion through the French Revolution. Tracking peregrinations out of the Iberian Peninsula to the British Isles, France, Holland, Italy, Germany, Poland-Lithuania, the Ottoman Empire, and the American colonies, it examines the diverse ways Jews organized their communities, interacted with their non-Jewish neighbors, and negotiated their social, economic, and legal status within different states and empires. What role did Jews play and what symbolic place did they occupy during a period of European expansion, technological innovation, artistic experimentation, and religious and political turmoil? What internal and external dynamics affected Jewish experiences in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries? Through a selection of inquisitorial transcripts, government records, memoirs, and historical literature, we will explore topics such as persecution, conversion, messianism, toleration, emancipation, and assimilation. Offered as HSTY 218, JDST 218, and ETHS 218. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JDST 220. Jewish Traditional Art and Architecture. 3 Units.  
Tradition and transformation in Jewish artistic expression over time and across space. Course will begin with biblical period and continue down to the present day in Israel and America. Examination of how concepts such as "Jewish" and "art" undergo change within the Jewish community over this period. Offered as ARTH 220 and JDST 220. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
J DST 223. Religious Roots of Conflict in the Middle East. 3 Units.
The course is about the rhetoric and symbols used by various voices in
the Middle East in the ongoing debate about the future shape of
the region. For historical and cultural reasons, much of the discourse
draws on religious symbolism, especially (although not exclusively)
Islamic, Jewish and Christian. Because of the long and complex history
of the region and the religious communities in it, virtually every act and
every place is fraught with meaning. The course examines the diverse
symbols and rhetorical strategies used by the various sides in the conflict
and how they are understood both by various audiences within each
community and among the different communities. Offered as JDST 223
and RLGN 223. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS
Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

J DST 228. The Jewish Image in Popular Film. 3 Units.
Explores film as social practice for its makers and its audience from the
silent era through Hollywood’s Golden Age, to the technological dazzle
of the present day. Notes views of the Jews as stereotypical “Racial
Other,” not only capable of Jewish self-representation, but also capable of
representing any group widely believed to be non-white, non-Christian or
otherwise “alien.” By studying select films in historical context, the course
will trace changes in this stereotype. By the end of the semester, students
will understand how film is shaped by, and how it actively shapes, our
construction of American Selves vs. Ethnic Others. Counts for CAS Global
& Cultural Diversity Requirement.

J DST 233. Introduction to Jewish Folklore. 3 Units.
Exploration of a variety of genres, research methods and interpretations
of Jewish folklore, from antiquity to the present. Emphasis on how
Jewish folk traditions and culture give us access to the spirit and
mentality of the many different generations of the Jewish ethnic
group, illuminating its past and informing the direction of its future
development. Offered as ANTH 233, RLGN 233, and JDST 233. Counts for
CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

J DST 254. The Holocaust. 3 Units.
This class seeks to answer fundamental questions about the Holocaust:
the German-led organized mass murder of nearly six million Jews
and millions of other ethnic and religious minorities. It will investigate
the origins and development of racism in modern European society,
the manifestations of that racism, and responses to persecution. An
additional focus of the course will be comparisons between different
groups, different countries, and different phases during the Nazi era.
Offered as HSTY 254, RLGN 254, ETHS 254, and JDST 254. Counts for
CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

J DST 268. Women in the Bible: Ethnographic Approaches to Rite and
Ritual, Story, Song, and Art. 3 Units.
Examination of women in Jewish and Christian Biblical texts, along
with their Jewish, Christian (and occasionally Muslim) interpretations.
Discussion of how these traditions have shaped images of, and attitudes
toward, women in western civilization. Offered as RLGN 268, WGST 268,
and JDST 268.

J DST 280. Religion and Politics in the Middle East. 3 Units.
An in-depth look at the relationship between politics and religion in the
Middle East. Students will spend the first week on the CWRU campus
and the last three weeks in Israel, where time will be divided between
classroom teaching, guest lectures, and “field trips” to important sites.
Students will have the opportunity to interact directly with members
of the region’s diverse religious groups within the political, social,
and cultural contexts in which they live. A final research paper will be
required. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Offered as JDST 280
and RLGN 280.

J DST 314. Mythologies of the Afterlife. 3 Units.
This course provides a multidisciplinary approach to the idea of an
afterlife, and its manifestation in diverse cultures. We will examine the
way varying views of the afterlife influence religion, popular culture and
palliative care, and how human creativity has shaped the heavens, hells,
hauntings and holidays of diverse populations over time and across
space. Students will come to see the afterlife as an integral part of
human history and experience, not only because it helps people die with
better hope, but because it helps them to live more richly. Offered as
RLGN 314 and JDST 314.

J DST 326. The Holocaust and the Arts. 3 Units.
This course explores artistic output during the Holocaust, as well as
responses to the Holocaust in various forms, including music, art,
arithmetic, film, and literature. Offered as MUHI 326, JDST 326,
HSTY 326 and RLGN 326 Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity
Requirement.

J DST 341. Jewish Urban History. 3 Units.
This course examines the relationship between Jews and the modern
urban environment. It seeks to answer questions such as: How did the
modernization of cities affect Jews and Jewish communities? In what
ways did Jews contribute to modern urban cultural and social forms?
What is Jewish urban space, is it unique, and how is it remembered later
on? Are there differences between the patterns in Europe, the Middle
East, and the Americas? Offered as HSTY 341 and JDST 341. Counts as
SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity
Requirement.

J DST 350. Jewish Ethics. 3 Units.
An exploration of Jewish moral and ethical discourse. The first half of the
course will be devoted to studying the structure and content of classical
Jewish ethics on issues including marriage, abortion, euthanasia, and
social justice. Students will read and react to primary Jewish religious
texts. The second half of the course will focus on various modern forms
of Judaism and the diversity of moral rhetoric in the Jewish community
today. Readings will include such modern thinkers as Martin Buber
and Abraham Joshua Heschel. Offered as JDST 350, RLGN 350, and
RLGN 450. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar.

J DST 371. Jews under Islam and Christianity. 3 Units.
This course examines the social and political status of Jews under
Muslim and Christian rule since the Middle Ages. Themes include
interfaith relations, Islamic and Christian beliefs regarding the Jews,
Muslim and Christian regulation of Jewry, and the Jewish response.
Offered as HSTY 371, JDST 371 and RLGN 371. Counts as SAGES
Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity
Requirement.

J DST 389. History of Zionism. 3 Units.
This course seeks to elucidate the major strands of Zionism, their
origins, how they have interacted, and their impact on contemporary
Israeli society. These may include political Zionism, cultural Zionism,
socialist (labor) Zionism, Revisionist Zionism, and religious Zionism.
This course will also examine the differences in the appeal of Zionism
to Jews in different places, such as Western Europe, Eastern Europe
and the United States. Offered as HSTY 389 and JDST 389. Counts as
SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity
Requirement.

J DST 392. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Units.
Up to three semester hours of independent study may be taken in a single
semester.